

ADVICE FOR WSCA CONVENTION PRESENTERS

“Why can’t presenters communicate better?” is a very common complaint from convention audiences. The following statements are collected from a number of successful presenters.

1. Deliver an extemporaneous talk about the paper or GIFTS presentation (planned, but not canned!). Do not read portions of the paper.
2. Consider the presentation a chance to invite people to read your paper or in the case of GIFTS an invitation to try what you have done with their own twist. Strive for quality of information over quantity.
3. Share with the audience, emphasizing why this work/activity is important, how the project/study/activity emerged, and then focus on the findings/successful use of the activity. Make the presentation conversational and share the important conclusions. For quantitative studies you may wish to concentrate on results and conclusions (what you found and what these findings mean to you and scholars in the discipline) instead of the statistics. With interpretive studies or rhetorical arguments, again select key themes, observations, or major claims. For GIFTS consider application to different classes (e.g. public speaking, interpersonal, group, etc.)
4. To present a conference paper or GIFTS effectively, follow the rules of public speaking:
 - a. Know your time limit and practice so that you meet that limit.
 - b. Time yourself as you speak.
 - c. Consider your audience; that is, think about what would be most interesting for them to hear.
5. Use all the skills of a good public presenter including using an extemporaneous (i.e., conversational) style that is planned, practiced, and talk WITH the audience; and good eye contact are always preferred. Show enthusiasm for, and commitment to, your hard work by preparing and presenting well.

Courtesy Demands:

1. If this is a paper presentation send a copy of your paper to the respondent well in advance of the conference.
2. For both paper and/or GIFTS presentation bring ample copies of your paper to the conference. Also consider bringing your business card in case you run out so that audience members can email you for a digital copy.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE WSCA PANEL/PROGRAM CHAIR

1. Please welcome the audience and indicate that this is one of the panels/programs sponsored by your Interest Group (indicate co-sponsor when applicable) and give the title of the panel/program.
2. Introduce all speakers at the beginning of the panel/program, BUT do not take too much of the time. Confirm the correct pronunciation of each panel/program member's name before the panel/program begins. Check also for any changes in title or presenter.
3. Introduce each participant again prior to his/her presentation; please also announce the title of the paper or title of their GIFTS.
4. Please keep time and give each speaker a signal at an agreed-upon time and a final one-minute warning. It is important to keep on time so that each speaker gets his/her full time. Some chairs appoint time-keepers from members of the audience so that they do not need to shuffle notes to the presenters. Note that panels/programs are 75 minutes long. Assuming that you take 5 minutes for introductions, each participant should have approximately 10-12 minutes to present (assuming there are four papers and one respondent). This should leave time for the respondent and discussion. For GIFTS there are between 5 or 6 participants – each speaker should have approximately 10 minutes allowing for introductions.
5. At the end of the panel/program, lead a discussion by recognizing people and regulating the length of their comments. If there is time after the presentation or if someone is unable to present allow for more questions or ask the audience how they could adapt some of the presented GIFTS for their classroom.
6. At the conclusion of the panel/program, please thank the participants and indicate that there are other major convention activities (such as a keynote address) or panels/programs sponsored by your Interest Group (specify when) and a business meeting (specify time and place). Invite audience members to participate in conference activities and to support your Interest Group.