

# How to... give an oral presentation

## CONGRATULATIONS!

Your abstract has been accepted; you'll now have to put together a presentation for the Annual Conference. To help you prepare, here's some advice from the judges and finalists of the 2015 Sir Howard Dalton Young Microbiologist of the Year competition, which recognises the best early career science communicators in our membership.

## THE FINALISTS



**S. Chui Sang Lee**  
**PhD student**  
**National University of Ireland, Galway**

The first thing I try to establish is "who am I presenting to?" and "what is the message I want to get across?" so I can tailor my slides appropriately. My priority is to ensure that information is clearly received by the audience.



**Joe Kirk**  
**PhD student**  
**University of Sheffield**

I had given a number of talks before my presentation but was still quite nervous. I find that the time leading up to giving a talk is the most stressful as you tend to overthink things, but when you actually stand up and start talking it becomes a lot easier.

## THE JUDGES

**Dr Dave Whitworth**  
**Senior Lecturer in Biochemistry**  
**Aberystwyth University**  
**Young Microbiologist of the Year Head Judge**

The plot is paramount. Set the scene clearly, but don't dally – the audience wants to know about your part in the story.



**Dr Donna MacCallum**  
**Senior Lecturer in Microbiology**  
**University of Aberdeen**  
**Young Microbiologist of the Year Judge**

Remember that you know more about the project or research than anyone else in the room; no one is trying to catch you out with their questions, they are merely interested and want to know more about your work. Make eye contact, speak clearly and show your enthusiasm!



## TOP TIPS

- 1 Slides should be clear, with text kept to a minimum.
- 2 Use slide titles to pose a question or to provide the key message.
- 3 Assume everyone listening is a first year PhD student rather than a senior professor.
- 4 Find out what is provided on the day and try to practise in a similar space to the one you'll be presenting in.
- 5 Practise as much as possible, and try to anticipate the questions the audience may have.

To find out more about our presentation requirements, see [www.microbiologysociety.org/conferences](http://www.microbiologysociety.org/conferences)

You can find out more about the Society and the benefits of becoming a member at [www.microbiologysociety.org/membership](http://www.microbiologysociety.org/membership)



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