

Presentation guide for IAIA conferences

Tips for oral presentation

- **Build a story.** Presentations are boring when they present large amounts of information without any context or meaning. Instead, tell a story, with the audience as the main characters.
- **Keep it relevant.** Audiences pay attention only to stories and ideas that are immediately relevant to them. Consider what decision you want them to make, then build an appropriate case.
- **Cut your introduction.** The session chair will introduce you.
- **Begin with an eye-opener.** Kick off your talk by revealing a shocking fact, a surprising insight, or a unique perspective that naturally leads into your message and the decision you want made.
- **Use facts, not generalities.** Fuzzy concepts reflect fuzzy thinking. Support your argument, story and message with facts that are quantifiable, verifiable, memorable and dramatic.
- **Never read from your slides.** Your audience can read.
- **Practice speaking slowly and clearly, and avoid jargon.** Cut business and company- or sector-specific jargon from your slides and your vocabulary. For much of the IAIA audience, English is a second language. If English is your primary language, consider what it is like for you to listen to a presentation in your second language and adjust your presentation style accordingly.

Tips for slide presentations

- **Make sure each slide builds on the previous slide** and that all slides have a logical progression.
- **Use the 6-6-6 rule:** (maximum 6 words per bullet, maximum 6 bullets per slide, maximum 6 text slides in a row). The fewest words and compelling imagery will have the most powerful effect.
- **Use high-contrast, easy-to-read fonts** that are common to most computers. Do not use ALL CAPS, *italics*, and other enhancements that clutter and are distracting. A good guideline is a minimum of 30-point text.
- **A graph or chart to illustrate your main point can be worth a thousand words.** Studies show that half of what an audience learns during a presentation is provided by the visuals.
- **But keep the slides simple.** People shut off their brains when confronted with complicated drawings, tables, and distracting backgrounds. Don't use your slides as a data repository. Have a separate handout if you want the audience to take away detailed information after your talk.
- **Don't get too fancy.** You want your audience to remember your message, not how many special effects and visual gimcracks you used.
- **Consider adding #iaia16 to your presentation slides** to encourage your audience to share thoughts on the session, receive feedback on your presentation, and help spread the word about the good work being done at the conference.