



Academic conferences are full of presentations! At SLLS the average delegate will attend over 30 presentations during the course of the conference, so it is important to try and make your presentation stand out. However, many people find presenting at conferences a nerve-wracking experience, even if they have been doing it for years!

So here are some tips and resources about making your presentation stand out and keeping the nerves to a minimum:

- **Keep to your time limit!** At SLLS, all sessions last 1.5 hrs, which equal 15 minutes per presentation, with time for discussion. The chair may allow you more time on the day but you should ensure that you finish your presentation within 15 minutes. On the day, make sure you keep an eye on the chair of the session who will let you know when you have 5 minutes and 2 minutes remaining.
- **The audience wants to hear about your research.** There are three things you must do: **Tell them what you're going to tell them. Tell them. Tell them what you've told them.** Don't skip any of these steps!
- **Leave time for questions.** It is tempting to give a longer presentation and try to skip the questions. SLLS is a friendly conference and your audience will have expertise in longitudinal research that could really help your paper. People will be asking questions because they are interested in what you have presented so don't be scared. If you do get a tricky question, it is ok to say, "Thank-you, I hadn't thought about that." or "That's really useful to bring up– could we perhaps a quick chat about it after the talk?"
- **Use PowerPoint carefully.** Don't fill your slides with too much text. Make your font big enough. Will people at the back of the room be able to read your tables? If they can't, then don't include them. Check for typos. Too much colour on your slides or too many transition effects can be distracting.
- **Practice. Practice. Practice.** If you practice your presentation before you deliver it then this will help you keep to time, remember the order of your slides and help the presentation flow. You don't have to write a script or know the exact order of words you will say for each slide, but you do need to practice!
- **Smile when you start.** Make eye contact with your audience and try to speak slowly and clearly. Remember, no-one thinks you look as nervous as you might feel!

Further resources:

- <https://getlifephd.blogspot.com/2011/04/how-to-give-fabulous-academic.html> a blog which gives some simple tips for academic conferences.
- <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2015/02/20/how-to-win-at-academic-presentations/> a blog about how to lift your presentation from good to great.

PowerPoint mistakes and how to avoid them:

- <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/careers-intelligence-how-avoid-death-powerpoint>
- <https://thevisualcommunicationguy.com/2013/09/24/top-12-most-annoying-powerpoint-presentation-mistakes/>