Making Oral Presentations: TIPS

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1. No more than 1 slide per 2 minutes of presentation time. At max, for a 15 minute slot, you should have no more than 8 slides. (Your title slide doesn't count)

   a. *Introduce yourself:* who you are, name of your project, how you came to be interested in this line of research, what your academic/career goals are going to be – 1 minute
      i. Do this while your title slide is on the screen

   b. *Slide content:*
      i. What's going to make people feel an emotional connection to your work?

      ii. To prep your slides
         1. Consider telling your story to a friend before trying to put the powerpoint together. In your story, cover points **ii. – vi.**
         2. Record yourself.
         3. Then listen to your story, take some notes or write down main points. Then use these notes/story to put together the information for the slides themselves.
         4. The slides should be scholarly, but your presentation can be conversational

      iii. Title slide
         1. Name of project, your name, department, supervising professor
         2. You will NOT read any of the information on the slide!

      iv. Brief background – 2-3 bullets summarizing the rationale for your research

      v. Purpose statement/Research question(s)

      vi. Methodology
         1. Who you studied
         2. Where
         3. How you did it
         4. How you took/measured your data or observations

      vii. Findings
         1. Best to use tables or graphs if possible
         2. Could include significance values IF there are significant findings
         3. OR, if you're doing humanities or descriptive research, summarize the major findings in a couple of statements

      viii. Discussion/Implications "so why should we care?"
         1. Brief statement for each major finding
         2. Suggest further work needed

3. You could even put up a question for the audience to stimulate discussion – but this is risky if you're running close on time!

    c. *Other slide tips*
        i. No busy backgrounds – generally, darker backgrounds with lighter font colors are preferable
        ii. Don't do fly-ins, animations for a very short presentation
        iii. Any time you can use visuals instead of words, do it
        iv. If you have art work, a dance sequence, etc. – hyperlink it into the presentation
        v. Font size should be between 32 point (largest for bullets) and 24 point (for the most subordinate bullets)

2. **DO NOT READ YOUR SLIDES**
    a. In general, you don't want more than 3-4 bullets on a slide, and have them be key words or phrases rather than sentences
        i. Enough to clue you in, in case you're nervous, but no more than that
        ii. Can include citations, but make them brief and small font! (e.g., Scott & Stierwalt, 2008)

3. **TIME YOURSELF – PRACTICE GIVING THE PRESENTATION 3-4 TIMES**
    a. First time -- ALONE
        i. How long does it take you?
        ii. Are there any slides that you are having a hard time remembering what you want to say? If so, modify them a bit so that the text on the slide is more helpful to you in triggering your memory

    b. Second time -- ALONE
        i. Check your timing again
        ii. Did modifications make it easier for you?

    c. Third time – With one or 2 friends/family members
        i. Have them check your timing
        ii. Give you feedback on parts they didn't understand
        iii. Make modifications

    d. Fourth time – with one or 2 of the same friends/family members
        i. Monitor time
        ii. See whether your modifications clarified major points for them
        iii. Ask them to ask you 1-2 questions they have