



139th Annual Civil Engineering Conference
October 29 – 31, 2009
Kansas City Marriott Downtown
Kansas City, MO

Presentation Guidelines

Congratulations for being selected to present at ASCE's **139th Annual Civil Engineering Conference**. This is an excellent opportunity for you to share knowledge and information with your colleagues.

It is important for you to prepare an interesting and informative session for the conference. The following guidelines will assist you in your preparation.

PREPARING YOUR PRESENTATION:

When you organize your talk, it may be helpful to begin by considering the following:

1. What is the topic of my presentation?

Of course, you know this. Be sure your audience will understand your goals and learning objectives.

2. Who is my audience?

- Consider, if you were sitting in the audience, how you would like the information presented.
- ASCE is committed to promoting an inclusive professional organization, so it is important for the presentation to be geared towards a diverse audience.

3. What is the objective of the presentation?

Choose main points and objectives and elaborate on them.

Once you have answered these questions, you should then begin to outline your presentation. A speech may be divided into three parts:

1. Introduction/Opening

- State your goal or ideas in general terms.
- Share a relevant story, anecdote, or quote.
- Use a metaphor or comparison to your topic.
- Use humor very carefully; it can be powerful and engaging, but jokes, as a particular form of humor, are risky and difficult to use successfully.
- Any one or a combination of these introductory methods may be used in your opening to draw your audience into the presentation.

2. **Body**

- Discuss your main idea(s) and learning objectives in detail.
- Use supporting examples.
- Use visual aids to reinforce.
- Reiterate your points.
- Develop a theme.

3. **Closing**

- Summarize your main points.
- Restate your goals and learning objectives, in a memorable way.
- Explain the value of your discussion.
- Reiterate the plan of action or any future plans.
- Return to the opening theme or story.
- Share another relevant story, anecdote, or quote.

GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING YOUR VISUAL AIDS:

Once you have prepared your presentation, you may decide to incorporate visual aids. Remember, “A picture is worth a thousand words.” A Harvard University study reveals that individuals comprehend about 7% of information they obtain verbally. They comprehend 87% when information is delivered both verbally and visually. An approved Conference PowerPoint template will be provided.

- There are many different types of visual aids available to you including PowerPoint, videos or exhibits.
- No matter what types of visual aids you choose, remember the acronym KISS (Keep it Short & Simple) and the old saying “Less is More.”
- Choose your visual aids carefully and make each one count.
- Determine if the information really needs visual representation – will it really help to explain your point? Too much information may overwhelm an audience.
- It is also important to prepare your visual aids so that everyone in the audience will be able to see the information. There is nothing worse than telling an audience, “Those in the back of the room won’t be able to see some of the information on this slide, so I’ll explain...”

PowerPoint...

- PowerPoint presentations increase the capabilities of the presenter; however, a speaker does not want to be upstaged by his/her visual aides. Please adhere to the following guidelines to ensure a more successful presentation:
 - Only one thought or concept per screen.
 - Follow the **six-by-six rule**; no more than six words per line, no more than six lines per screen.
 - Graphs work better than tables when projected.
 - Use uppercase and lowercase letters in the text of visual materials.
- Remember, **If you are making a PowerPoint presentation, you MUST bring your laptop with you. ASCE will not be able to supply any laptops for your use. If you do not have a laptop computer, please discuss alternatives with your session coordinator.**
- Please remember your presentation time begins when you are introduced. To maximize your presentation time, be sure any PowerPoint presentations are pre-loaded on your computer, or the

moderator's computer, and ready to go when you arrive at the session room. You may take advantage of the Speaker Ready Room for this purpose.

Video...

- Video can be used effectively to show examples.
- Show only top quality tapes or DVDs, never those that have been copied over and over.
- Review your video ahead of time; make sure the video and sound quality is good from the beginning to end.

Exhibits...

- There may be times when you will be able to actually use what you are talking about as a visual aid – make sure that everyone can see it. This is best done with a small group.

****NOTE: Audio-visual equipment available to speakers, free of charge, differs with each conference; please refer to the A/V Form for the options available to you.***

Reminders...

- If you cannot appear for your presentation, you must contact your session coordinator so a replacement speaker may be found. If no replacement can be found, please contact a Conferences' staff member (refer to the email message for contact information).
- Technical assistance is available upon request, but is not present in the room throughout the session.
- Please be sure you know how to set-up your presentation and make good use of the Speaker Ready Room to work out any last minute difficulties.
- Please check in with your session coordinator so you know *exactly* how much time you will have for your presentation.

The Final Step:

- Practice, Practice, Practice! The presentation should be well rehearsed.
- As you practice, be extra conscious of such things as elocution and time constraints.
- Take advantage of the Speaker Ready Room available during the conference.
- If you have practiced your presentation and are comfortable with your material and visual aids, then you will be more relaxed and an effective speaker.

BEST OF LUCK ON YOUR PRESENTATION!