A talk on giving a talk

CS 225
Chris Reedy
Original version courtesy Bill Hurd
Introduction

- A presentation on giving a presentation
- Tips and techniques to be a better speaker
Agenda

- Ten Myths
- How to start
- Heuristics
- Visuals
- Your audience
- Style
- How to stop
Overview

- Assi Dvir learns to play tennis
- Knowledge
- Practice
Ten Myths

- I’m not a public speaker
- Don’t use your hands
- Look over the heads of the audience
- Memorize your speech
- Stand in one place

- Use a lectern
- Cover your whole talk
- Start with a joke
- Dark room for slide shows
- Don’t be nervous
How to start

• No jokes
  – Absolutely no self deprecation
• The promise
• Visuals to show where you are
The Promise

- Why are you giving this talk?
  - Persuade your audience?
  - Get a decision?
  - (Rare) Transfer information?
- State your thesis
- Don’t be afraid to take a stand!
Examples

Strong
- Abortion after the third month should be banned
- We need an international treaty to stop spammers outside the US
- Hacking government web sites is a legitimate form of civil disobedience
- Brittany Spears sucks
- Lost revenue to music companies from file sharing is greatly over estimated

Weak
- Issues regarding abortion
- Developments in international spamming law
- How hackers defaced the FBI’s web site
- How pop music could be improved
- Considerations regarding the cost of file sharing
Heuristics

• Cycle in and repeat, repeat, repeat
  – John Woll (seven times)

• Tell’em what you’re gonna tell’em. Tell’em. Then, tell’em what you told’em.
  – U.S. Military

• Verbal punctuation and recap
  – Kerry – “wrong choices and wrong decisions for America”
  – Bush – “flip/flop”

• Near miss, show what it is and what it is not
  – The triangle

• Ask a question
Visuals

- Engage whole intellect
- Pictures
- Color
- Make lists
  - five or less
Research Your Audience

- Specialist versus generalist
- Peer group, informal, more engagement
- Listener profile, gender, knowledge, education, experience level, regional background, politics, economics
Style

- Adapt, not copy
- Be yourself
  - How could you be anyone else?
- OK to be eccentric
- Tell a story
  - When software is translated it is important to check the translation (“Hotspot”)
How to stop

- End with a joke
- Deliver on promise
- Salute the audience
Summary

- Incorporate tips into your talk
- Practice by giving your talk to a friend
Where to Get More Information

- Patrick Wilson Video
  - CS dept has it (see me)
- Book: Knockout Presentations by Diane DeResta
Let’s fix this presentation
Slides that need improvement

- Slide 4 – jigsaw graphic
- Slide 5 – too many items in the list
- Slide 8 – several problems