

## How to Give a Talk at a National Meeting – Emelia J. Benjamin, MD, ScM

Topic	Ineffective	Brilliant
Preparation for talk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Inflexible &amp; unresponsive to specific audience</li> <li>▪ Don't know audience</li> <li>▪ Use old talk without updating slides</li> <li>▪ Assume computer or video or audio works with equipment</li> <li>▪ Have no back up</li> <li>▪ Upload slides at last minute</li> <li>▪ Rush in at last minute or late</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Know thy audience                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Lay, beginner, expert, mixed</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ For lecture [vs. abstract] if expert in your field, know his/her work – if possible cite it</li> <li>▪ Know room</li> <li>▪ Know talk format</li> <li>▪ Allow for unexpected elements</li> <li>▪ Disclosure slide</li> <li>▪ <b>Back up talk on thumb drive and email</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Practice, practice, practice</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Rehearse timings out loud so that talk is correct length &amp; flow</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Show up early, start on time</li> <li>▪ Breathe</li> </ul>
Attire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Unless you are a big wig don't go sloppy</li> <li>▪ If talk is being recorded, be careful not to wear shimmery materials that don't show up well on camera</li> <li>▪ Don't wear clothes that are distracting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Dress appropriate for setting; formal for national meeting, less formal for research meeting [e.g. Gordon]</li> <li>▪ Err on the side of formality</li> <li>▪ Be comfortable</li> </ul>
Subject Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Limited grasp of information</li> <li>▪ Inability to answer questions</li> <li>▪ Solipsism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mastery of topic</li> <li>▪ Ability to acknowledge what doesn't know</li> <li>▪ Refer to others' work in the field</li> </ul>
Big picture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Too many ideas – career/course in 1 lecture</li> <li>▪ Bugged down in details &amp; technicalities</li> <li>▪ Overly abstract or complex</li> <li>▪ Scattered points – no trajectory or connection to larger significance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ As in life: <b>“Start with the end in mind”</b></li> <li>▪ Clear learning objectives</li> <li>▪ Communicates Innovation [what is new]</li> <li>▪ Effectively communicates significance</li> <li>▪ <b>KISS</b> – Keep it Simple</li> </ul>

## How to Give a Talk at a National Meeting – Emelia J. Benjamin, MD, ScM

Topic	Ineffective	Brilliant
Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Disorganized</li> <li>▪ Illogical or no order</li> <li>▪ Death by power point, flash by slides</li> <li>▪ Redundancy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hook audience early <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Case, conundrum, controversy</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Clear outline</li> <li>▪ Logical ordering of topics</li> </ul>
Slides	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Crowded</li> <li>▪ Numerous lines</li> <li>▪ Paragraphs</li> <li>▪ Tiny font</li> <li>▪ Numerous abbreviations</li> <li>▪ Excessive animations</li> <li>▪ Tutti-frutti color scheme</li> <li>▪ Avoid red on blue and other color combinations that don't project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Do you need slides? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Metcalf winners don't use power points</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Telegraphic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Minimal text, bulleted phrases</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ &lt;5-7 lines per slide</li> <li>▪ Font &gt;24-28</li> <li>▪ Few abbreviations and acronyms</li> <li>▪ Spare animations – avoid audience vertigo</li> <li>▪ Coordinated straightforward color theme across slides</li> </ul>
Data, figures & Tables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Different lay out each slide <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Switching colors or axes, etc.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Illegible pictures</li> <li>▪ www when room doesn't connect to internet</li> <li>▪ Videos when computer doesn't project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>AVOID T.M.I.</b></li> <li>▪ Lots of pictures</li> <li>▪ <b>Legible</b> tables</li> <li>▪ Not too many details</li> <li>▪ If not www connection good go with screen shots</li> </ul>

## How to Give a Talk at a National Meeting – Emelia J. Benjamin, MD, ScM

Topic	Ineffective	Brilliant
Connection with audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No eye contact</li> <li>▪ Talk to slides</li> <li>▪ Read from notes</li> <li>▪ Bored</li> <li>▪ Too causal or chatty</li> <li>▪ Elitist</li> <li>▪ Laser your audience, point to each word, or have laser wiggle/shake around</li> <li>▪ Inappropriate comments                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Racist, sexist, political, sports [If in NYC]</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Eye contact</b></li> <li>▪ Engage in a conversation with the audience/tell a story</li> <li>▪ Walks audience through slides, x axis, y axis, color scheme etc.</li> <li>▪ Steady laser, or use animation to point</li> <li>▪ Admit what you don't know</li> <li>▪ Have passion about topic</li> <li>▪ <b>Involve audience</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Show of hands, clickers, breakouts</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <b>Read audience – are they with you?</b></li> </ul>
Verbal Techniques & tics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mumbles</li> <li>▪ Speak softly or shouts</li> <li>▪ Rapid speech</li> <li>▪ Speak in and out of microphone</li> <li>▪ Monotone</li> <li>▪ Verbal tics                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ You know, like, uh</li> <li>○ Ending sentences up or down in inflection, or rushed</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Clear articulation</b></li> <li>▪ Clear medium-loud voice</li> <li>▪ Speak slowly – emphasis on key words</li> <li>▪ Varies inflection</li> <li>▪ Have colleague monitor &amp; provide feedback on verbal tics</li> <li>▪ <b>Remember to pause &amp; to breath</b></li> <li>▪ Subtle humor</li> <li>▪ If stumble, breath &amp; move on</li> </ul>
Wrap up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Go way under in time</li> <li>▪ Run out of time for talk</li> <li>▪ No bottom line, whimper off</li> <li>▪ Forget to acknowledge team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ For original research articulate limitations</li> <li>▪ Future directions</li> <li>▪ <b>End with bottom line</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Leave time for questions</b></li> <li>▪ Acknowledge team</li> </ul>

## How to Give a Talk at a National Meeting – Emelia J. Benjamin, MD, ScM

Topic	Ineffective	Brilliant
Q&A Including difficult person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Babble/talk on &amp; on</li><li>▪ Insult or make fun of questioner</li><li>▪ Flippant</li><li>▪ Cut off questioners – if moderator, that is his/her job</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Short answers</li><li>▪ Thank questioner for question</li><li>▪ If don't know answer – don't fake it<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Great question, I will get back to you</li><li>○ Future research direction</li></ul></li><li>▪ If questioner off-base, thank questioner, answer briefly and ask pleasantly to discuss afterwards</li></ul>
After talk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Dash off after your talk [unless true conflict]</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Stick around for feedback &amp; further questions</li><li>▪ Jot down unexpected questions</li><li>▪ <b>Solicit feedback</b></li><li>▪ <b>Review, delete, revise slides to improve talk</b></li></ul>