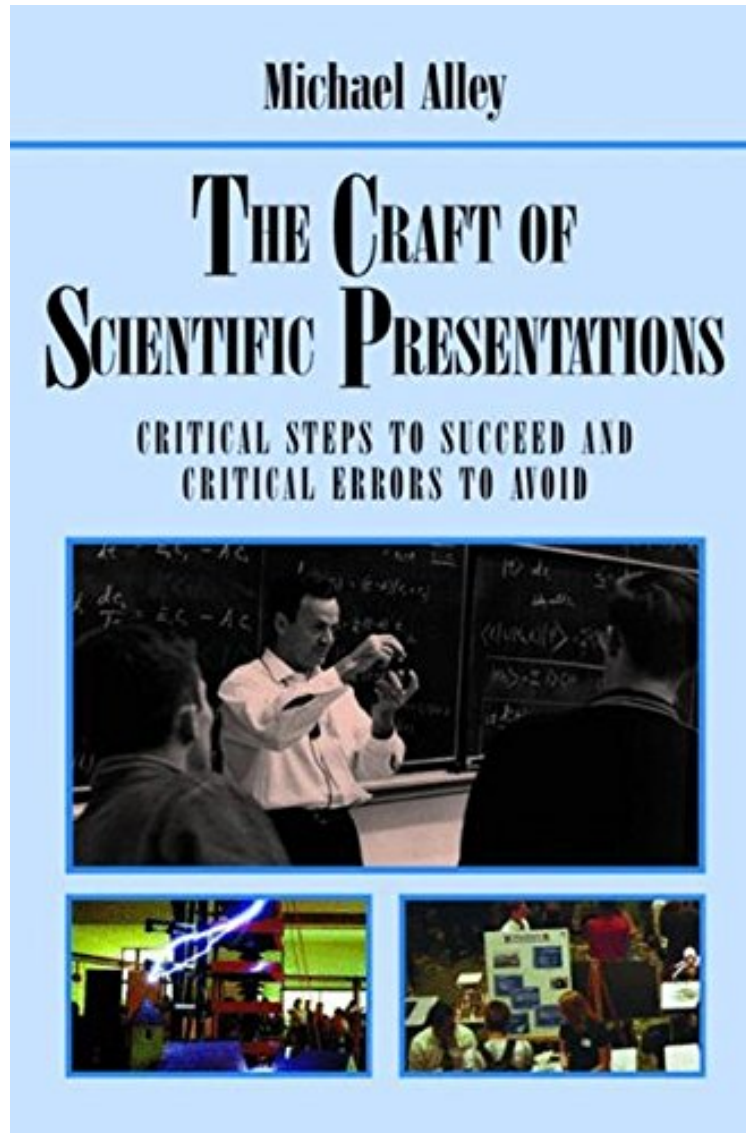


# The Craft of Scientific Presentations: Critical Steps to Succeed and Critical Errors to Avoid

Michael Alley

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**Michael Alley : The Craft of Scientific Presentations: Critical Steps to Succeed and Critical Errors to Avoid**

before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Craft of Scientific Presentations: Critical Steps to Succeed and Critical Errors to Avoid:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Read this to make your career a bit easier to manage By Kevin HomToo oftentimes presentations that use Powerpoint are dull and the audience loses focus in following the speaker -

the speaker in this case might as well be talking to a tree for the 30 minutes he or she is allotted to present their life's work. After reading this book, if you apply the concepts from this book in your presentations from then on, your technical presentations will become much more interesting to everyone and everywhere. Your audience will be able to grasp difficult technical concepts quite a bit faster because of this style of presenting. Even if you are not in a scientific major, it is worth a read since you, as a listener, in the future will encounter technical presentations in which your job depends on you disseminating that information - this book gives you the steps needed to be able to absorb the main concepts from the presenters.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Manual of Scientific Presentation  
By chemmastr  
This book is clearly meant for scientists from STEM fields. This book is more than just a primer for scientists who present and discuss information to audiences often, this book is The Manual of Scientific Presentation. Many scientific presentations are done poorly and are boring as hell. This is a must have book for scientists in training or in beyond. Mike gave this work 3 stars because the work doesn't cater to the media, humanities and the social sciences. I am a graduate student in chemistry, part of the intended audience, and I feel this book is a must have.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Three Stars  
By bill valdez  
This was a gift for my son in grad school. I hope he enjoys it.

This timely and hugely practical work provides a score of examples from contemporary and historical scientific presentations to show clearly what makes an oral presentation effective. It considers presentations made to persuade an audience to adopt some course of action (such as funding a proposal) as well as presentations made to communicate information, and it considers these from four perspectives: speech, structure, visual aids, and delivery. It also discusses computer-based projections and slide shows as well as overhead projections. In particular, it looks at ways of organizing graphics and text in projected images and of using layout and design to present the information efficiently and effectively.

From the reviews: Praise for Michael Alley's THE CRAFT OF SCIENTIFIC PRESENTATIONS: PHYSICS TODAY "Alley's [book has] elements of conversation that engage a reader in ways a list of rules would not. [It] can be profitably read from cover to cover, but [it] can also be opened to a specific section for reference ... The Craft of Scientific Presentations is informal in tone but serious in intent. Alley makes the reader think about the point of a presentation, about different kinds of presentations, about different techniques - from writing on a blackboard to using computer slide shows. He shows how to think about finding the right words, structure, and images. He is at his best discussing well-chosen examples from both great and lesser-known lecturers, and his counsel to anticipate what could go wrong is sage advice ... Spending time with [this book] will give you food for thought and the encouragement to practice, practice, practice!" PHYSICS WORLD "The book does contain much good advice. This is summarised in useful tables and checklists that are easy to locate and refer to subsequently. Having just returned from a large international conference, I only wish that many of the speakers had studied Alley's book." THE JOURNAL OF THE EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF SCIENCE EDITORS "A book that one can read for pleasure and self-improvement, as well as utilize as a manual... A valuable addition to the libraries of scientific institutions and I have already recommended it to several of my research organization clients." DANIEL J. INMAN, DIRECTOR CENTER FOR INTELLIGENT MATERIAL SYSTEMS "Alley has revamped the way our research center makes presentations particularly the way we design our presentation slides." CHRISTENE MOORE, COMMUNICATION INSTRUCTOR UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN "This book fills a void by illustrating key issues and difficulties in oral presentations with the experiences of others." "Scientific presentation, whether for a gathering of colleagues or a general audience, benefit from techniques of stagecraft and rhetoric. The Craft of Scientific Presentations is informal in tone but serious in intent. Alley makes the reader think about the point of a presentation, about different kinds of presentations, and about different techniques . He is at his best discussing well-chosen examples from both great and lesser-known lecturers, and his counsel to anticipate what could go wrong is sage advice." (Chris Quigg, Physics Today, July, 2004) "The author, an experienced teacher, adds numerous examples not only from his praxis, but found in many biographies, memorial books, and articles of well known scientists and speakers. Due to the applied form the book presents amusing reading for everybody . Forty-one illustrations accompany the text . Beginners in presenting speeches will find the book a source of both useful and interesting information, experienced lecturers can learn many amazing stories from the history of science." (Z. estk, Photosynthetica, Vol. 41 (4), 2003) "What makes an oral presentation effective? The Craft of Presentations considers presentations made to persuade an audience to adopt some course of action (such as funding a proposal) as well as presentations made to communicate information . Its goal is to provide you with the insights and tools to let you learn from your own presentations until they become outstanding." (Meteorology and Atmospheric Physics, Vol. 84 (1-2), 2003) "A failure to communicate the principal message of a scientific presentation can have literally catastrophic consequences. the book does contain much good advice. This is summarised in useful tables and checklists that are easy to locate and refer to subsequently. Having just returned from a large international conference, I only wish that many of the speakers had studied Alleys book." (Keith McEwen, Physics World, October, 2003) "Rather than present

a list of simple rules for giving scientific presentations, this book looks at the styles of successful presenters such as Boltzmann, Einstein, Feynman, Levi-Montalcini and Linus Pauling . The bulk of the book considers in detail ten critical errors that undermine the performance of the speaker, from giving the wrong speech to not preparing enough to not paying attention and losing composure." (Book News on the Internet, June, 2003)From the AuthorA revolution is occurring in the way that scientists and engineers are making presentations. The revolution is small, but many of the scientists and engineers breaking away from PowerPoint's default structure of a topic-phrase headline supported by bulleted points are making names for themselves: Janine Benyus, Brian Cox, Jill Bolte Taylor. This book tries to present the essence of that revolution by showing you what distinguishes the excellent scientific talks on TED.com as well as excellent presentations at scientific conferences and in technical meetings. After reading this book, you will know when to blank the screen during a scientific talk and how to empower that part of the presentation. Also, for those occasions in which you do use slides, you will create scenes that are truly for the audience, rather than the sad practice of projecting slides that simply present the speaker's notes. If you want to give a mediocre presentation, do what everybody else does. If you want to communicate your science and engineering in an understandable, memorable, and persuasive way, consider this book.

About the AuthorHolding a master of science in electrical engineering from Texas Tech and a master of fine arts in writing from the University of Alabama, Michael Alley is an associate professor of engineering communication at Penn State. He is the author of *The Craft of Scientific Writing*, 3rd ed., and *The Craft of Scientific Presentations*, 2nd ed. (2013). Over the past twenty years, he has taught writing and presenting courses to scientists and engineers across the United States and in Europe, Asia, and South America. Sites include Penn State, MIT, Virginia Tech, the University of Texas, the University of Illinois, Harvard Medical School, Sandia National Laboratories, Los Alamos National Laboratory, Lawrence Berkeley Lab, Lawrence Livermore Lab, United Technologies, Areva Nuclear Power, the Army Corps of Engineers, Simula Research Laboratory (Norway), the Institute for Energy Technology (Norway), the European Space Organization (Chile), the University of Sao Paulo, Shanghai Jiao Tong University, Seoul National University, the University of Osaka, the University of Oslo, the University of Barcelona, and the University of Seville. Alley's web-site on writing is the first Google.com listing for the topic of "engineering writing" and his web-site on speaking is the first Google.com listing for "presentation slides." When not writing or teaching, he can be found hiking through forests with his wife and dogs.