CSE/ISE300 Communications S14

- Location: Room 2205 Computer Science, 2nd floor, Multimedia Lab
- Time: Tue/Thur 5:30-6:50PM
- Instructor: Professor Larry Wittie
- Office/Lab: Room 1308 Computer Science, 1st floor, Network Lab
- Office Hours: 4:10-5:25+7-7:15 pm Tu/Th, if door is ajar, or by appointment
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CSE/ISE 300

The Next Paper Is a Two-Page Memo2

English essay Memo2 is due Thurs., 13 March 2014 as one printed copy in class & a .doc file emailed to larry.wittie@stonybrook.edu

Subject: 300 memo2 New Computer.

Put a title, your name and the paper’s last print date centered above the left-edge start of your “1.5- to 1.7-page” memo. Use 1.5 lines spacing. Use lines 6 inches long with 30 lines per page of text. Make the memo text fill 45 to 51 lines (1.5 to 1.7 pages, 650 to 800 words). Address your boss politely. Number your two pages.

Assume the reader is your computer-savvy, but non-expert boss in a small company with 50 or fewer employees. The boss has announced that the firm will buy new computers for some employees, those most needing one for their jobs. Justify why the firm will benefit from buying you (or your team) new computer(s). Be specific on why you need a new machine, what computer model with what features, and what price from what source. After about 48 lines of text, list all references (web URLs) used for your memo.
Write a technical essay in English on the topic:
Why I Need a New Computer

Explain why you need a new computer, what type, and how it will increase your value to the firm. (In doing so, let me know what is the business of your company, but in a way that will not bore your boss, who knows about the business, but not why you need a new machine for your own job.) Describe the key features of the new computer(s) and why they are critical. Tell precisely what brand, model, vendor, and cost. (List exact web pages for details in a References section after the memo text and ending.) Convince your boss to spend some money. (The title, your name, the memo salutation, and final References list do not count in the 1.5 to 1.7 pages. Just memo paragraphs count as text; feature lists, quoted material, and images do not.) This memo will be the basis for your 8 minute oral presentation.
CSE/I SE 300
New Computer Talks

Derive your talk from your memo2 submission, but with visual aids, 4 to 10 slides. Explain why you need a new computer, its type, and how it will increase your value to the firm. (In doing so, let me know what is your job and your company’s business, but in a way that will not bore your boss, who knows what business, but not why you need a new machine for your own job.) Describe the key technical features of your new computer; tell why each one is critical for you to do your job more efficiently. Precisely specify the computer brand, model, cost, and vendor. Convince your boss to spend a little money.

On a References slide after the conclusions slide of your talk, list all web and printed references used for your talk, including the precise URLs of all websites which gave you details about your old computer and your desired new computer.
Talks on Why I Need a New Work Computer begin in class Thursday, 27 March 2014.

Assume the reader is your computer-savvy, but non-expert boss in a company with 50 or fewer employees. The boss has announced that the firm will buy new computers for some employees, those most needing new ones for their jobs. Justify why the firm will benefit from buying you (or your team) new computer(s). Be clear why you need a new machine, what computer model with what features, and what total price from what source. Address your boss politely. Avoid subtle insults such as “As you probably know,”.

Aim for a 7-minute (6-8 min.) talk to your boss and colleagues in your company. Persuasively request a new computer for your work. Bring your own laptop (Mac or PC with VGA capability) or bring your power point slides for a PC on a USB stick or CD.
CSE/ISE 300
Talks: 27 Mar. & 1, 8, 15 Apr. on 2-pg Memo2

Why I Need a New Work Computer

Plan to give a 6- to 8-minute talk based on your Memo2 paper. Prepare 4 to 10 powerpoint slides.

If you would like to give your talk on a specific date, send email to larry.wittie@stonybrook.edu with the Subject: 300 talk day. I will pick talk dates for all class members who do not send email.

The Thursday and Tuesday talk dates are:
-Day 1: 27 March Thurs. 2 speakers
-Day 2: 1 April Tues. 7 speakers
-Day 3: 8 April Tues. 7 speakers
-Day 4: 15 April Tues. 6 speakers
CSE300/ISE300 Talk Evaluations

YOUR NAME : ________________   TODAY’S DATE : ________

1. Did the speaker speak clearly; was the speaker understandable?
2. Did the slides have the right amount of content and a conclusion?
3. Did the speaker engage the audience well, make … eye contact?
4. How well did the speaker know the material?
5. How much interest and agreement did you have with the talk?
6. Was the talk the right length? (If too long and not finished, circle 4; if finished just before time limit, circle 5.)

1. Name: ________________
2. Name: ________________

1) 1 2 3 4 5 Spoke clearly
2) 1 2 3 4 5 Good slides
3) 1 2 3 4 5 Eye contact
4) 1 2 3 4 5 Knew facts
5) 1 2 3 4 5 Interest, Agree
6) 1 2 3 4 5 Good timing

2. Name: ________________
7. Name: ________________

…
Suggested Contents of Slide 1

Title of Your Talk

Your Name

Your Title, Company Name or Department

Date of your talk

Abstract – two or three sentences

Good => 36 pt  32 pt  28 pt  24 pt  <= too small

Bold Good => 36 pt  32 pt  28 pt  24 pt  <= too small
Suggested Contents of Slides 2-4

What We Need to Buy and Why

Two paragraphs

or

One short paragraph

+  
List of 3 to 5 points

or

One short paragraph

+  
A picture of your dream machine.
Suggestions for Next-to-Last Slide

What It Costs and Where to Buy It

Vendors and costs of proposed model(s)
Total purchase price

Reference URLs
Suggested Contents of Last Slide

An Image

Concluding Paragraph
Summarizing which computer system, How it will help company’s income, and Where best to buy it, at what total cost.
Suggested Slides Are Only Hints

Many of the best talks on day 1 will use more than 4 slides. Most will have more than one image. Slides with colors may work well.

If you show 5 to 8 slides, make sure you can cover all the material without talking too fast. Very rapid speech is poorly understood and may bore listeners.

Lists in large fonts are better on slides than long paragraphs in smaller fonts.

Avoid backgrounds that hide your text.
Guidelines for Speech Preparation and Delivery

The goal of most oral presentations is quite simple: You must present a few basic points, in a fairly brief time, to an interested but usually impatient audience. Simplicity, brevity, and interest are the keys to success. If you deliver what you expect when you hear a speech, then you will give good presentations yourself.

Speech Guideline 1: Know Your Listeners
These features are common to most listeners:

- They cannot “rewind the tape” of your presentation, in contrast to the way they can skip back and forth through the text of a report.
- They are impatient after the first few minutes, particularly if they do not know where a speech is going.
- They will daydream and often need their attention brought back to the matter at hand (expect a 30-second attention span).
- They have heard so many disappointing presentations that they might not have high expectations for yours.
Speech Guideline 2: Use the Preacher’s Maxim
The well-known preacher’s maxim goes like this:

First you tell ‘em what you’re gonna tell ‘em, then you tell ‘em, and then you tell ‘em what you told ‘em.

Speech Guideline 3: Stick to a Few Main Points
Our short-term memory holds limited items. It follows that listeners are most attentive to speeches organized around a few major points. In fact, a good argument can be made for organizing information in groups of threes whenever possible. For reasons that are not totally understood, listeners seem to remember groups of three items more than they do any other size groupings—perhaps for these reasons:

- The number is simple.
- It parallels the overall three-part structure of most speeches and documents (beginning, middle, and end).
Speech Guideline 4: Put Your Outline on Cards, Paper, or Overheads

The best presentations are “extemporaneous,” meaning the speaker shows great familiarity with the material but uses notes for occasional reference. Avoid the extremes of (1) reading a speech verbatim, which many listeners consider the ultimate insult, or (2) memorizing a speech, which can make your presentation seem somewhat wooden and artificial.

Ironically, you appear more natural if you refer to notes during a presentation. Such extemporaneous speaking allows you to make last-minute changes in phrasing and emphasis that may improve delivery, rather than locking you into specific phrasing that is memorized or written out word for word.

Depending on your personal preference, you may choose to write speech notes on (1) index cards, (2) a sheet or two of paper, or (3) overhead transparencies. The main advantages and disadvantages of each are listed in Figure 4–14.
Speech Guidelines: Pfeiffer 5th Edition Text pp 131+133

Speech Guideline 5: Practice, Practice, Practice
Many speakers prepare a well-organized speech but then fail to add the essential ingredient: practice. Constant practice distinguishes superior presentations from mediocre ones. It also helps to eliminate the nervousness that most speakers feel at one time or another.

Speech Guideline 6: Speak Vigorously and Deliberately
Vigorously means with enthusiasm; deliberately means with care, attention, and appropriate emphasis on words and phrases. The importance of this guideline becomes clear when you think back to how you felt during the most recent speech you heard. At the very least, you expected the speaker to show interest in the subject and to demonstrate enthusiasm. Good information is not enough. You need to arouse the interest of the listeners.

You may wonder, “How much enthusiasm is enough?” The best way to answer this question is to hear or (preferably) watch yourself on tape. Your delivery should incorporate just enough enthusiasm so that it sounds and looks a bit unnatural to you. Few, if any, listeners ever complain about a speech being too enthusiastic or a speaker being too energetic. But many, many people complain about dull speakers who fail to show that they themselves are excited about the topic. Remember, every presentation is, in a sense, “showtime.”
Speech Guideline 7: Avoid Filler Words
Avoiding filler words presents a tremendous challenge to most speakers. When they think about what comes next or encounter a break in the speech, they may tend to fill the gap with filler words and phrases such as these:

uhhhhh . . .
ya know . . .
ookay . . .
well . . . uh . . .
like . . .
I mean . . .
umm . . .
Speech Guideline 8: Use Rhetorical Questions
Enthusiasm, of course, is your best delivery technique for capturing the attention of the audience. Another technique is the use of rhetorical questions at pivotal points in your presentation.

Rhetorical questions are those you ask to get listeners thinking about a topic, not those that you would expect them to answer out loud. They prod listeners to think about your point and set up an expectation that important information will follow. Also, they break the monotony of standard declarative sentence patterns. For example, here is a rhetorical question used by a computer salesperson in proposing a purchase:

I’ve discussed the three main advantages that a centralized word-processing center would provide your office staff. But is this an approach that you can afford at this point in the company’s growth?
Speech Guideline 9: Maintain Eye Contact

Your main goal—always—is to keep listeners interested in what you are saying. This goal requires that you maintain control, using whatever techniques you can to direct the attention of the audience. Frequent eye contact is one good strategy.

The simple truth is that listeners pay closer attention to what you are saying when you look at them. Think how you react when a speaker makes constant eye contact with you. If you are like most people, you feel as if the speaker is speaking to you personally, even if there are 100 people in the audience. Also, you tend to feel more obligated to listen when you know that the speaker’s eyes will be meeting yours throughout the presentation. Here are some ways you can make eye contact a natural part of your own strategy for effective oral presentations:
With audiences of about 30 or less: Make regular eye contact with everyone in the room. Be particularly careful not to ignore members of the audience who are seated to your far right and far left (see Figure).

With large audiences: There may be too many people or a room too large for you to make individual eye contact with all listeners. In this case, focus on just a few people in all three sections of the audience.

With any size audience: Occasionally, look away from the audience—either to your notes or toward a part of the room where there are no faces looking back. In this way, you avoid the appearance of staring.
Speech Guideline 10: Use Appropriate Gestures and Posture
Speaking is only one part of giving a speech; others are adopting appropriate posture and using gestures that will reinforce what you are saying. Note that good speakers are much more than “talking heads” before a lectern. Instead, they do the following:

- Use their hands and fingers to emphasize major points
- Stand straight, without leaning on or gripping the lectern
- Step out from behind the lectern on occasion, to decrease the distance to the audience
- Point toward visuals on screens or charts, without losing eye contact with the audience

The audience will judge you by what you say and what they see, a fact that again makes videotaping a crucial part of your preparation. With work on this facet of your presentation, you can avoid problems like keeping your hands constantly in your pockets, rustling change (remove pocket change and keys beforehand), tapping a pencil, scratching nervously, slouching over a lectern, and shifting from foot to foot.
Problems in Talks Last Semester

1. Speaking too fast, especially with accented English
2. Mumbling just before finishing discussion of a slide
3. Slide tables and graphics copied from the web
4. Too many details in tables and lists
5. Too many colors in tables on one slide
6. Too small, illegible fonts used in tables and graphics
7. Reading from screen too often, not scanning the audience
8. Not speaking for at least six minutes
General Guidelines for Speech Graphics

More than ever before, listeners expect good graphics during oral presentations. Much like gestures, graphics transform the words of your presentation into true communication with the audience. The following 10 guidelines will help you use graphics to enhance each speech. Then the next section will provide guidelines for a common form of speech graphic: PowerPoint slide shows.

Speech Graphics Guideline 1: Discover Listener Preferences
Some professionals prefer simple speech graphics, such as a conventional flip chart. Others prefer more sophisticated graphics that require equipment such as video projectors connected to laptop computers. For example, if your instructor in this course uses presentation graphics, he or she may make use of overhead transparencies, video clips, or a PowerPoint program (see the next section for PowerPoint guidelines).

Your listeners are usually willing to indicate their preferences when you call on them. Contact the audience ahead of time and make some inquiries. Also, ask for information about the room in which you will be speaking. If possible, request a setting that allows you to make best use of your graphics choice. If you have no control over the setting, then choose graphics that best fit the constraints. Details about lighting, wall space, and chair configuration can greatly influence your selection.
Speech Graphics Guideline 2: Think about Graphics Early

Graphics done as an afterthought usually look tacked on. Plan graphics while you prepare the text, so that the final presentation will seem fluid. This guideline holds true especially if you rely on specialists to prepare your visuals. These professionals need some lead time to do their best work. Also, they can often provide helpful insights about how visuals will enhance the presentation—\textit{if} you consult them early enough and \textit{if} you make them a part of your presentation team.

The goal is to use graphics of which you can be proud. Never put yourself in the position of having to apologize for the quality of your graphic material. If an illustration is not up to the quality your audience would expect, do not use it.

Speech Graphics Guideline 3: Keep the Message Simple

Listeners may be suspicious of slick visual effects that appear to be more important than the speech itself. Many prefer the simplicity of overhead transparencies and flip charts. However, even if you may prefer to use PowerPoint slides, video, or other sophisticated graphics, remember that graphics should support the speech, not draw attention to themselves.
Speech Graphics Guideline 4: Make Any Wording Brief and Visible
Some basic design guidelines apply whether you are using posters, overhead transparencies, or computer-aided graphics.

- Use few words, emphasizing just one idea on each frame.
- Use much white space, perhaps as much as 60% to 70% per frame.
- Use “landscape” format more often than “portrait,” especially since it is the preferred default setting for most presentation software.
- Use sans serif large print, from 14 to 18 point minimum for text to 48 point for titles.

Your goal should be to create graphics that are easily seen from anywhere in the room and that complement—but do not overpower—your presentation.

Speech Graphics Guideline 5: Use Colors Carefully
Colors can add flair to visuals. Follow these simple guidelines to make colors work for you:

- Have a good reason for using color (such as the need to highlight three different bars on a graph with three distinct colors).
- Use only dark, easily seen colors for text, and be sure that a color you choose contrasts enough with its background (for example, yellow on white would not work well).

Because graphics reinforce text, they should be shown only while you address the particular point at hand. For example, reveal a graph just as you are saying, “As you can see from the graph, the projected revenue reaches a peak in 2008.” Then pause and leave up the graph a bit longer for the audience to absorb your point.

How long is too long? A graphic outlives its usefulness when it remains in sight after you have moved on to another topic. Listeners will continue to study it and ignore what you are now saying. If you use a graphic once and plan to return to it, take it down after its first use and show it again later.

Speech Graphics Guideline 7: Avoid Handouts

Because timing is so important in your use of speech graphics, handouts are usually not appropriate. Readers will move through a handout at their own pace, rather than at the pace the speaker might prefer. Thus, handouts cause you to lose the attention of your audience. Use them only if (1) no other visual will do, (2) your listener has requested them, or (3) you distribute them as reference material after you have finished talking.
Speech Graphics Guideline 8: Maintain Eye Contact While Using Graphics
Do not stare at your visuals while you speak. Maintain control of listeners’ responses by looking back and forth from the visual to faces in the audience. To point to the graphic aid, use the hand closest to the visual rather than the opposite hand. Using the opposite hand would cause you to cross over your torso, forcing you to turn away from the audience.

Speech Graphics Guideline 9: Include All Graphics in Your Practice Sessions
Dry runs before the actual presentation should include every graphic you plan to use, in its final form. Running through a final practice without graphics would be much like doing a dress rehearsal for a play without costumes and props—you would be leaving out parts that require the greatest degree of timing and orchestration. Practicing with graphics helps you improve the smoothness of your delivery and the effectiveness of your transitions in the speech.

Speech Graphics Guideline 10: Use Your Own Equipment
CSE/ISE 300
PowerPoint Planning Guidelines: Pfeiffer 5th Ed. pp 142-3

PowerPoint Planning Guideline 1: Use and Review the Planning Form
This section offers general guidelines that apply to most speeches, but remember that the needs of your specific listeners come first. The preferences of your “real” audience, combined with the purpose of the document, drive any strategy you choose to organize a speech and the PowerPoint slides that accompany it.

PowerPoint Planning Guideline 2: Outline the Entire Speech Before You Create Slides
The last section of the Planning Form recommends you attach a topic outline to the completed form. Make sure to complete the outline BEFORE you begin the process of creating PowerPoint slides. Your presentation outline should guide the development of a PowerPoint show, not vice versa. Slides are a tool, not an end in themselves. Once you have the outline completed, then locate opportunities to insert slides into the presentation. Each point at which you decide to insert a slide should be used to reinforce a main point you intend to make in presentation, catch the attention of listeners, or advance their attention from one part of the presentation to the next. In other words, think strategically about the use of slides so that they enhance your presentation.
PowerPoint Planning Guideline 3: Make a List of All Slides Before You Create Them

Your slide list can include some or all of the following information: (a) title, (b) purpose of the slide, (c) reference to a point in the speech where the slide will be used, and (d) possible design ideas. The list will give you the “big picture” perspective of the slide show you intend to create. As you look at it, you may think of other opportunities for inserting additional slides and find slides you wish to delete. Thus, it will help you realize how diverse slides should fit together into an organic whole that supports the speech.

PowerPoint Planning Guideline 4: Keep Slides as Simple and Brief as Possible

As you move from planning to formatting, remember the KISS guideline mentioned in Chapter 1: Keep it Short and Simple. All viewers, no matter how technical their background, prefer simplicity. They expect that slides will make the narrative of your speech easier—not harder—to understand. Indeed, have you ever heard someone claim a presentation was too clear and simple? Instead, you’ve likely heard people observe, or you have observed yourself, that complex PowerPoint slides confused rather than clarified a presentation. Therefore, at the planning stage—before you even begin designing slides—be thinking about the simplicity and brevity with which you can express ideas in PowerPoint format.
PowerPoint Format Guideline 1: Use the Same General Format for All Slides

PowerPoint slides should reinforce your presentation, not draw attention to themselves. This goal is best achieved when all slides have the same general format, a strategy that gives readers a predictable mental map into which they place information as they view your presentation.

There are various formats and styles that you can glean from PowerPoint manuals or that you can develop on your own. For example, you may choose to place a short phrase or title at the top of every slide, followed by several bullets or a graphic (see Figure 4–16 and 4–17). Or you may decide to reserve slides just for graphics.

By avoiding asbestos contamination, you can

- Prevent health problems
- Satisfy regulatory requirements
- Give yourself peace of mind

FIGURE 4–16
Powerpoint slide with title and bullet points
Figure 4-17
PowerPoint slide with title and graphics

Whatever style you select, here are some basic rules to follow:

- Use no more than three to five bullets
- Avoid second- or third-level bullet breakdowns
- Avoid using all capitals because they are hard to read
- Left justify bullets for easier reading
PowerPoint Format Guideline 2: Use Few Words
One common PowerPoint mistake is to include too much verbiage, an error that leads to the audience reading slides rather than focusing on the presentation. PowerPoint text should distill rather than repeat words you deliver in the speech. Besides focusing attention where it should be—on you the speaker—using a few words in slides allows you to use a larger, more visible type (see Figure 4–19).

It's your asbestos!

FIGURE 4–19
PowerPoint slide just with brief phrase

One way to achieve the goal of brevity and simplicity on your slides is to always keep the following rule in mind when you are designing a PowerPoint presentation: Include only one main idea on each slide. Your idea might be embodied in a graphic, in one phrase, or in several bullet points. But it will always be just one main idea.
PowerPoint Format Guideline 3: Consider Font and Color Choice Very Carefully

Speech Graphics Guidelines #4 and #5 (see pages 137 to 138) provide information that applies to all speech graphics, including PowerPoint slides. It's worth including similar cautions in this section because the dizzying array of choices in PowerPoint technology does not necessarily lead to better presentations. Simply because many choices abound doesn't mean they have to be used. Simplicity, clarity, and, of course, visibility are the best virtues.

To achieve them, (a) keep colors fairly standard throughout the slide show, for example by using the same color background, (b) avoid garish color combinations, (c) make sure colors you use are visible from all parts of the room, (d) use the same font(s) throughout, and (e) use sans serif fonts with bold and visible lines, unless you have good reason to do otherwise.

PowerPoint Format Guideline 4: Don’t “Dump” Data on to Slides

Perhaps the most off-putting PowerPoint mistake is to dump data from reports on to slides. Listeners have difficulty reading and understanding slides with excessive data, even when you don't use PowerPoint slides. It is preferable to include just major pieces of data in an oral presentation, which also ensures you will use a large font that is visible.