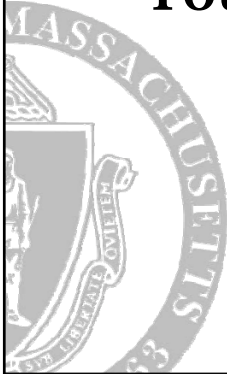


Tips and Tricks for Your MDR Presentation



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MDR Presentation

- MDR is important component of SDP
 - Presentation has major impact on your grade
 - Poor presentation kills the best projects
- Presentations are important
 - Teaches you how to explain your project to non-experts
 - Present in an engaging manner
 - You will need these skills for your interview and job
- Oral communication is as important as technical knowledge
- Everybody can give a good presentation
 - Requires lots of preparation and care

Presentation Skills

- Presentations are different from written reports
 - Many non-technical issues are important
 - Lots of etiquette

- Common problems can be avoided easily
 - Not enough introduction
 - Too much detail
 - Poor, confusing structure of talk

- Today: how to prepare and deliver a good presentation

Outline

- Introduction
- **MDR Presentation Goals**
- Preparing your Presentation
 - Presentation Structure
 - Timing
 - Slides
 - Delivery
 - Questions
- Dos and Don'ts
- Practice

MDR Goals

- Convince the MDR panel that:
 - You have a good idea
 - You have clearly specified your project
 - You have made progress in implementing your project

- What are the main evaluation criteria?
 - Good explanation of your project
 - Highlighting of the major challenges and solutions
 - Progress you have made
 - Quality of technical details
 - Quality of your presentation
 - Professional appearance

- All this happens during 20 minutes

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Structure of Presentation

- Audience wants to understand
 - What is your project about?
 - Why is this an interesting problem?
 - What are the major challenges and how do you solve them?
 - How are you progressing?
 - Any other interesting details (e.g., budget, unique technologies)
- You need to present in layers
 - Everybody needs to understand the key points. Everybody.
 - You should show some technical detail to get credibility
- This is not a homework problem
 - The solution is not everything
 - You are in charge of explaining everything
 - You need to put your work into context

Structure of Presentation

- Start with a simple scenario/example/figure
- Present in a top-down/hierarchical style
 - Focus on main aspects of your project
 - Explain details in the context of each aspect
 - Use clear transitions to keep audience on track
- Transitions are very, very important
 - Allows you to summarize what has been said
 - Lets you give scope for the next slide
 - Transition is possibly single most important part of any slide
- Adjust depth of explanation to your audience
 - Audience is well-versed in engineering
 - Don't assume audience knows any details of you project
 - Be ready to explain everything if necessary

Timing

- Do not go over time.
 - Plan 1-2 minutes per slide
- Practice, practice, practice
 - Practice looking at watch
 - Be aware what time talk should finish
- Prepare for 20% less time than you have
 - Leaves some room for questions, etc.
- Sometimes nervousness causes you to talk faster
 - Don't count on it ☺
- If you are running out of time
 - Don't talk faster (well, maybe a bit)
 - Leave out material
 - If you are completely out of time: skip to end and finish up

Slides

- PowerPoint with projection
- Use large fonts
 - Title: 36-48 point font
 - Text: 18-24 point font
- Use consistent formatting
 - Same font for same type of bullets
 - Limited number of fonts, color, etc.
- Grammar
 - Pay close attention to spelling and grammar
 - Common errors:
 - It's vs. its; there vs. their vs. they're; a vs. an; etc.

Delivery

- Speak SLOWLY and clearly
 - If you're nervous, you'll speak incredibly fast
 - Try to speak normal speed
 - It's ok to take a breath and have a few seconds of pause
- Don't read from notes
 - Think about what you need to say
 - Say how it feels natural
 - The shorter the sentences, the easier things get
- Stay cool
 - Easier said than done
 - Everybody is supportive and wants you to succeed
- You are the expert!
 - The audience knows a lot, but you know your project best

Delivery

- Keep eye contact with audience
 - Face audience
 - Ensure setup of laptop/projector allows you to face audience
 - If you prefer, look at base of nose between eyes
- Appearance
 - Dress nicely (business casual)
 - Don't overdo it
 - Show respect
- Keep your hands in front of you
 - Hold pen/pointer/notes in hand if you prefer
 - Don't fidget with stuff
- Practice first and last sentence of presentation

Questions

- Questions and answers at the end of presentation
 - Important part of your presentation
- Make sure you understand the question
 - If not, ask to have it rephrased
- Answer the question down to the point
 - Don't ramble (if something is missing, you'll get a follow-up anyway)
 - Let team members answer question in their area of expertise
- If suitable go back to a previous slide
 - Know your keyboard shortcuts, so it doesn't take too long
- If you don't know, say so. Do not make something up.
 - It's ok to think about it for a few seconds

Teamwork

- SDP presentations are unusual due to teamwork
 - Everybody is expected to present
- Introduce everybody at the beginning
 - State names clearly
 - Make sure it is obvious who you are talking about
- Switch speakers as little as possible
 - Everybody should present a major part of the project
- Have good transitions between speakers

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Dos and Don'ts

- Do test the equipment
 - Practice with the same equipment as you will use for presentation
 - Know the maximum resolution of projector
 - Be familiar with keyboard shortcuts for PowerPoint
 - Be careful with last-minute changes
- Do use a pointer
 - Preferably use "stick"
 - Laser enhances your trembling and can make audience dizzy
 - DO NOT POINT LASER AT AUDIENCE. EVER.
- Do not use mouse pointer as pointer. Ever.
 - Especially when enabling Trackpad for double-tap = click

Dos and Don'ts

- Do use illustrations and graphs
 - Be careful with clip-art
 - Use illustrations only if directly related to your project
 - Note that everybody has seen every MS clipart that there is
 - Stay professional
 - Do not animate the appearance of text (no fly-in etc.)
 - Do not use any sound effects. Ever.
- Don't write full sentences
 - Nobody will read full text
 - Should be detailed enough to “save” you when you blank
- Don't use unnecessary abbreviations
 - This is not Instant Messenger
 - Don't use '4', 'u', 'r' etc. Ever.

Dos and Don'ts

- Don't do anything of the following:
 - Vulgar and inappropriate humor
 - Swearing and blasphemy
 - Tell weak jokes and laugh out loud at them
 - Appear to be bored or otherwise showing disrespect
 - Talk longer than your allotted time
- Do be subtle
 - All “presentation tricks” should be smooth and non-obvious

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Practice

- Practice “30-second elevator pitch”
- Think on how you explain to a non-expert
 - What are you doing
 - Why is it interesting
 - What is the challenge
 - How do you solve it
 - The current status and outlook for the project

Preparing your MDR Presentation

- Start today. Really.
 - Develop structure
 - Decide on content
 - Make some slides
 - Practice, identify problems, fix, repeat.

- You should have your final version three days before the presentation
 - Make sure everyone on the team has practiced
 - Gives you confidence

- Always be critical and see how you can improve

Sources

- “How to Give a Presentation”
 - http://www.kevinboone.com/howto_presentation.html

- “Oral Presentation Advice”
 - <http://www.cs.wisc.edu/~markhill/conference-talk.html>

- “How to Give a Bad Talk”
 - <http://www.cs.wisc.edu/~markhill/conference-talk.html#badtalk>