

Presentation Skills for Ocean Scientists

Summary and Tips

This document summarizes key messages and tips from the Presentation Skills for Ocean Scientists Training that was held online 26 September 2025 (PDT).

A video recording of the training session is available on PICES YouTube [@PICES_MarineSci](#).

Direct video link: <https://youtu.be/tHa-h6uw8mk>

Learn more about PICES Advisory Panel on Science Communication here:

<https://meetings.pices.int/members/advisory-panels/AP-SciCom>

English Operating Rules and Best Practices

1

Speak clearly
and about 10%
slower

2

Avoid indirect
expressions and
explain acronyms

3

Use short
sentences and
simple grammar

4

Repeat key
messages

5

Be patient and
respectful

6

Ask for
understanding
and clarification



Helpful Tips from Pannellist Presentations

General Presentation Tips (Oral & Poster)

Determine Your Main Message 🎯

- ☐ Identify your goals for the conference overall.
- ☐ Determine the goal of your poster.
- ☐ Identify the most interesting thing about your project; if you don't know, ask your colleagues.
- ☐ Communicate concepts using **multiple methods** (write, visualize, speak) to help everyone understand

Preparation and Practice 🧠

- ☐ Practice your presentation, but try not to memorize it completely.
- ☐ Breathe during your talk.

During the Event 🙌

- ☐ Attend as much of the conference as you can.
- ☐ Put yourself out there and network.
- ☐ Ask for help if you need it.
- ☐ Celebrate your work afterward.
- ☐ Reflect on what went well and what could be improved upon.
- ☐ Follow up with the people you met after the conference.

Slides & Visual Design Tips

Text and Clarity 📝

- ☐ Use a **complete sentence** as the title or "main idea" for each slide
- ☐ Include a **key sentence** on each slide.
- ☐ Use **short phrases**, not paragraphs, for other text.

Visuals and Layout 🖼️

- ☐ Use **more visuals** (images, charts).
- ☐ Use **BIG text**.
- ☐ Use **thick lines** in your visuals.
- ☐ Use **clear axis labels** on graphs, including "helper" axis labels if needed for context.
- ☐ Present information as **small, manageable pieces**.
- ☐ Incorporate drawings and **icons** (e.g., from PowerPoint's stock library) to reinforce concepts.
- ☐ Use PowerPoint's **Bézier curve drawing tools** ("Curve" tool, "Edit Points") to create complex vector drawings.
- ☐ Organize the objects on your slides using PowerPoint's **alignment tools**.



Color and Animation 🎨

- ☐ Use **color** effectively, including thematic colors for data points.
- ☐ Choose from PowerPoint's preset **color and font palettes** under the "Design" tab.
- ☐ Use **animations effectively** to guide your story.
- ☐ By default, use the "**Fade**" animation, as other types can be distracting.
- ☐ Use **Morph transitions** to guide your story by duplicating a slide, moving/resizing objects, and letting the transition handle the movement.

Tips for Better Communication in English

Use "International English" 🗣️

- ☐ Use **simple grammar and vocabulary** to deliver a clear message (known as 'International English').
- ☐ Avoid indirect expressions.

Focus on Key Points 💡

- ☐ Include an explanation of the **most interesting points** of your study.
- ☐ Consider including a **personal story** to communicate more effectively.

Q&A/Discussion Strategies 🗣️

- ☐ If you don't fully understand a question during Q&A, you can ask for **clarification**.
- ☐ Use specific phrases to ask for repetition: "I'm sorry, could you please repeat the question?".
- ☐ Use phrases to confirm understanding: "Just to make sure I understand, is your question about ...?" or "Thank you for the question. If I understand correctly, you are asking about ...?"

Poster Presentation Tips

The "Elevator Pitch" 🎤

- ☐ Be ready to start with a **two-minute brief presentation** when someone stops by your poster.
- ☐ Don't use too many technical terms in this pitch.
- ☐ Start the conversation by asking, "Hi! Would you like me to explain my poster?".
- ☐ Structure your brief presentation to include:
 - ☐ Research objective.
 - ☐ Methodology (and why you used it).
 - ☐ One or two main findings.
 - ☐ The most interesting (or exciting) point, detailing what is new or why it's interesting.



Interaction 🗣️

- ☐ The **best part** of a poster presentation is the interaction.
- ☐ After your brief pitch, transition to a **deeper interaction** like Q&A and further technical explanation.
- ☐ Prepare questions to ask the audience for advice on methodologies or feedback for results.
- ☐ **Take notes** of the discussion so you don't lose valuable comments.

Advertising 📣

- ☐ Advertise yourself and your poster.
- ☐ Don't be afraid to add an **incentive** for people to come see your poster.

Summary

State your main ideas using speech, writing, visuals, and interactions. By including different communication methods, you are more likely to reach a diverse audience and build in repetition of key ideas.

What you say in your presentation

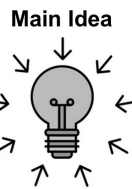
- Use plain language and everyday words - define technical terms
- Memorize a short script summarizing your work
- Speak 10-15% slower



Speech



Writing



Interaction



Visuals

Discussions and questions

- Ask for understanding and clarification
- Memorize a short script summarizing your work
- Offer to follow up

What you write on your slides or poster

- Write key sentences on each slide or section of your poster
- Use short phrases, not paragraphs
- Use plain language and simple grammar

Visuals without language

- Language free communication!
- Images, icons, pictures, or graphics that represent your ideas
- Label and/or describe visuals clearly