**Tips for Research Paper Presentations**

**Research Papers** (20 minutes)

Research Paper presentations are 20 minutes in length (15 minutes for the presentation with five (5) minutes for questions and answers). Three (3) Research Papers will be grouped in a session. Presenters should avoid reading papers and/or study results, and instead present the valuable information in an engaging format.

**Opening:**
- Jump right in by stating the question you will answer.
- Give your rehearsed opening statement; don't improvise at the last moment.
- Use the opening to catch the interest and attention of the audience.
- Briefly state the problem or topic you will be discussing.
- Briefly summarize your main theme for an idea or solution.

**Speaking**
- Talk at a natural, moderate rate of speech
- Project your voice.
- Speak clearly and distinctly.
- Repeat critical information.
- Pause briefly to give your audience time to digest the information on each new slide.

**Handouts:**
- Presenters are advised to post your handouts on the ACTFL Community site and refer attendees to there at the beginning and ending of the presentation.
- Remind attendees that this saves paper and makes for a “green” presentation.

**PowerPoint Slides:**
- Let the pictures or graphics in your PowerPoint slides tell the story – don’t overload with text and/or data. Too much text makes the slide unreadable.
- The aim is to have a few powerful PowerPoint slides.
- Prepare an Agenda or Table of Contents slide.
- Proofread everything, including visuals and numbers.
- Font size must be large enough to be easily read. Size 28 to 34 with a bold font is recommended.
- It is distracting if you use too wide a variety of fonts.
- For a long presentation, you may want to change background designs when shifting to a new topic.
- Animation effects can be interesting when used in moderation.
  - Too much animation is distracting.
  - Consider using animated clip art
  - Consider using custom animation
- You can insert video and audio clips into PowerPoint, but the clips must be on your laptop: you cannot access them through the internet
- Don’t read the slides aloud. Your audience can read them far faster than you can talk.
Numbers

- Numbers are usually confusing to the audience. Use as few as possible and allow extra time for the audience to do the math.
- Numbers should never be ultra precise:
  - “The Break Even Point is 1048.17 units. Are you selling fractions of a unit?
  - Don’t show pennies. Cost per unit is about the only time you would need to show pennies.
- If you have more than 12-15 numbers on a slide, that’s probably too many.
- Using only one number per sentence helps the audience absorb the data.
- Consider presenting data in chart or graph form, which is more easily understood than a chart with numbers.

Statistics

- Use the same scale for numbers on a slide. Don’t compare hundreds to thousands.
- Cite your source on the same slide as the statistic, using a smaller size font.

Charts

- Charts need to be clearly labeled. You can make more interesting charts by adding elements from the drawing toolbar.
- Numbers in tables are both hard to see and to understand. There is usually a better way to present your numerical data than with columns and rows of numbers. Get creative!
- PowerPoint deletes portions of charts and worksheets that are imported from Excel, keeping only the leftmost 5.5 inches. Plan ahead.

Backgrounds

- Backgrounds in PowerPoint slides should never distract from the presentation.
- Using the default white background is hard on the viewer’s eyes. You can easily add a design style or a color to the background.
- Backgrounds that are light colored with dark text, or vice versa, look good. A dark background with white font reduces glare.
- Colors appear lighter when projected. Pale colors often appear as white.
- Consistent backgrounds add to a professional appearance.

Length:

- Research Papers are 15 minutes in length with 5 minutes for Q&A.
- End on time! There is another presentation following yours in the same room.