Tips for Presenting a Platform Presentation

Suggestions from the ASC Scientific Program Committee
Congratulations on the acceptance of your abstract for a platform presentation. The ASC Scientific Program Committee recognizes one of its goals as aiding and coaching in public speaking. The following are some tips for preparing and presenting your research.
Preparing the Slides

• Keep text succinct
• Use the ASC template
• Minimize the number of slides (10-15 for a 10 minute presentation is a good goal).
• Highlight the information you want to convey
  – QA, technique, or novel approaches require emphasis on methods
  – Otherwise minimize methods to pertinent information only (to provide plenty of time for results and conclusions)
Preparing the Talk

• Practice, practice, practice
  – Get a speaking buddy to give you feedback (e.g. your mentor, a resident/fellow, cytotechnologist, faculty)
  – Use this as an opportunity to identify and correct bad habits
Common mistakes

- Speaking too quickly
- Speaking too quietly
- Putting unnecessary information in the talk
- Using tables with too many boxes and words
- Traveling laser pointer (text slides rarely need a red dot following or circling the words)
- Reading off the slides
  - Bullet points will keep you on track and prevent you from reading the text
Good habits

- Be comfortable with the slides and the research
- Speak clearly
- If you lose your train of thought, start your sentence over again or simply move along
Question Portion

• Anticipate questions and your responses
• If you do not know the answer, simply state, “That is a good question but I don’t know the answer.” Your mentor should be in the session with you to field such questions. Other response options (depending on the situation) include:
  “I am not absolutely sure, but I believe…”
  “We did not evaluate that question specifically; however…”
• If you do not understand the question even after attempts to clarify a response, a comment such as “If this doesn’t answer your question, I would be happy to talk to you after this session,” is fine.
Remember

• The audience wants you to do well.
• It is not necessary to provide every detail of your research.
• If residual questions persist, they will be brought up during the question portion.
• Public speaking can be difficult, but practice makes it easier. Take this opportunity to learn your style and areas for improvement.
Example 1

• The next 2 slides demonstrate a wordy PowerPoint slide followed by an edited, clearer slide.
Methods

• 125 Papanicolaou and Diff Quik slides were reviewed from patients with lacrimal gland fine needle aspirations and classified as insufficient, benign, suspicious, malignant (with subtype).

• All cases were correlated with subsequent surgical excision or biopsy.
FNA of Lacrimal Gland

- 125 aspirates
  - insufficient, benign, suspicious, malignant
- Correlated with biopsy results
Example 2

- The next 2 slides show the same data presented different ways. The second slide is simple and clear and the audience does not need to spend a lot of time reviewing it. The second table could be followed by a more specific (but simple) table of one of the categories or a point you want to make.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Final Diagnosis</th>
<th>Insufficient</th>
<th>Benign</th>
<th>Suspicious</th>
<th>Malignant primary</th>
<th>Metastatic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breast carcinoma</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prostate carcinoma</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melanoma</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benign Mixed Tumor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acinic cell carcinoma</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mucoepidermoid carcinoma</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Insufficient</td>
<td>Benign</td>
<td>Suspicious</td>
<td>Malignant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salivary Gland Tumor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4 *</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metastatic Carcinoma</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: the asterix is there to prompt you to explain how many were benign or malignant on excision. This technique avoids the overuse of words in a table.
ASC us

• The Scientific Program Committee is willing to review your slides or coach you during any portion of your preparation. Simply contact the ASC office and they will put you in touch with one of the ASC members.
We look forward to hearing your presentation!