

No-Dig 2007

Presentation Guidelines

1. What is the purpose of making the presentation?

Generally speaking, most presenters at No-Dig 2007 are doing so to inform those in attendance. Your presentation should be one in which you share your expertise and exchange information. Of course, you know this, but be sure your audience is fully aware of your goals.

2. Understand your audience.

At No-Dig 2007, you will more than likely be welcomed by a committed audience full of individuals who really want to hear what you have to say. And, because there are concurrent tracks being presented, you should find comfort in the fact that those in attendance have also made the choice to come to your presentation.

Understanding your audience will help you deliver your message in the right way. In general, these types of attendees make excellent audiences for a presentation that reports, explains and informs. If you can present in an entertaining way, they will even be more receptive to your message. More detail, or evidence in your presentation that shows you really understand the topic / technology presented, will please the committed audience. Remember that your audience at No-Dig 2007 wants you to share your knowledge and experience; **they do not want to sit through a sales presentation.** The highest ratings in post-show surveys are given to those that effectively deliver valuable information without commercialism.

3. Defining your audience.

The following information about previous No-Dig experiences may assist you in setting your presentation strategy:

- There are generally between 15-75 people within a session. The large variance comes primarily from the track topic. The rooms will be set up to accommodate up to 100 people, your presentation should be designed for projection (color selection and font size are key variables).
- Most in attendance understand the basics of underground construction and rehabilitation, but are less likely to be an expert on the topic you are presenting. They are attending your presentation to learn more details, not necessarily the basics. **Engineers, contractors, students and field experienced individuals make up No-Dig attendees.** Target your audience and prepare your presentation to cater to their assumed level of understanding.
- Your audience wants to walk away from your presentation with increased knowledge. Find a way to deliver your message that allows them to grasp value from what they've heard and seen. Use handouts (50 is a good number to bring with you) if they will assist you in delivering your message.

What's in it for me?

Most audiences want the presenter to succeed. Start to answer this question for your audience by identifying your presentation objective(s). Choose no more than three main points you wish to relay and elaborate on them. Follow three basic steps to organizing your presentation: 1) Tell your audience what you're going to tell them; 2) Tell them - deliver your message; and, 3) Close by telling them what you've told them.

1. Introduction

Get your audience attention by presenting your subject in an interesting or significant manner. Provide a relevant statistic, share a quote or interesting piece of information about your topic, or compare / relate your subject in a metaphoric fashion. Unless you are typically successful in linking humor to technical matters, use caution in using humor to set the tone for your presentation.

2. Body / Main Theme

This is where you present the details of your main point(s). Use examples to which the audience can relate. Visual aids such as photographs, video or handouts may assist in your presentation. Develop and instill your theme in the audience – relaying of experience/lessons learned, identification of technical capabilities of a material or method, sharing of expertise, etc.

3. Conclusion

Summarize your subject / main points. Restate what you wanted the audience to garner from your presentation (your objective). Discuss briefly action plans or future opportunities to gain more information on the subject matter. Share another relevant story, statistic or quote that will remain with the audience to remind them of your subject after the conference closes.

Guidelines for Preparing your PowerPoint Presentation:

1. Theme / Color – Microsoft provides some good advice on the use of color in presentations. You may visit this document at: <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/assistance/HA010120721033.aspx>

Summarizing some of that data:

- Choose complementary colors that suit your audience and provide a balance between professionalism and attractiveness.
- Use pre-defined color schemes available in your PowerPoint program.
- Colors may appear differently when projected vs. on-screen. Test your presentation color theme using a projector if possible.
- Ease in visibility from a distance may be achieved by using a dark colored and/or textured background with light text.

- When using graphics tie at least one of your font colors to the color used in your graphic.
 - Use colors sparingly for more effect, and to avoid overwhelming the audience.
2. Copy / Text - Don't fall into the trap of too much text. Use your presentation as an overview, not a complete statement. Bullet points, abbreviated statements, graphics, photographs and video clips will allow the attendee to listen to your presentation vs. concentrating on reading the slides. Use visual aids to complement your verbal presentation, not overtake it.
 3. Number of slides – Make sure you can discuss the points shown on the slides in the time allotted for your presentations. See item 5 below.
 4. Visuals - Choose visuals that represent your topic and deliver your message. Relevance and simplicity are important. Do not place a table full of text into your presentation only to tell the audience they can't read it. Refer to your paper and the proceedings for more detailed information if necessary.
 5. Practice – This is the most important step of preparing your presentation. Know the content of your presentation. Do not “read” your slides or your “paper” – share your knowledge and use the presentation slides to remind you what next to say. Time yourself to be sure you can deliver your presentation within the limits allowed. Practice will allow you to be more comfortable and relaxed in delivering your presentation.

In summary, you've worked hard to prepare a well-written paper and we look forward to your presentation. Thank you for your dedication to informing and educating the industry. See you at No-Dig 2007!