Platform Presentation Tips

Essential requirements

The following information is provided to help platform presenters prepare and deliver their presentation.

Platform presentation sessions provide oral accounts of innovation in research, education and practice. The presentations in each session are on related topics. Sessions will be up to 1.5 hours.

There are three types of platform presentation:

- **Classic**: eight platform presentations lasting eight minutes each followed by three minutes for questions.

- **Rapid five**: a session of 10 presentations each delivering key messages using no more than <u>five slides in five minutes</u> (5 x 5) in two groups each followed by 15 minutes open discussion of the findings with individual authors.

- **State of the art**: 12 minute presentations from a small number of the highest quality abstracts that are likely to influence practice, followed by 18 minutes of moderated discussion and a summary by a leader in the field.

Most presentations are a mix of verbal and visual communication. A fixed microphone, lectern and data projector for Microsoft PowerPoint presentations will be available to all presenters. Presentations will be projected at 16:9 aspect ratio.

There is no internet access provided for presenters in session rooms.

Tips on preparation, preparing visual aids and delivery are provided below, along with guidance on the different formats and a final check at the end. Most tips are generic, so think about applying them to the type of presentation you are doing. We've also added some guidance on creating additional content to add value to your contribution.

Preparation

Below are some tips to help you plan and prepare your presentation, ensuring that it is accessible to international delegates.

What are your aims?

To inform, inspire, maybe to demonstrate, prove, or persuade: your choice of presentation style should match the aim of your presentation.

Who is your audience?

A WCPT audience is made up of physical therapists in the most part. Delegates to a WCPT Congress will come from all over the world. English is the language of delivery for all presentations; however, for many English is not their first language. It is important to keep your messages clear for all delegates.

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Preparing the content

There are different schools of thought about the order in which material should be presented. One recommended order for research presentations is:

- clearly set out your purpose

- explain your method

- state your results

- give your conclusions and recommendations

An alternative to engage your audience is:

- state the conclusion to provide a focus for the talk;

- develop an attention grabbing opening that spells out the benefits of listening; then

- spell out the data and arguments.

Think about the key message that you want the audience to take away and the constraints of a congress presentation. Think about the length of your presentation - 5, 8 or 12 minutes - and do not try and fit too much in to the presentation. It is better that the audience has key messages clearly delivered.

Draft the outline of the presentation and develop it in full if you prefer to. However, consider that the language and syntax used in a verbal presentation is different from that used in writing.

In preparing your draft, an active voice and concrete rather than abstract language is preferable. Give specific examples that are relevant to your audience.

Include case studies, examples, quotations, analogies, questions and interesting statistics as appropriate to the topic and the audience.

Preparing visual aids

Microsoft PowerPoint should support the verbal presentation, not replace it.

Text

Keep slides simple but interesting. The title slide should reflect the title of the abstract accepted for presentation.

- PowerPoint may provide for greater creativity and formatting, but the temptation is to have too many slides.

- Limit the amount of information on any one slide. Try to use keywords and phrases and include no more than 4-5 points per slide. This will help your audience to concentrate on what you are saying.

- The layout of the slide should have light and empty space. Too much information on one slide makes it difficult to read and attracts the attention to the slide rather than the speaker.

- The text, tables and graphics should look integrated. Words and illustrations should go together.

- Leave space between lines of text.

- Place the text in the top 2/3 of the slide so the audience at the back can view the text.

- Use different size fonts for main points and secondary points.

  - font size for headings should be no less than 38pt

  - font size for text should be no less than 24pt

- Use fonts that are easy to read, such as Arial.

- Use upper and lower case and avoid using too many style changes eg shadow, bold, italics, etc.

- Text should be left justified (with the right side ragged) as this is easier to read.

Colour

- Check if your institution has a house style that must be followed.

- Keep in mind that your audience might include people with visual impairments. Consider accessibility guidelines to make your slides easy to read (for example, see Lighthouse International: http://li129-107.members.linode.com/accessibility/design/accessible-print-design/making-text-legible/).

- Select colours with high visibility and high contrast. Note: using colours for decoration may be distracting.

- Use colours that will stand out and be easy on the eyes (dark backgrounds and light text is best).

- Limit the use of colour to 2 – 4 shades/colours.

Images, graphs and charts

- Use only appropriate graphs, charts and images that closely follow or complement the findings/concept expressed in each slide.

- Diagrams, graphs and charts are a good visual aid; they also tend to hold interest better than text. Don't overcrowd your slides, and label them fully.

- Graphics should tend toward the horizontal, greater in width than height, ideally 50 percent wider than tall.

- Use colours to distinguish different data groups in graphs and avoid using patterns or open bars in histograms.

- Lines in data graphics should be thin.

- Labels should be placed on the graphics itself, no legend is usually required.

- Remove all non-essential information from graphs and tables.

- Focus on principal results.

- Illustrate your point by verbally discussing the graph or chart.

Sound and animation

- If you elect to use animation use MPEG4 for video files and MP3 for audio files.

- Use sounds and animation only if they help convey, complement, or enhance the message. They can be distracting and can make your presentation less effective.

- Use animation only to make a point and not to make your presentation more interesting – use content and delivery style to do that.

- Insert video files using the <<insert>> function within PowerPoint and ensure they are embedded in the presentation.

Transitions

- Use transitions to help your presentation make more of an impact by varying the way one slide replaces another.

- Keep transitions to a minimum; too much movement will distract your audience.

- Use the same transition or a variation of the transition.

Content

- The title of the presentation should be the same as on your abstract.

- Consider using the headings given in the guidance for abstracts. However, many presenters simplify this to introduction, purpose, participants, methods/materials, results, discussion/conclusions and recommendations /implications (for practice, research, education, management and/or policy).

- References should be included, if used, but try to keep them to a minimum.

- Have an acknowledgments slide where you acknowledge contributors and funding organisations.

- Ethics approval if appropriate should also be mentioned and the appropriate committee/body acknowledged.

- Provide information about where/how you can be contacted on the final slide.

Delivery

Speaking at an event such as a world congress is never easy for even the most experienced public speaker, but there are things that you can do to prepare.

Preparation

- Consider a test run in front of colleagues or friends, which allows you to make mistakes when they do not count, allowing time to make corrections to content or in style before the actual presentation Think about the language you choose.

- Consider the pace of delivery; avoid speaking too quickly, whether you are a native English speaker or not, and try to avoid reading your paper.

- Consider the tone of your voice and verbal expressions.

- Consider non-verbal communication (body language, facial expression and gestures).

- Consider where visual aids enhance, but not replace your verbal presentation.

In advance

Make sure you have uploaded your presentation according to the instructions you will be sent by the WCPT Secretariat. On-site in the Speaker Service Centre:

- Make a final check of the presentation.

- Check you are comfortable with the presentation equipment and how it works.

On the day

- Meet with your chair and other presenters in the presentation room you have been assigned to 15 minutes before the start time of your session. Details will be provided in your programme notification notice.

As soon as you stand up, you should be aiming to establish a rapport with your audience. Make sure that you face your audience and speak confidently and clearly. Your performance in the first few moments will set the tone.

The focus should be on the audience and the messages you want them to take away at the end of the session. If you concentrate on the audience, you will observe them and notice if they are following all your points so that you can address any problems as they arise. It will also take the pressure off you as the centre of attention.

Maintain eye contact with people in all parts of the room. Eye contact enables you to check whether the audience is following your talk.

Remember to **keep to time**. There will be an indicator on the presentation screen in the room to show you the time remaining and a system to alert you when you are nearing the end of your time. The session chair will have been instructed to stop you if you are going over time in order to keep all sessions to time, or reduce question time.

Taking questions

There will be time for questions following the presentation.

- Based on the feedback from a practice session, think about short succinct answers to the most likely questions. Put the questions on cards and perfect the answers on the back of the cards.

- Listen actively to the question; it helps to look directly at the questioner and, if necessary, ask for the question to be repeated or clarified. Often the second time the question is more concise and much clearer.

- Repeating the question in your own words gives you the opportunity to establish that you have heard and understood the question as intended as well as giving yourself time to think of the reply. You may make the question less aggressive, narrower or give a broader focus.

- Pause before you respond, even if you know the answer. Blurting out a response without thinking it through may make you look insecure and anxious. A thoughtful pause, especially if you feel under pressure, reminds you to slow down and collect yourself and your thoughts.

Different formats

State of the Art platform presentations

Up to six presenters will each present their work in 12 minutes followed by a moderated panel discussion facilitated by the chair assigned to the session. This may result in individual questions for specific presenters or questions that several presenters can address.

Rapid five presentations

This may be a format that you aren't used to. Just because there is less time to present doesn't mean your work is of less importance. The format allows for more interactions between presenters and delegates and they have proved popular with previous WCPT Congress attendees and presenters. Using five slides in five minutes can be a challenge so focus on your key messages that will stimulate further discussion when delegates move around the room to talk to you. You are allowed a title and thank you slide in addition to the five slides. The chair will introduce the first five speakers in turn and after the first group has presented you will move to a designated numbered location in the room. There is then 15 minutes for delegates to move around the room and question the different presenters. The chair will then reconvene everyone for the second part of the session with another set of five speakers presenting followed by 15 minutes of individual discussion with the presenters.

This model breaks up the session into two parts and helps the delegates to stay focused on the presentations and messages conveyed.

Classic platform presentations

These follow a familiar format with each presenter having eight minutes to present followed by three minutes for questions and a changeover of presenter.

Final check

Here are some questions to help you check the final presentation.

- Is the message clear?
- Do the key points stand out?
- Is there a good balance between verbal presentation and visual aids?
- Is the sequence of your talk clear?
- Is the visual material appropriate?
- Do the colours you've chosen work together and are they accessible from the back of the room?

Generate additional content to add value to your presentation

You will have a dedicated time to present but with competing programming on offer not everyone who wants to get to your talk will make it. Consider pre-recording a short presentation to accompany your abstract. We advise that this is no longer than two minutes. This could:

- highlight the key findings, implications for practice and lessons learned;
- provide a language translation of the presentation content for example in your native language eg French, Spanish, Japanese; or
- include a combination of the above.

Alternatively, you could simply record an audio commentary.

If you upload this to a website, you can then direct people to it; check with your workplace if there is an option to do this via your institution's/facility's website. Think about a dedicated webpage that could include:

- your presentation
- a translation of your presentation in any additional languages you can provide
- a pre-recorded presentation
- a handout
- a recorded message that you make at the congress; a recording onsite at the congress will give you the opportunity to reflect on questions that have come up.

Take a look at this example of a video recorded onsite at the ER-WCPT conference in Liverpool in 2016 by Ann Green: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y6Sn76HcA6s&feature=youtu.be

When you upload your presentation for the congress proceedings there will be the option to add a URL to direct readers to this additional content.

Lastly, don't forget to enjoy the experience and follow up on any contacts after the event.

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