

TOP 10

Tips for Cultivating Your Scientific Presentation Skills

During the course of a scientific career, you will be called on many times to present on a scientific topic or to share your latest research findings.

Presenting research, whether in person at a poster, a presentation, or by an online format, is one of the primary ways scientists communicate with each other and spread new findings. How can you give effective presentations that engage your audience and shine a light on your research? Follow these ten tips to start on the pathway to becoming a professional presenter.

1

Focus on your audience.

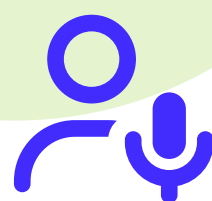
Before you start to prepare your presentation, know your expected audience composition, consider their knowledge of the topic, and think about their expectations.



2

Tell a story.

Avoid dumping your data and findings in the audience's lap. Craft the story of your research – why it is important, what your findings are, and how your findings might impact the next research steps.



3

Keep your visuals streamlined.

Don't overload slides or posters with information and carefully select figures, designs, and graphs that support your story, helping your audience quickly focus.



4

Don't read directly from the slides or poster.

Make sure that what you say gives even more insight to your audience than the visuals. Graphics should supplement the oral talk.



5

Keep to the designated time.

For posters, prepare a 2-minute elevator pitch. For presentations, time yourself during practice sessions.



6

Practice, practice, practice.

Practice alone and then with an audience of your colleagues, and rehearse as often as your need to feel comfortable with the presentation.



7

Acknowledge contributors.

Think carefully about all the people who contributed to your work, and make sure they are listed and properly acknowledged.



8

Have a plan for handling questions.

Have colleagues and friends share their thoughts and develop a strategy for answering questions.



10

Dress for success.

Make sure you wear professional attire that represents the image you want to portray to your audience.



9

Be well rested, healthy, and relaxed.

Learn and practice relaxation tips such as taking several deep breaths before starting.

