

Technical Presentation Skills for Engineers

Course Outline

Course Objectives

To enable participants to effectively deliver the different types of presentations commonly given in the field of engineering with particular emphasis on presentations of an academic nature.

Course Content:

A General View of Presentations

- Different types of presentation
- What makes a good or bad presentation
- Analysing the audience
- Deciding on a style
- Spoken vs. written language
- Academic vs. colloquial language

The Academic Presentation 1 - The Introduction

- Capturing the audience's attention
- Contextualising the present study
- Justifying the study using a 'create a research space model'
- Describing objectives

The Academic Presentation 2 - The Body of the Presentation

- Describing methods
- Describing results
- Quantifying data: numbers and mathematical language
- Describing static and dynamic data: tables and graphs
- Designing effective visual aids
- Talking around slides: creating a triangular relationship between presenter, visual aids and audience
- Connecting ideas and maintaining the flow of information: signposting and metadiscoursal features
- Emphasising key ideas

The Academic Presentation 3 - The Final Phase

- Building up a strong conclusion
- Dealing with the unpredictable: strategies for effectively answering questions from the floor

The Conference Abstract

- Effective titles
- Structure and language
- Keeping to word limits

Methodology

Key input will be provided to participants throughout the course in the form of language-based activities and models. Participants will not only be expected to complete these activities and understand these models but also provide proof of an active mastery of the points covered. To that end, participants will be expected to apply the language and models to their own situation and data and will thus 'build' the different parts of a future presentation as they proceed through the course. Both lecturer-participant and participant-participant evaluation will be encouraged.

Evaluation

The final grade for the course will be evaluated using two separate criteria: course participation (50%) and performance on a final presentation of a piece of the participant's own research (50%) in a simulated congress setting.

Course Organisers

Dr Ruth Breeze (rbreeze@unav.es)

Dr Paul Miller (pmiller@unav.es)

Bibliography

Alley, M (2003). *The Craft of Scientific Presentations: Critical Steps to Succeed and Critical Errors to Avoid*. Springer-Verlag New York Inc.

Swales, J & Feak, C. (2000). *English in Today's Research World: A Writing Guide*. University of Michigan Press.

Swales, J & Feak, C. (2004). *Academic Writing for Graduate Students: Essential Tasks and Skills*. University of Michigan Press.

van Emden, J. (2001). *Effective Communication for Science and Technology*. Palgrave.