



## HINTS and TIPS FOR RAPID FIRE PRESENTATIONS from Prof Charles McGhee

### **RAPID FIRE PRESENTATIONS**

Rapid Fire presentations are just that! You have exactly five minutes to present your paper followed by two minutes for discussion. Illustrative slides will be limited to a maximum of **five** per paper (including title slide **which must declare all affiliations and sponsorships**).

There will be two podia so that there is no time wasted in changing over from one speaker to the next.

### **The time limit will be strictly enforced by the Chairperson(s).**

#### **1. General Considerations**

The oral presentation should highlight the key features of the written paper. This will motivate the audience to read your published work. Few listeners will remember detailed statistics but many will retain a few key statistics that summarise your work.

#### **2. The Audience**

Your audience at the RANZCO Annual Scientific Congress will be composed of well-informed ophthalmologists and trainees. Your presentation should provide something of value to the generalist as well as to the expert.

#### **3. Pre-Meeting Preparation**

The key to a successful scientific talk is adequate preparation. Plan your presentation well in advance. Once the initial written draft is completed the oral presentation and the written paper/Powerpoint presentation should proceed concurrently.

#### **4. Timing for paper presentations**

Only five minutes is allocated for your paper presentation followed by two minutes for questions and discussion.

Remember, if no questions are forthcoming the Chairperson may ask you to discuss the key elements, or the ramifications, of your work – you might wish to prepare in advance some succinct answers/discussion points.

## **5. Preparation of Visual Material- general principles**

Remember that the audience can only assimilate a limited amount of material in such a short presentation. Therefore utilise the minimum number of visual images necessary to convey your message and limit the number of slides to five, including your introductory slide.

Visual images improve a presentation only if they are relevant, concise and easily visible/understood. Avoid placing the text of your presentation on images, and key images should only be used to document and add emphasis to important points. Overall it is best to keep visual image data simple.

In a rapid fire presentation generally limit the information on each slide to a single idea or concept.

## **6. PowerPoint Presentations**

Produce computer generated PowerPoint images in a standard horizontal format.

Prepare a duplicate slide or image for emphasis if you need to refer to the same image at different times during your presentation rather than referring the audience back to earlier material e.g. in drawing conclusions or showing before and after images.

Font size should generally be 18 or greater (preferably at least 20 – 24 for main text and 30 – 36 for titles) with usually no more than six to eight words per line and only six to eight lines per slide (*NB the six by six rule – up to six words per line and up to six lines of text per slide approaches the ideal for ease of audience interpretation*).

If you use graphs or other illustrations, simplify them and use a limited number of captions. Ensure that numeric values on axes are at least 12 pitch font size and preferably greater.

Check that the information on the slide can be comfortably read by the audience by either projecting your PowerPoint presentation in advance, or by reading your presentation on a 15 -17 inch computer screen from a distance of 2 to 3 metres.

Never use black print on a red background or red on blue. Green and red combinations of text and background should obviously be avoided. Use additional colours for emphasis only. "Rainbow" slides are distracting.

For best visibility, type colour should be white or yellow on a dark background.

Use illustrations only if they enhance your presentation or clarify an idea.

Remember that computer generated imaging is an aid to your oral presentation and should not become the main source of interest. Do not complicate your visual presentation with too many "special effects" to be distracting.

Generally if you wish to use videos these should be incorporated into your PowerPoint presentation for single screen projection.

## **7. Preparing the rapid fire presentation script**

Though reading a paper from a prepared text may be the easiest method of delivery it does not always produce a convincing presentation. Many feel that a talk is more effective without the aid of a written text. But when a paper is memorised, a presentation can sound stilted. The use of a script is therefore a personal decision. However, when a presentation is 7 minutes or less a script may be desirable and such a script is absolutely essential for a 5 minute rapid fire presentation, for reasons listed below:

1. It ensures that all important points are included
2. It results in the development and use of short, simple sentences

3. It ensures that the visual images on the screen match the spoken presentation
4. It allows a detailed rehearsal with voice emphasis on key words
5. It permits advance timing of the talk to produce a well edited/paced presentation.

A script is not finalised until it is read aloud three or more times. This process will allow you to edit phrases or words that may read well silently but are awkward in speech. After the script has been edited, it is best to use legible large print.

### **8. Presentation Rehearsal – PowerPoint tools**

Once the script has been completed and the PowerPoint presentation prepared, click on “*Slide Show*” on the top bar of PowerPoint and a drop-down menu will appear from which you can select “*rehearse timing*”. This facility will enable you to run your presentation and the program will automatically time the whole session at the same time. This provides an overall time for your presentation and times each individual “slide” such that you can refine the exact timing of the presentation.

The presentation must take the exact time provided in the program. Chairs of each session have strict instructions to switch off microphones when you have reached the allotted time for your presentation.

Rehearsing before an audience of colleagues/friends is both valuable and necessary. It helps you to develop a smooth delivery and check content and organization with colleagues. It also allows you to pace the presentation and to become familiar with your slide sequence and timing.

### **9. Presentation Delivery**

When presenting, be sure to speak directly into the microphone so the attendees can hear all your comments. Speak to the audience, not to the projection screens.

### **10. On Site Preparation**

#### **A. Audio Visual Material**

Please refer to the AV material information in the Rapid Fire Presenter Handbook

#### **B. Presenter Check-In**

It is advisable to meet with your Chairperson about 10 minutes beforehand and it is imperative that you check in with the Chairperson of the session so that you are confirmed as present. If there is more than one lectern, the Chairperson will tell you which one to use.

#### **C. The Congress Lectern**

If you are unfamiliar with speaking at congresses it is helpful to stand at the lectern prior to the session to familiarise yourself with the lectern and microphone heights, slide control button, laser pointer and warning light system. This ritual may also allay any apprehension.

A prompting system will be advised by the Chair Person to remind you of the time left for your 5 minute presentation.

The PowerPoint presentation will be operated by remote control on the lectern.

If adjusted appropriately prior to commencement there should be no need to lean into the microphone or to adjust it during the presentation.

#### ***D. Pointer Use***

The pointer should aid the presentation, not be a distraction. Some speakers forgetting to release the switch on the laser pointer, splash a beam throughout the stage in a wild display. If there are any small nervous tremors in a speaker's hand, they are amplified in the pointer's spot on the screen.

If there is a script, it should clearly indicate where the pointer is needed. It is best used sparingly, spotting only key points by circling or underlining these with the laser. Often it is better to insert arrows/circles into your PowerPoint presentation – these are larger, more easily seen and always point to the target of interest.

#### ***E. Policies Regarding Presentation***

Speakers at the Congress should not make remarks that could be interpreted as being prejudicial against a group or an individual on the basis of race, colour, sex, sexual orientation, age, religious creed, national origin, ancestry, martial status, physical handicap or medical condition.

#### ***F. Disclosure of Financial Interest***

It is the College policy that financial interest should not restrict scientific presentation or publication, provided that appropriate disclosure of such interests is made. However, even with disclosure, presentations should not promote the use of a commercial product.

If the author(s) have a financial interest in the subject matter of the presentation it will need to be projected on their introductory slide at the beginning of their presentation.

Such financial interest may include: holding patent rights; receiving proceeds from the sale of devices or drugs; being a paid consultant to a company; owning shares in a company; holding a paid position in a company; or obtaining financial support from a company for your study.