

TECHNICAL SESSIONS



SOCIETY of  
EXPLORATION  
GEOPHYSICISTS

SPEAKER MANUAL

TECHNICAL SESSIONS

## INTRODUCTION

*Outstanding presentations require thought, planning, and careful delivery.*

The Society of Exploration Geophysicists takes this opportunity to express its appreciation for your contributions to the Technical Program and your interest in participating. The geophysical industry looks to leaders like you for current information on new and improved exploration and development tools and techniques.

Exploration and development technology involves teamwork with many experts, often from different organizations and even different disciplines, contributing to the solution of natural resource problems. Consequently, exchange of technical information between experts is of vital importance. Communicating technical information with skill is critical to the success of that exchange. An author with an important point to make can bury it in poor paper construction or inadequately prepared graphic material.

This manual is intended to serve as a reminder of ways to make a presentation more effective for the intended audience. So, for your benefit and the benefit of your audience, we ask that you carefully study and apply the suggestions in this manual.

### I. Create an Effective Presentation

*Cohesion, unity, and organization.*

#### Know your Audience

You must capture the interest and attention of your audience. Even though they are your peers and colleagues, audience members must be won over to your particular point.

#### Identify your Objective

What is the purpose of your presentation? Are you going to inform the audience of a new tool, method, or technique; or demonstrate research findings? Write out your objective, keep it before you, and relate it to all of the material you are including in your presentation.

#### Unify the Presentation

Try to address a single, major point (a problem, issue, or question) and support the conclusion with a solution, premise, or proposition using examples of data, which relate to that point.

#### Organize your Information

Write out your presentation word for word. Keep in mind you are presenting something new. It is your job to keep the audience informed and make sure they understand what you are saying. You will not have time to digress for even a moment. If you lose the attention of your audience even once, you may never get it back. Organize your material and your visuals to flow logically from one point to the next. Explain how you came to each conclusion, and point out any change in direction or thought process. Be aware of the path on which you are leading the audience, and guide them with carefully planned, sequential material – each point naturally leading to the next until they arrive at your conclusion with an “of course!” feeling.

#### Write for the Ear

The audience will not have much time to digest and go over all of your material. You will be speaking at approximately 125 words per minute, and your audience is expected to hear and comprehend everything you say in 20 minutes. Remember to keep it simple and brief, using visuals to enhance your presentation and increase audience comprehension. You should practice writing and speaking with fewer words. You'll find brevity contributes to better organization of your material and vice versa. If a point can be adequately made in ten words, don't use twenty.

Use Simple Language

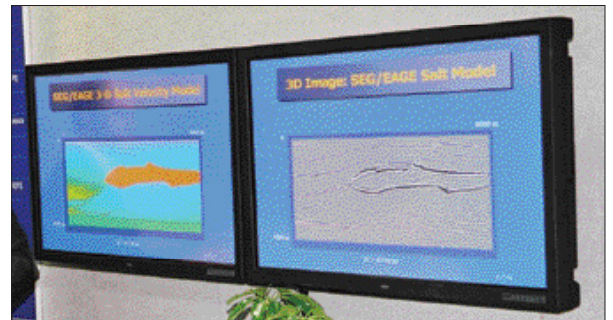
A complex technology does not require complex language. Successful communicators use simplified language, especially in an international setting. Your audience has an extremely high level of sophistication and education—they know and understand the same “state of the art” words and phrases you do. Remember the idea(s) you are trying to convey may be new and complex, and time for the audience to assimilate them is limited. Provide your audience with the most commonly used words and phrases. When a difficult concept arises, use several brief definitions and explanations to clarify your point.

#### Repeat the Key Point or Conclusion

The speech model (tell them what you're going to tell them, then tell them, then sum it up by telling them what you told them) is excellent to keep in mind when preparing or adapting a paper for oral presentation. Again, if the subject is complex, make your point more than once, from a different angle each time. State the relevance of your presentation to the exploration industry.

#### Humor

The use of a little humor, especially in technical papers, can provide a welcome change of pace for your audience. Humor keeps things interesting, and helps the audience stay attuned to your speech. Don't tell a joke or story unless it is brief and relevant to your presentation. Long jokes and stories, even when relevant, are normally counter-productive and take away valuable presentation time. Remember your audience is an international audience of both genders with vastly varied social and religious views. Make sure you don't offend anyone.



*Compare the use of color in these two slides. Notice how the graph with the colorful background is more clear than the graph with the white background.*

## Be in the Audience

Listen to your presentation as you read it over and consider the following:

- Will the point(s) you are making be absolutely clear to everyone?
- Is all of the material (both oral and visual) relevant to your central theme?
- Does the language used make the point clear?
- Is all of the material organized to flow logically from one point to the next, straight through to the conclusion?

## II. ILLUSTRATE YOUR MESSAGE

*Effective visuals attract audiences and encourage active listening.*

Too many speakers fail to realize the importance of the visual portion of their presentation. Consider the following for a moment:

- Studies repeatedly have shown that an audience generally understands and remembers approximately 25% to 30% of what they hear, but approximately 60% to 70% of what they see.
- Relevant, well-prepared visuals can enhance the success of your presentation. Poor visuals can destroy an otherwise excellent presentation. Make your visuals work for you – not against you.
- The oral presentation provides the “road map” which gives unity, direction, and relevance to a presentation. Visuals illustrate, explain, and clarify the oral presentation and provide a mental change of pace for the audience.



## III. CAREFULLY PREPARE YOUR ORAL PRESENTATION

*Make it Uncluttered, Simple, and Legible.*

When you are creating a PC-based presentation, you will need to prepare your visuals so they can be easily seen and understood, and designed to support your oral presentation. SEG Technical Sessions often draw large audiences and many of those attending will be seated large distances from the screen or stage. Prepare your visuals accordingly. Do not design slides as you would design graphics for publication in a magazine or book (for viewing from 10 – 20 inches). Most material prepared for the printed page (magazine, journal, book, company report, etc.) is not suitable for projection in front of an audience. Each visual should be limited to the presentation of one idea. Fill the entire area with clear, uncluttered information. A slide should not contain unnecessary details or data. Be sure the visual relates directly to your speech. Visuals should contain no more than 10 – 15 words. Explanatory details, legends and captions should be included in your speech, not on your slides. Avoid tables and highly detailed graphics. Use simple line diagrams and graphs, and simple block lettering. Use a minimum number of grid lines and keep them light. Your audience will not be able to read them at a distance, and might become frustrated or lose interest. Graphic material including complex (but necessary) illustrations that are not “readable” at normal audience viewing distances should be redesigned and/or redrafted for your presentation. Keep only the necessary information. Color attracts attention and enhances the illustration. Different zones of a map can be separated, and curves can be distinguished more easily with color.

### Audience Readability Test—One-Sixth A/V Rule

Affix the graphic to a wall, or display it on a screen. Measure the widest dimension in inches and back away from the graphic six times that figure. If a person with normal eyesight can “read” everything at that distance, your graphic should be acceptable.

## IV. PRESENT WITH CONFIDENCE

*The secret behind every effective presenter is confidence.*

- Your confidence comes from knowledge of your subject, preparation (visual and written), and practice. Practicing oral delivery (preferably before an audience) can turn even the least experienced speaker into one with polished audience-binding skills. Practicing with a video recorder or even a mirror will help increase confidence. Even though your presentation will be short, it must be done well in order to be effective.
- Memorize your introduction if at all possible. This allows for immediate eye contact at the beginning of your presentation when you must gain your audience's attention. This also will give you time to become familiar with your surroundings.
- Know your speech; don't read it. Glance occasionally at your notes, but plan to spend most of your time looking at your slides or the audience. Knowing your speech also helps with the pace of the presentation. Don't rush yourself. Use short sentences and pause between ideas and slides to give the audience a chance to digest the information.

### Maintain Eye Contact with your Audience

One of the primary visual effects at your disposal is yourself. Give the impression of being interested in your audience by looking at them. Demonstrate that you know the material being presented and impress the audience with the fact that you thought enough of them to be extremely well prepared.

### Be Physically at Ease

Stand in a normal manner. Don't fidget or stare fixedly at one spot. Feel free to move about during your presentation if you are comfortable doing so and you have the space, but do not pace back and forth because this will distract the audience.

## Time Your Presentation

Don't overrun your time. Interrupting questions may take time away from your presentation, so practice an accelerated summary. When the timer warns you that your time is up, be prepared to go into your concluding remarks. Be respectful of other speakers and finish your presentation on time.

## Rehearse

Practice until you are so confident of your material you can be relaxed during its presentation. If you relax, it is easier to establish a good rapport with your audience. Be in command of the presentation. Assure the audience of your expertise and credibility.

Repeated rehearsals will help you achieve a successful presentation. Do not forget to use your visuals in your rehearsals. Again, it is recommended that you rehearse in front of a video camera. There is no better way to become aware of your total impact on your audience. You will be able to judge the effectiveness of your visuals and identify undesirable vocal qualities. You will be able to see if the flow you have established is logical and clear and how your overall attitude and stance affect your speech. Be aware of those things previously discussed such as eye contact, timing, general ease, and poise.

## V. OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

### ► Subtitles

Please include English subtitles in your presentation if you feel as if your audience would benefit from the clarity that subtitles will provide.

### POSTER PRESENTATIONS

Poster presentations will utilize ONE poster board. The dimensions of the board are 4 feet high by 8 feet wide (1.2 meters high by 2.4 meters wide) with a surface area that is 3 feet 10 inches high by 7 feet 10 inches wide. Due to limited space posters will be taken down at the end of each day, to allow for the next day poster sessions.

Poster presenters must be prepared to give a 4 minute talk on their poster in the speed-geeking session format. It is recommended to have no more than 5 slides, to keep with the allotted time.

- Time allotted see Technical Program for speaker times, times may be subject to change. An attempt will be made to meet special needs of presenters to the extent possible. If Coordinator in the SEG Business Office no later than 10 June e-mail [jabbott@seg.org](mailto:jabbott@seg.org).

