

EECS 573 Class Overview

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EECS 573

How to give a bad talk

The Ten Commandments
by David A. Patterson

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1. Thou shalt not waste space

- Transparencies and hard-discs are expensive.
- If you can save five slides in each talks per year, you save 7.00/year in transparencies!
- This is equivalent to 350 kB precious memory!
- 2. Thou shalt not be neat
- 3. Thou shalt not cover brevity
 - Do you want to continue the stereotypes that engineers can't write? Always use complete sentences, never just key words. If possible, use whole paragraphs and read every word.
- 4. Thou shalt cover thy naked slides
 - You need the suspenseful Overlays, not be flashy.
- 5. Thou shalt not write large
 - Be humble – use a small font. Important people sit in front. Who cares about the rest of it?
- 6. Thou shalt not use color
 - Flippant use of color indicates uncareful research. It's also useful to emphasize some words over others.
- 7. Thou shalt not flatter
 - Confucius says: "A person is 10% words, but 90% says: "Others are far wiser than I." Who are you going to believe? Slaves from the ages or the person who has learned glass?"
- 8. Thou shalt not make eye contact
 - You should avoid eye to show respect. Making screen can also add mystery.
- 9. Thou shalt not skip slides in a long talk
 - You prepared the slides, people come for your whole talk, so just talk better. Skip your summary and conclusion if necessary.
- 10. Thou shalt not practice

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1. Thou shalt not waste space

- Handouts and hard-discs are expensive.
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2. Thou shalt not be neat

- Why waste research time on prepare slides?
- Ignore spell'g, grammer and legibility.

Who cares what 30 people think?

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2. Thou shalt not be neat

- Why waste research time on preparing slides?
- Ignore *spelling, grammar and legibility.*

Who cares what 30 people think?

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3. Thou shalt not covet brevity

- Do you want to continue the stereotype that statisticians can't write? Always use complete sentences, never just key words. If possible, use whole paragraphs and read every word.

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3. Thou shalt not covet brevity

- Use **key** words.
- Don't **read** your slide.

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4. Thou shalt animate to the limit

- You need the **suspense!**

Overlays are too flashy
Animations can irritate.

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5. Thou shalt not write large

- Be humble -- use a **small font...**
- ...especially for the relevant part.
- Important people sit in the front.

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6. Thou shalt not use color

- Flagrant use of **color** indicates uncareful research.
- It's also **unfair** to emphasize some words over others.

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7. Thou shalt not illustrate

- Confucius says
 - ``A picture is a 1000 words,``
- but Dijkstra says
 - ``Pictures are for weak minds.``
- Who are you going to believe?

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8. Thou shalt not make eye contact

- You should avert eyes to show **respect**.
- Blocking screen can also add **mystery**.

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9. Thou shalt not skip slides in a long talk

- You **prepared** the slides and suffered, make them suffer too.
- People came for your whole talk; don't cheat them out of anything.
- So just talk **faster**
- Skip your **summary** and **conclusions** if necessary.

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10. Thou shalt not practice

- Why waste research time **practicing** a talk?
 - It could take several hours out of your two years of research.
 - How can you appear spontaneous if you practice?
- If you do practice, **argue** with any suggestions you get and make sure your talk is **longer** than the time you have to present it.
- Commandment 10 is most important. Even if you break the other nine, this one can save you.

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1. Thou shalt not be **neat**
2. Thou shalt not **waste space**
3. Thou shalt not covet **brevity**
4. Thou shalt **animate** to the limit
5. Thou shalt not write **large**
6. Thou shalt not use **color**
7. Thou shalt not **illustrate**
8. Thou shalt not make **eye contact**
9. Thou shalt not **skip** slides in a long talk
10. Thou shalt not **practice**

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EECS 573 Presentation Structure

- This is a structure that works well in my experience and it is the most common at conference presentations, however, other structures may work as well, too.
 - Motivation
 - Goal
 - Solution - technical overview
 - Technical insights
 - Experimental evaluation
 - Conclusion
 - Discussion points

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How to Prepare

- *(10 days before)*
 - Study the paper
 - Make sure you understand it
 - Make sure you understand the problem that the paper addresses.
You may need to do some research to understand the problem/context better.
 - Read referenced work if the paper relies heavily on it
- *(1 week before)*
Prepare your slides
 - Limit amount of text in a slide
 - Pictures are always faster at conveying ideas
(feel free to copy pictures from the paper)
 - Follow the structure above (Presentation structure)
 - Have no more than 10-13 slides
- *(3-4 days before)*
 - Rehearse
 - Rehearse again
- *(1 class period before)*
 - Meet 1-1 with instructor (**REQUIRED**)
 - Rehearse
- *(day of the presentation)*
 - Present

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Class Checklist

- You have 20 minutes for your presentation + 10 minutes for the discussion. After 30 minutes I must stop the discussion to move on to the next paper or lecture.
- The 1-1 meeting with the instructor should be scheduled on the day of the lecture preceding your presentation. (If the slides are not ready at the time of the 1-1 meeting with the instructor, the presentation will be pulled from the schedule.)
- Responsibilities of the audience
 - Read the papers in advance
 - Be an engaging audience
 - Be prepared for two-team question and answer sessions after the talk