How to Make a Presentation

SWEN-261
Introduction to Software Engineering
Department of Software Engineering
Rochester Institute of Technology
Making a presentation can be a frightening experience for some people.

- How to deliver an effective presentation is an important skill for your professional career.
- It would be good for you to be comfortable communicating your technical ideas to others.
But first, let's reflect on that instructor you had whose lectures were just so bad.

- What made them that bad?
  - *Droned on in a monotone*
  - *Spoke too softly for you to hear*
  - *Only looked at the screen or board*
  - *Presented dense slides filled with text, charts, and images that you could not read*
  - *Simply read the text to you*
  - *Material had no apparent organization or flow*
  - *Tried to present too much so rushed or skipped stuff*
  - *Did not seem to know the material very well*
  - *Told lousy jokes*
  - *Never allowed for any questions*

- Make sure your presentation avoids these faults
A presentation is not something that just happens.

- To give a good presentation, especially within the allowed time, takes preparation and organization.
- You need to start with top-level "requirements".
  - **Who is the audience?**
    - What is their expertise level in the area?
  - **What is the purpose of the presentation?**
    - What do you want to get across to the audience?
    - What does the audience want to hear or learn?
  - **How much time do you have?**
Based on the requirements that you have, create an outline for the presentation.

- Your outline can be in terms of slides that you will have in the presentation.
  - Roughly identify the purpose for each slide in terms of how it will contribute to the overall purpose
  - At this top level, identify the flow of information from one slide to the next

- You will know more details than you will have time to cover.
  - What are the most important points to hit?
  - Where should you spend time on details?
  - Two minutes per slide is a good ballpark; unless the slides have minimal information, one minute per slide will be rushing the slide
Like most things, you will get better with practice.

- Doing more presentations should improve your general presentation skills and reduce anxiety.
- Practicing a specific talk will help you nail it.
  - Go over it in your head
  - Run through it by yourself
  - Have the team practice the entire talk
- Learn from your practice
  - Carefully note areas that seemed rough
  - Use different wording if you stumble on something
  - The team should constructively critique each other's section of the presentation
You must provide graphics to support your design discussion.

- Your documentation will provide many more details than you can give in your presentation.

- You will use a variety of graphics
  - *Break the system into multiple class diagrams that are readable by the audience, i.e. less detail*
  - *Statecharts for web application interface, and class behavior*
  - *Sequences diagrams to show flow of a feature*

- Be clear on the purpose for the slide
  - *Have your diagram target that level of information.*
Finally, you should be proud of the work that you have done on the project.

- Let that pride show through to the audience.
- This is your work. Shout out about it.
  - *Tell the audience about what you did.*
  - *It will not be perfect.*
  - *There may be places with critical comments given.*
  - *If you made a truly diligent effort on the project work as a team you have done what was asked of you.*