



FAKULTÄT FÜR  
WIRTSCHAFTSWISSENSCHAFT

# Guidelines on holding a scientific presentation

Chair in E-Business

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# Guidelines on holding a scientific presentation

1. Basics
2. Design
3. Content
4. Visual elements
5. Equipment
6. During the presentation
7. Summary

# 1. Basics (I)

- audience
  - the audience determines the content and the pace of the presentation
  - avoid stressing known facts or definitions
- time management
  - the time frame you are assigned is inclusive of the time for discussions
  - adapt the number of slides and the content to the time you have
  - focus on important aspects instead of explaining many aspects superficially

## 1. Basics (II)

- structure
  - should be analogous to the written paper
  - only present the most important aspects, not every detail
- headlines
  - short, precise und analogous to the written paper
- phrasing
  - few, short bullet points

# 1. Basics (III)

- literature
  - indicate your sources in short form:

## Example 1 – direct (literal) citation:

„Employment of economists is projected to grow 14 percent from 2012 to 2022 [...]“ (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2014)

## Example 2 – indirect (corresponding) citation:

Applicants with a bachelor’s degree in economics will face very strong competition for jobs in the US. (See Bureau of Labor Statistics 2014)

- prepare a bibliography<sup>1</sup> including all sources mentioned in the presentation
- show and discuss the list of references only if your are asked to

<sup>1</sup>See “Guidelines for academic paper writing“.

## 2. Design

- use subtle and/or matching colors
- make sure the contrast between font and background color is high
- the slide master should take up no more than 20 percent of the slide
- header and footer including:
  - slide number
  - title of your presentation
  - your name
  - date

### 3. Content

- stand-alone slides
- asides only if they are necessary to follow the presentation
- common thread in all the slides
- short text blocks or bullet points
- don't forget to spell check
- clarity:
  - slides are legible from everywhere in the audience
  - font is easy to read
  - emphasize consistently and sparsely (**bold**, *italic*, underlined or colored)
- try to use visual elements to convey the content

## 4. Visual elements (I)

- use a consistent color scheme for visualizations
- do not vary the colors and symbols that correspond to one issues
- do not overload the visualizations
- do not forget to label the diagrams
- use a reasonable scale (e.g. in labeling the axes)
- redesign visualizations of poor quality
- indicate your sources (see page 5)





## 4. Visual elements (II) - Illustrations

- illustrations are numbered consecutively
- the title stands below the illustration
- indicate the source below the title
  - unaltered original illustrations  
e.g.: Source: Statistisches Bundesamt (2014).
  - modified illustrations  
e.g.: Source: See Statistisches Bundesamt (2014).
  - mark your own illustrations  
e.g.: Source: Own illustration.

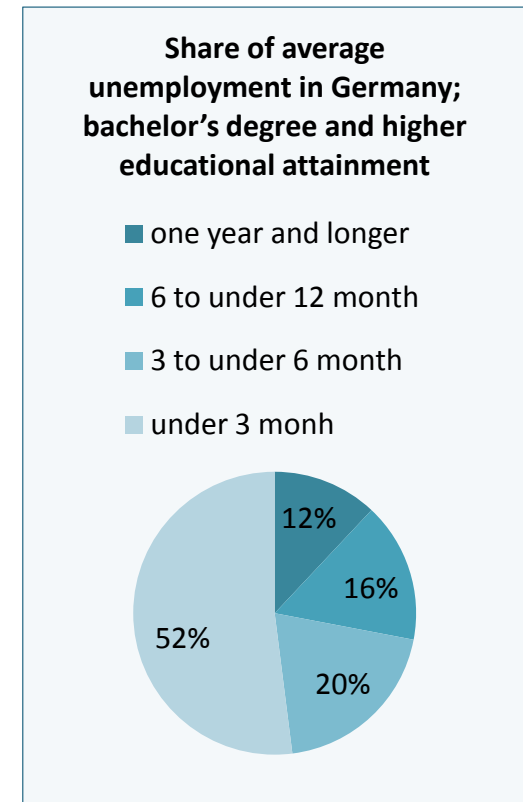


Figure 1: Duration of unemployment for higher education

Source: See Agentur für Arbeit (2014), p. 21.

## 4. Visual elements (III) – Tables

- tables are numbered consecutively
- the title stands before the table
- the source stands below the table

Table 1: Unemployment rate by occupation

Unemployment rate, Germany 2014	
Field of study	Unemployment rate
Medicine and dentistry	0,8
Teaching in secondary school	1,4
Computer science	1,4
Engineering	2,1
Maths, physics, statistics	2,2
Law	2,2
Psychology	2,2
Social work	2,2
Chemistry	2,2
Linguistics and literature	2,5
Academics in total	2,5
Editing, journalism and publishing	3,6
History	4,3
Biology, biochemistry, biotechnology	4,6
Advertising and marketing	5,1

Source: See Agentur für Arbeit (2014), p. 20.

## 4. Visual elements (IV) - Animations

- Sparring use
  - too many animations make it difficult to leaf through the slides and they divert the audience's attention
  - if you choose to use animations after all, pick only a few appropriate effects
- uniformity
  - do not use different animation styles during your presentation



## 5. Equipment

- venue
  - check availability of chalk/board marker before you start
  - clean the blackboard/whiteboard before you start
- technical aids
  - if you are using sound or video, ask whether the necessary computer program/technology is available
  - consider software compatibility and bring a PDF version of your presentation

## 6. During the presentation (I) – Appearance

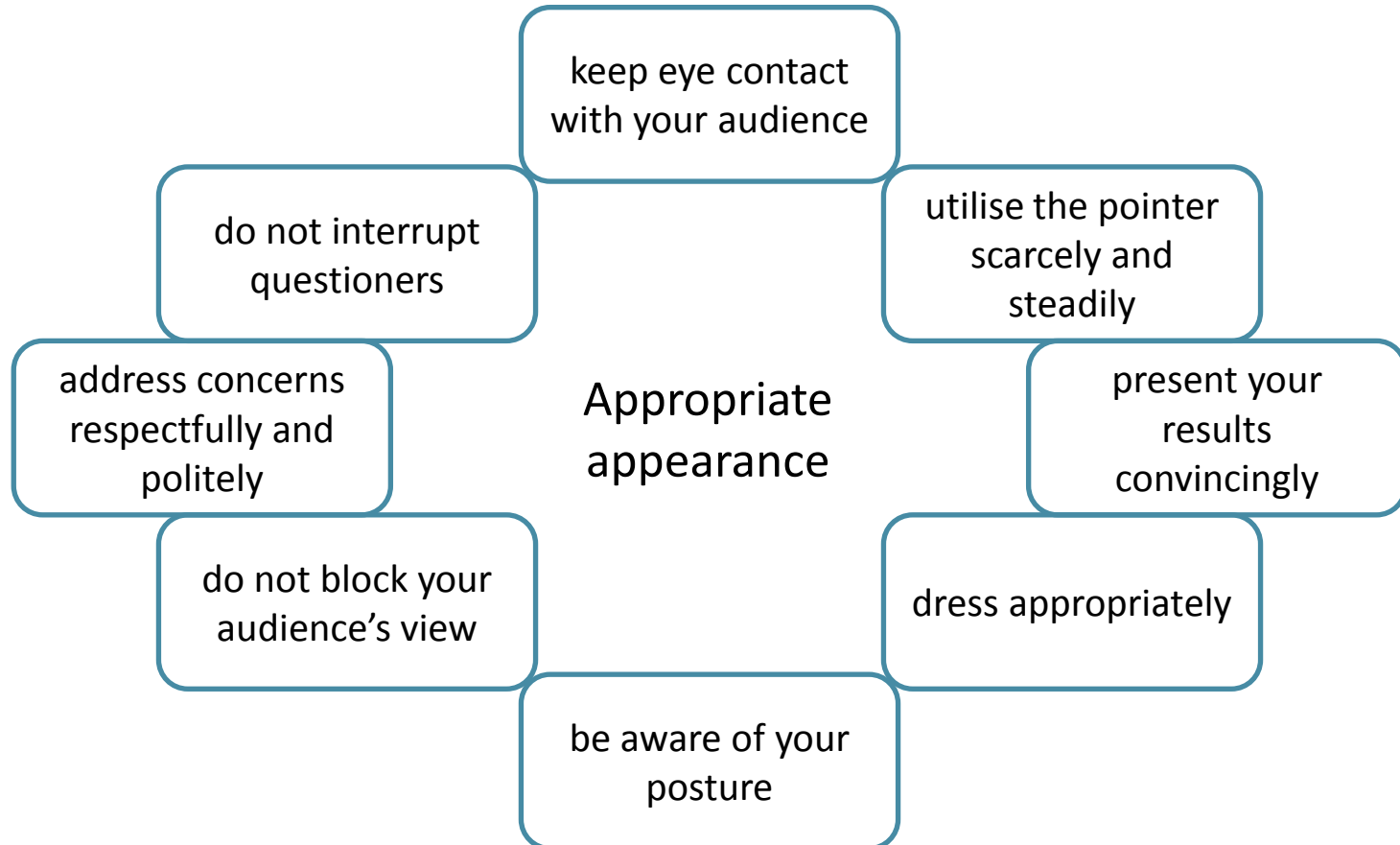


Figure 2: Appropriate appearance in scientific presentations  
Source: Own illustration.

## 6. During the presentation (II) – Delivery

- introduce yourself before you start (e.g. name, study program, institution)
- clarify dealing with questions (during or after the presentation)
- make listeners aware if a handout is available
- speak loudly and clearly
- emphasize important aspects
- use breaks and do not speak too quickly
- do not use colloquial language
- avoid fillers and slang
- using short sentences facilitates active listening and understanding
- try to avoid using notes
- practice before you actually hold your presentation

## 6. During the presentation (III) – Discussion

- mark the end of the presentation, e.g. with a thank you slide
- be prepared for questions and comments
- start the discussion
  - include enough time for discussing
  - prepare back up slides if there is material that you do not cover in your presentation that could, however, raise questions
  - introduce the discussion with the help of a slide, that includes your main results in summarized form
  - consider asking questions to encourage a discussion

## 7. Summary

### Checklist:

- keep to a common thread both in content and visualizations
- check your spelling and grammar
- prepare a handout (if necessary)
- make sure your sources and bibliography are complete and correct
- use a consistent layout
- use visual elements if appropriate
- prepare the discussion
- make sure you have the equipment necessary to hold your presentation
- practicing your talk improves your appearance, performance and orientation within the presentation



## Bibliography

Agentur für Arbeit (2014). Gute Bildung - gute Chancen - Der Arbeitsmarkt für Akademikerinnen und Akademiker in Deutschland (Überblick über alle großen Berufsgruppen), [http://statistik.arbeitsagentur.de/Statischer-Content/Arbeitsmarktberichte/Akademiker/generische Publikationen/Broschuere-Akademiker-2013.pdf](http://statistik.arbeitsagentur.de/Statischer-Content/Arbeitsmarktberichte/Akademiker/generische-Publikationen/Broschuere-Akademiker-2013.pdf), 11/20/2014.

Bureau of labor statistics (2014). Occupational outlook handbook. <http://www.bls.gov/ooh/life-physical-and-social-science/economists.htm#tab-6>, 12/09/2014.

Here are some examples on how not to design your presentation:



## 2. Main part

- **The main part should be structured usefully. You should limit the structure of your seminar thesis or your bachelor thesis: Not more than five chapters.**

### *Content*

- *1. Introduction*
- *2. Main part*
- *3. Summary*

*A new chapter should start on a new page.*

# 1. Conception and structure of a scientific work

## • visualizations

- serve as a summary or for clarification
- label concisely
- do not overload
- try creating your own illustration
- aim for an excellent image quality



## 1.2 Bullwhip effect

The bullwhip effect is an observed phenomenon in forecast-driven distribution channels. It refers to a trend of larger and larger swings in inventory in response to changes in customer demand, as one looks at firms further back in the supply chain for a product. The concept first appeared in Jay Forrester's *Industrial Dynamics* (1961) and thus it is also known as the **Forrester effect**. Since the oscillating demand magnification upstream of a supply chain is reminiscent of a cracking whip, it became known as the bullwhip effect.

Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bullwhip\\_effect](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bullwhip_effect)