Nailing the Job Talk
or
Erudition Ain’t Enough

Andrew E Green, PhD
“The job talk is what will make or break your campus visit”

Professor Tim Lebestky
consultant
Williams College
Grad Students & PhDs - Career Center Special Events

The Career Center’s PhD counselors offer customized workshops designed to meet the needs of graduate students, PhDs, and postdocs whether you are pursuing a faculty position or are focused on professional options outside of academia. For more information about Career Center services for advanced degree holders, visit Graduate Students, PhDs, and Postdocs.

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<td>Creating Your Written Credentials: CVs, Cover Letters, Etc.</td>
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Setting The Hook

• Most common start to a Job Talk:

  My research is about the S. Korean Auto Industry

• Most common response:
Setting The Hook

• Just Because You’ve Spent All This Time on Your Topic Doesn’t Mean They Will Find it Worthy of Their Attention

• Don’t Start With a Laundry List

• They’re Leaning Back - How Do You Get Them to Lean Forward?

• What is the Surprise? What’s at Stake?

• Tell them a story

• EX 1
Structuring the Talk

• Provide the Context

• Give them a Road Map

• General - Specific – General

• Praxis before Theory; plenty of examples

• Brief Review & Finish With Implications

• Ex 2
Allude to Complexity, But Keep it Simple

• Assume Ignorance

• Making it Easy for Your Audience – Visual Learners

• Making it Easy for You

• Do You Want to Address Questions in the Midst of or at the End - Decide Ahead of Time
Use Evocative, But Not Clichéd Language

• How many of you have sat through student or peer presentations?

• We most easily learn something new by reference/comparison to what is already familiar

• Use Analogies, Metaphors, and Similes to Illustrate
  - RR

• Means/Ends - Statistics Don’t “Speak for Themselves.”
It’s About More Than Words

- 7 Percent Rule
- Make Eye Contact
- Text vs. Notes/PowerPoint/Winging It
- Written vs. Spoken Language
- Speak Slowly - Pause for Emphasis
- Time it Out
AS YOU CAN CLEARLY SEE IN SLIDE 397...

GAAAHH!

"POWERPOINT POISONING."
Using PowerPoint Effectively

• Don’t Use Distracting Fonts, Multiple Graphics, Transitions & Effects

• Don’t read everything on your PowerPoint slides. Your audience can read much faster than you can articulate the words & their minds will have time to wander away while you catch up - will they ever come back?

• Most people are visual, rather than verbal, learners

• Bring Transparencies with You (art)
Handouts

• Don’t Distribute a Printout of your Slides

• Something to Take Away
  – Not an Outline of the Talk but a Recitation of Key Points and Data
Display Confidence When Challenged

- You have Reasons and Evidence to Back Your Assertions
- Apparent Challenges are Often Requests for Clarification
- Re-State Their Objection in Your Own Words
- Address the Issues Raised - Take Them Through the Steps if Necessary
- Reasonable People Can Differ
- Move On
Chalk Talks

- Your plans for future research
- Not informal, Not Improvised
- Organize it like a grant application with 2-4 clear aims
- Ubung macht den Meister – including writing on the board
Best Advice I have to Offer

• Providence, RI is a boring place to grow up
Upcoming Fall Presentations

• Nov 1 – Nailing the Job Talk

• Nov 30 - Postdocs: What Should You be Looking For and How to Find Them

• Dec 1 - PhD Negotiation Skills and Strategies: How to get what you want and need
Finally, have a good closing slide. Why?

So your audience will know it's time to clap.