

THE ART OF SCIENTIFIC PRESENTATION

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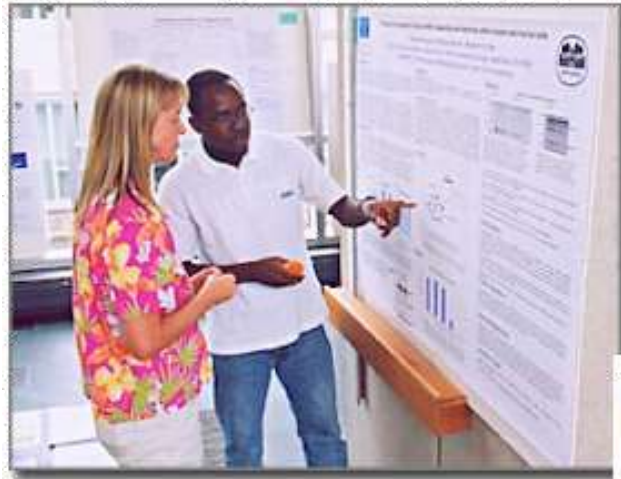


Introduction

- ▶ Two major types of presentations:
 - a. Poster presentation
 - b. Oral presentation

- ▶ Visual aid
 - a. PowerPoint presentations
 - b. Overhead presentations a.k.a transparencies

Poster presentation



- ▶ Suitable for complex studies.
- ▶ Also recommended for amateurs.



Oral presentation

Introduction

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 - a. Poster presentation
 - b. Oral presentation
- ▶ Visual aid
 - a. PowerPoint presentations
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Before you begin preparing...

- ▶ Don't let your self be too anxious.
- ▶ Know your audience
 - What is their level of knowledge likely to be?
 - How many are likely to attend?

Remember the attention curve

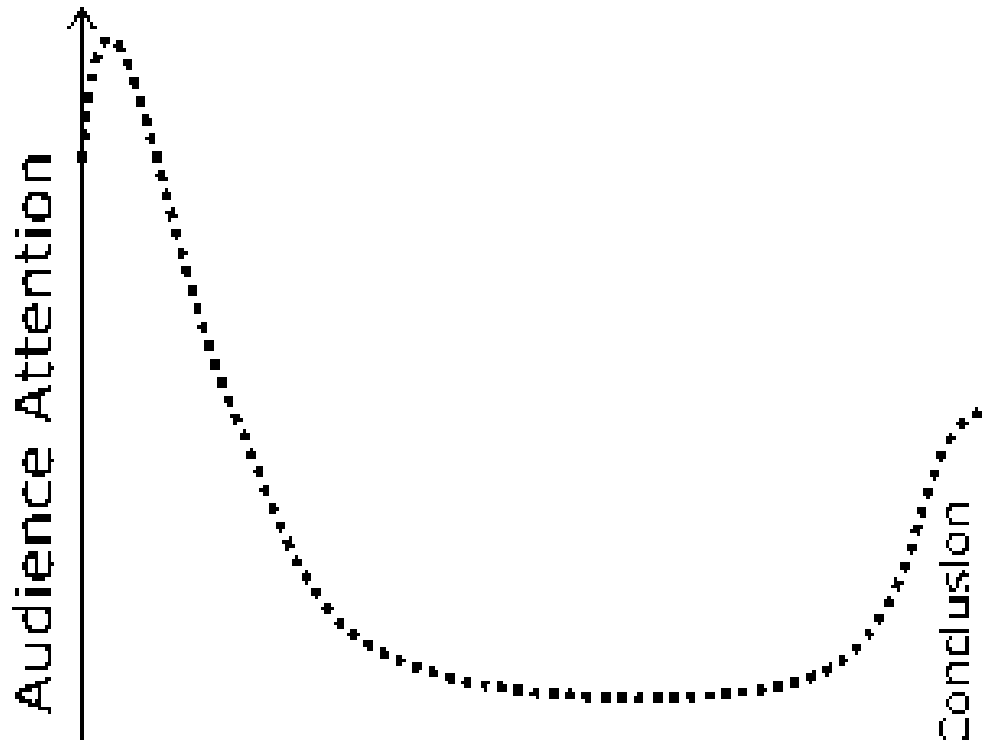


Figure: Typical attention the audience pays to an average presentation

Developing the presentation

- ▶ Its kind of like baking a black forest cake.
- ▶ Follow the IMRAD guidelines.
 - Introduction
 - Methodology
 - Results
 - Analysis
 - Discussion and conclusion

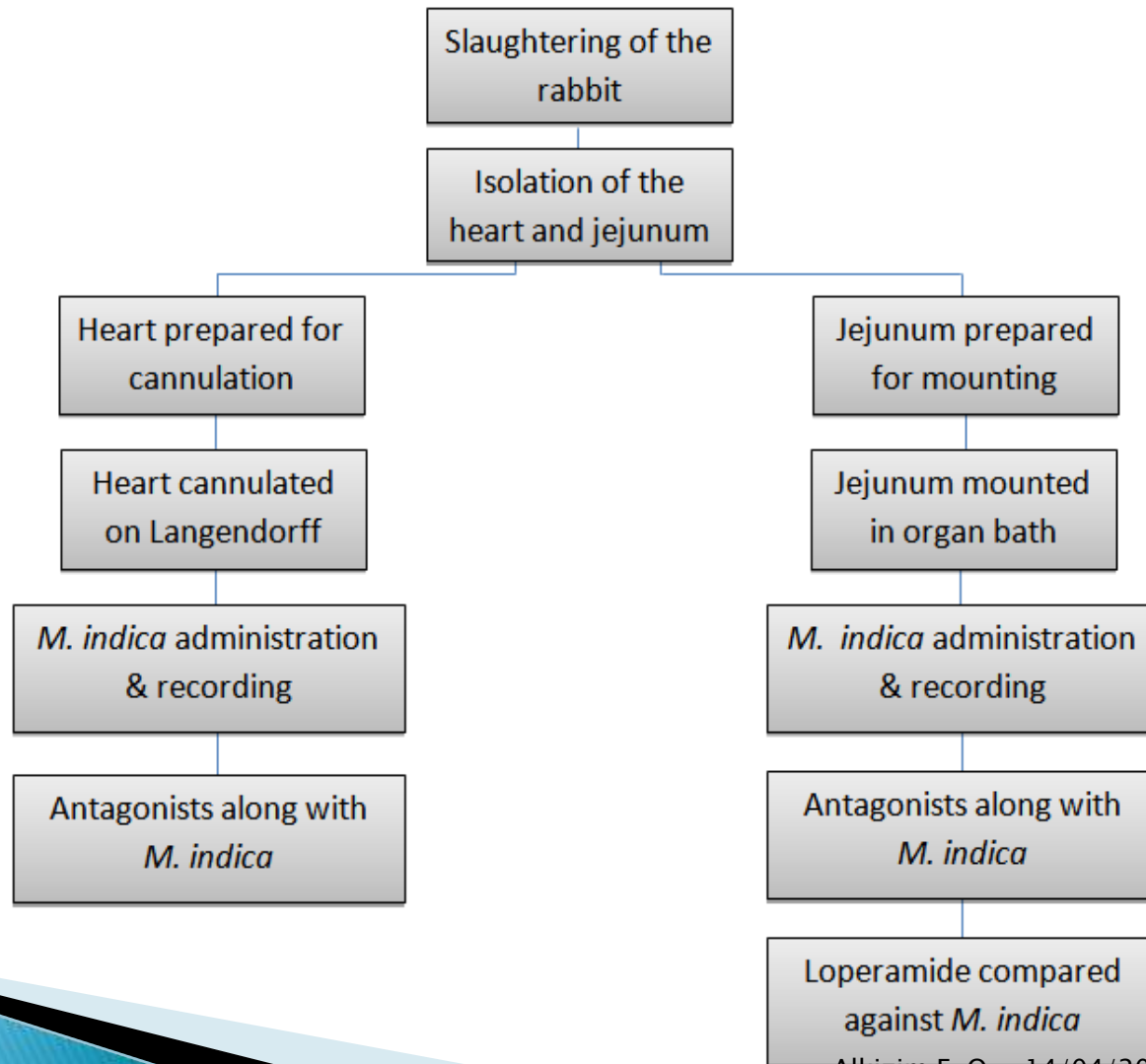
Introduction

- ▶ Give a brief introduction
- ▶ What is your research question?
- ▶ A quick justification
- ▶ Your objectives
- ▶ H_0
- ▶ Resist the temptation to over do it.

Methodology

- ▶ What did you do?
- ▶ Be brief and concise.
- ▶ If it is a literature review, give some details on the search.
- ▶ If retrospective study, tell us what records you went through.
- ▶ if an original study, what are your subjects, and what did you do on them? What parameters?
- ▶ Again, avoid temptations!

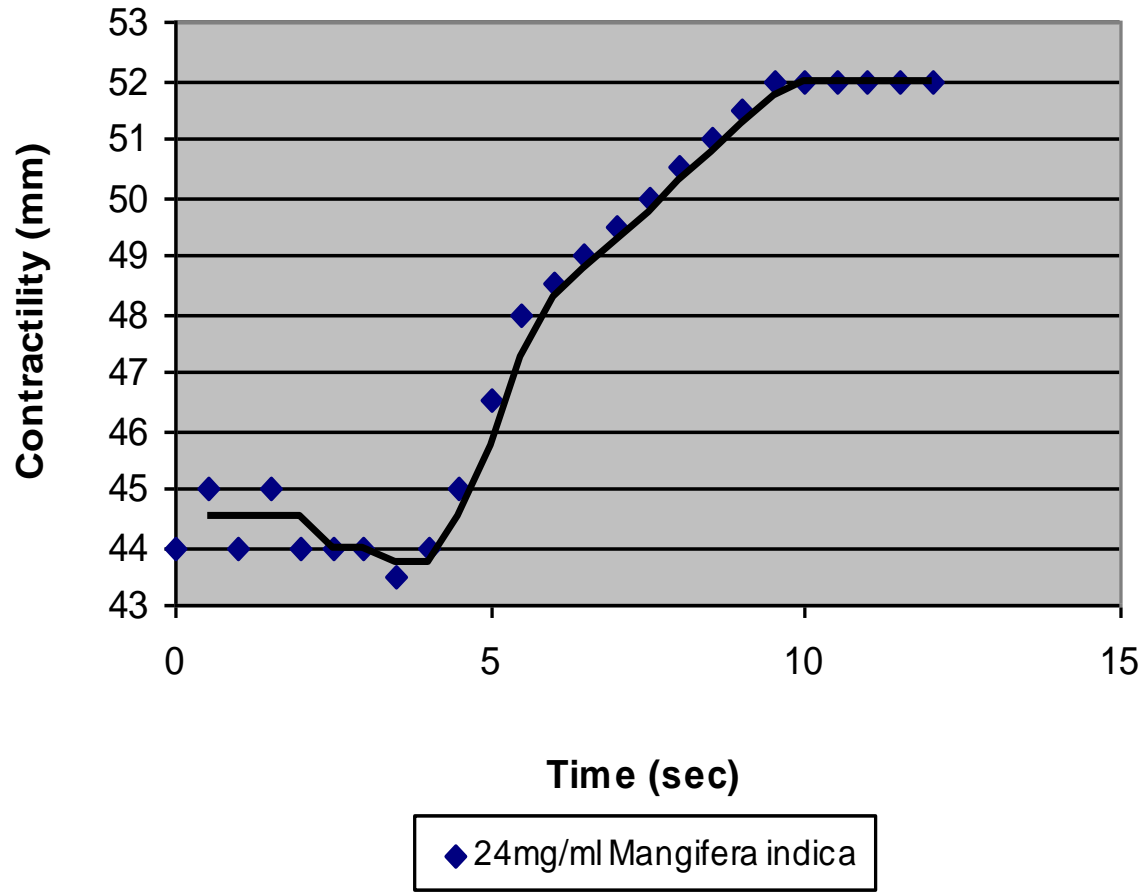
Diagrammatic study design



Results

- ▶ What did you come up with?
- ▶ State the results you got, don't discuss.
- ▶ If possible, graphical figures. Describe the trends seen.
- ▶ This is also the chance to smartly create questions for roasting session.

Effect of *Mangifera indica* on myocardial contractility



Analysis

- ▶ Parameters
- ▶ Data presentation
- ▶ Statistical test
- ▶ Confidence interval

Discussion

- ▶ This is often overlooked.
- ▶ Elaborate and make sense out of your results. Demonstrate the relevance of your research, and how it relates to the larger picture of issues.
- ▶ You are allowed to speculate

Conclusion

- ▶ Answer your research question, by agreeing or disagreeing with your null hypothesis.

References

- ▶ Not needed in a conference oral presentation, unless very necessary.
- ▶ Requirement in academic presentations.
- ▶ Give the reference as a footnote

Acknowledgment

- ▶ Acknowledge support e.g. financial.

THAN  YOU



Some general rules:

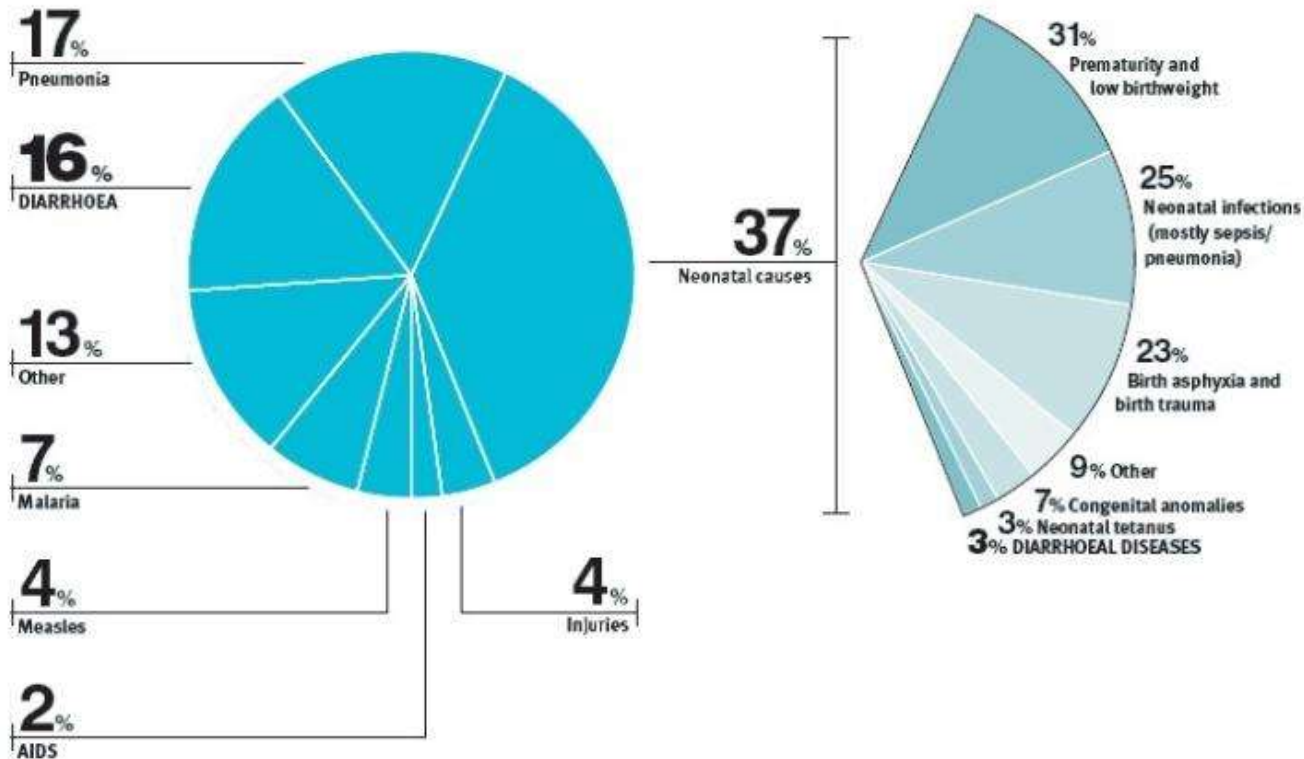
- ▶ How many slides? There is no theory to it...depends on time, content, information, speed of speech etc.
- ▶ Keep slides simple with appropriate backgrounds, font type, size, and colour.
- ▶ Do not over crowd slides. The common limit is 5 lines a slide.
- ▶ Do not use full sentences.
- ▶ Be careful with the colours



- ▶ **AVOID ANNOYING BACKGROUNDS!!!**
 - Colour acceptable unless it distracts
 - Use complimenting colours, best is light background with dark font.
 - Make sure you're using the best colours for legible text – avoiding the worst ones!!

► Pictures speak louder than words...

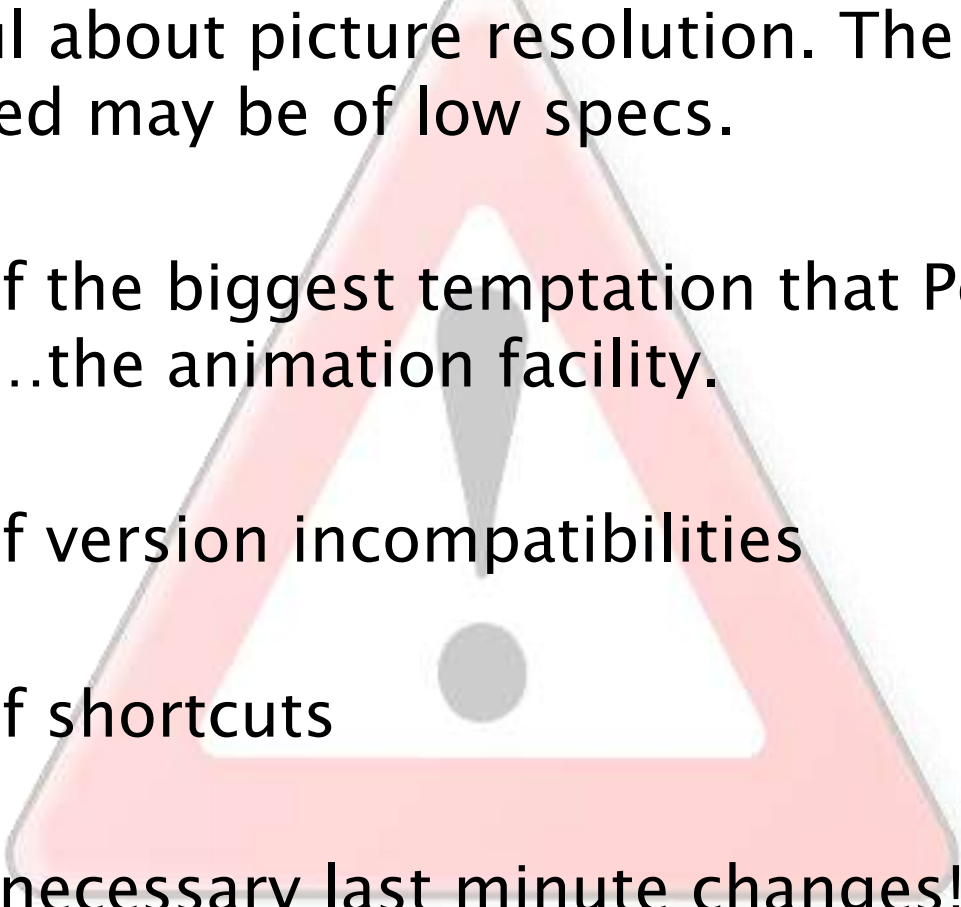
Figure: Proportional distribution of cause-specific deaths among children under-five years of age. Reproduced with permission from: WHO. Diarrhoea: Why children are still dying, and what can be done. 2009



Source, with permission: UNICEF and WHO. Diarrhoea: Why children are still dying and what can be done. UNICEF / WHO press. 2009.

- With every figure there must be a title and footnote.
- But don't create a photo slideshow!
- Avoid tables if you can.

Caution!!

- 
- ▶ Be careful about picture resolution. The computer being used may be of low specs.
 - ▶ Beware of the biggest temptation that PowerPoint give you...the animation facility.
 - ▶ Beware of version incompatibilities
 - ▶ Beware of shortcuts
 - ▶ Avoid unnecessary last minute changes!

Rehearse rehearse rehearse!!!

- ▶ An important key to reducing anxiety.
- ▶ Stand in front of a mirror.
- ▶ Practice by presenting to your colleague.
- ▶ In case it is lengthy, don't try to speak faster, cut down on some info.
- ▶ This will also help you anticipate questions.

On the day of presenting

Dress code

- ▶ Go early and get acquainted with the room.
- ▶ Be simple and down to earth.
- ▶ Introduce yourself to the chair.
- ▶ Some conferences may have designated place for speakers, if not sit strategically.
- ▶ Wait for your turn.
- ▶ When you are called...

- ▶ Smile at the audience, they are not enemies!

- ▶ Thank the chairman
- ▶ Greet the audience appropriately

The talk

- ▶ Be audible. If you can't be heard, your words are wasted.
- ▶ Be intelligible. If your words can't be understood, the audience is wasted.
- ▶ Be engaging. If you don't hold the audience attention, your slot in the program is wasted.
- ▶ Be and look confident. If you don't look like you believe in what you are saying, nobody else will.
- ▶ Regulate your speed.
- ▶ Never go back, rather use two slides.
- ▶ Do not read from the slides.
- ▶ Never flash through slides.

Eye contact

- ▶ Don't just talk to your notes or the screen.
- ▶ Don't stare at the floor, ceiling, or out of the window
- ▶ Don't just focus on the front rows, the rest will feel left out.
- ▶ Don't fix your gaze too much on some one who seems to be paying attention. You may loose the only friend you have.

- ▶ Do not apologize for anything e.g. bad slide, image. It creates the impression that you were poorly prepared.
- ▶ End appropriately, don't "I think I will stop there" this sends a message that you were not well prepared.



Prepare for emergencies!!!



Grilling session

- ▶ When the question is being asked, listen to it but try also to assess why it is being asked. Does the questioner genuinely want information or he/she just trying to be smart?
- ▶ Always repeat a question from the floor to ensure everyone got it, especially your self.
- ▶ Don't loose your cool or respond defensively.
- ▶ When asked an irrelevant question...
- ▶ Offer to be available after the presentation



Questions?