# ORAL PRESENTATION TIPS

The quality of the oral presentations is a prime factor in the success of the Symposium. It is essential that you prepare early and well for the presentation of your paper. The requirements for this presentation are high-quality, well-organized slides; organization of the material to be presented (not the entire content of the written paper); and sufficient practice to ensure a smooth, polished presentation.

A maximum of 25 minutes will be allowed for presentation of each paper including questions, so plan your slide count to accommodate this time restraint – as in aim for about 15 charts. (check the latest program schedule as the maximum time may be 30 minutes including questions for some symposiums)

***(Poster paper presentations are 10 minutes with no question/answer period).***

Limit your presentation to highlight the major themes and significant points of your paper. Lesser details usually distract the listener and are covered in your paper. Few people will use your mechanism directly in their application — this is not a design review, not a test data review. Find something new, innovative or different about your mechanism that other people can learn from and tell us about that. Think of it as telling a story – it will probably require charts that you have not done before.

**Presentations are NOT to include company propaganda, history or product line information** — keep these for ‘hallway’ discussions. If the president of your company came into your presentation and had 15 seconds of time, what would you tell him about this work — those are the points on which you want to focus.

Please begin your preparations **early** to ensure that you are comfortable with your talk. Practicing your presentation to colleagues is often a big help. Not only does this help you practice your timing and delivery, but you can also use it to solicit constructive criticism regarding the presentation's technical content and flow.

NOTE – having a too short a presentation does disrupt the symposium flow as well!

Multiple speakers for a paper, while allowed, is discouraged because of the time required to switch lapel microphones and move people about the room. In addition, it breaks up the continuity of the presentation.

**Presentation Content**

Remember that the audience will be people with similar backgrounds and interests to your own. Do not read your paper, as the audience has a copy of the proceedings and can read it as well as you. Use your slides as cue cards.

Hardware, models, and video are very effective and appealing. Try to work them into your presentation, but keep them short (under 2 minutes). Hardware will need to be large scale in order to be seen as the presentation room is large.

Give the audience information that will cause them to swamp you with questions after the presentation and during the breaks. The audience wants to hear information and experiences that will help them to develop mechanisms, not vague generalities and tributes to company competence. The content of your presentation should emphasize the “why” rather than the “what” that was done.

**Presentation slides**

Nothing spoils a potentially good presentation as surely as poor slides. Please, please use large lettering on slides. Keep them simple. *(See the simple examples in other file.)* Better to use two simple slides rather than one that is ‘busy’. Color helps bring out key features on parts drawings and cross-sections. Do not simply use your figures from the paper. Be sure the slides can be read in a room that is 30 meters long.

The presentation shall be put onto a CD or Memory stick or emailed and sent to the Host Chairman (Brandan.r.robertson@nasa.gov) one week before the symposium.

Presentation slides should be prepared in accordance with the following requirements to be compatible with the projection facilities:

• Slides must have a high visual contrast between the information and the background. Some color combinations have very poor light transmission and contrast. Red or green lettering often fades. White letters against a dark blue background or vice versa are usually effective. Make sure your slides can be read; try them out on a large-room projector.

• Use 4:3 aspect ratio for the slides.

• All logos or dates (both not really necessary) shall be at the bottom of the charts – place information as high on chart as possible as that is seen the best from the audience (sometimes the screens are not very high due to low ceilings)

• The presentation material should be typed or computer generated.

• The following letter sizes and line weights are recommended:

- Use >24-point type for all lettering

- All Greek letters and other symbol sizes equivalent to the 24-point type.

- Line weights for primary lines, such as curves, should be wider than line weights for grid scales. We recommend that grid scales be omitted.

• Do not overload the slides with words, lines or shapes. Consider the rule of maximum of 6 lines per slide, each line with a maximum of 6 words. Use phrases, not sentences.

• Line/bar charts – use contrasting colors for different lines rather than symbols.

• Video must be imbedded into the presentation or be of digital format to be displayed onto the screens.

• End your presentation with the same title slide as your first slide – nice to have that title slide on the screen as you are answering questions.

**Posters**

For those that have Poster Papers, the plan is to have you give your short presentation, and then set up your poster. The poster board should be a foam core board and be able to be set on a table (you provide the poster and the board). The posters are set out during the reception for attendees to see and ask questions. Do not simply glue your paper onto a poster board! The poster is intended to present additional information, photos, etc. The material is then put away after the reception.