

## PREPARATION OF VISUALS

GOMACTech requires the use of computerized projection. All session rooms will be equipped with a laptop computer with MS Office and a projector. Further, **speakers are asked to arrive at their session room 30 minutes before the start of the session where an audio-visual operator will be available to assist them loading the presentation computer.** Speakers are also reminded that the instructions for the visuals preparation guidelines below still apply when using any of the popular presentation software programs.

### GOOD VISUALS ARE AN INVALUABLE ASSET

Good visuals can help you get your talk across with maximum impact; poor visuals that are illegible or confusing will simply distract your audience from what you're trying to say.

1. **QUANTITY.** A good rule of thumb is to allow about 2 minutes per visual. This means no more than 10 visuals in a 20-minute talk.
2. **SUBJECT MATTER.** Visual aids are intended to add information visually -- do not waste them where they are not needed. Use them where a picture, chart, diagram, or cartoon will help. Tables of figures are hard to read and understand quickly -- use pie charts or column graphs instead.
3. **SIMPLICITY.** If it takes longer than 10 seconds to comprehend a visual, there's too much on it. You want the audience to grasp the visual content quickly, then turn their attention to what you are saying about it. Put nothing on the visual you don't need; tell what each visual is all about, but do not just read it. Keep it on as long as your talk refers to it.

For maximum presentation area and legibility, all visuals should be prepared for horizontal projection.

***PLEASE AVOID THE USE OF COLORED BACKGROUNDS  
WHEN MAKING VISUALS -- WHITE BACKGROUNDS ARE  
PREFERRED.***

GOMAC MS PowerPoint presentation templates are available [here](#).

## ORAL PRESENTATION

### SUGGESTIONS TO SPEAKERS

GOMACTech offers you a unique opportunity to reach an exceptional audience with your presentation. The atmosphere at GOMACTech is warm and collegial, and you can expect an alert, attentive, and receptive audience when you speak. The following suggestions are intended to help you carry on the tradition of lively, informative presentations for which GOMACTech is known. Read it over -- we hope that even the most experienced speakers will find some useful suggestions in the following pages.

#### General

1. **PREPARATION.** Considerable time should be taken in the preparation of the Proceeding material and presentation of your talk. The two should have nothing in common but subject matter, for concise writing is one thing, and clear, engrossing speaking is quite another. Please do plan to allow yourself plenty of time to prepare for the specific task of making an oral presentation.
2. **SHOW UP EARLY.** Plan to meet with the Session Chair near the speakers' platform 30 minutes before the beginning of the Session. The Chair will have some final instructions for you and you may have some for him, and it takes time to get everyone squared away. This will also be your opportunity to give your visuals to the projection technician, along with any special instructions with respect to your presentation. The name of your Session Chair was given in the accompanying letter.

#### On Speaking

1. **SPEAK UP.** Address the microphone as recommended by your moderator. Speak distinctly and don't rush your words. Above all you must be heard, and those in the rear rows do want to hear you!
2. **BE ENTHUSIASTIC.** It's infectious. Putting across the excitement that your paper should generate is the best way to make the audience catch fire. If you let the audience see and hear your enthusiasm for the subject, they'll pick up on it and stay with you. Let them in on the fun!
3. **KEEP IT SIMPLE.** Your audience came to be enlightened, not confused, to be told results, not to relive every step of your research. Avoid long mathematical developments: present in words only the highlights and the logical basis of your proof, then show the results and interpret them fully. Your research took months -- or years -- but what counts is the substance and significance of the end result.
4. **LANGUAGE.** Very specialized terms and acronyms should be used sparingly and only after they have been carefully explained to the audience. Any paper delivered at GOMACTech should be intelligible to anyone else attending the symposium, even though he might not be a specialist in that particular area.
5. **OUTLINE, PRESENT, SUMMARIZE.** The written word is permanent, and each of us reads and re-reads it at his own pace. The spoken word is transient and the speaker sets the pace. Your audience needs time to absorb each thought and can't review what you've just said without missing what you're about to say. Give your listeners a chance to keep up and reinforce your message by reviewing it with them. Begin with a brief introductory summary of your thesis that places your work in the context of familiar material. Then go through the thesis slowly and in detail, amplifying each point and explaining fully. Finally, in the last couple of minutes, summarize again, in terms of your conclusions and plans for future research.
6. **AVOID READING YOUR PAPER . . . USE NOTES.** Your speaking style should be relatively informal and relaxed, compared with a written research report. An informal style is usually easiest to achieve if you speak from notes, rather than read a prepared speech where every word has been written out in advance. It is better to prepare a complete set of notes for continuing reference. Speaking from notes allows you more flexibility to adjust your talk to the mood of the audience. If you do write out your talk, avoid the condensed, formal language you would use in a written presentation. Instead of "Upon examination of the maximum

characteristic shown on slide 6 it is evident that . . .", write "Now, look at the top curve on this slide an you'll see that . . .".

Notes should be typed with key words underlined. No matter how full your notes, you will communicate better if you try to look at your audience more than three-quarters of the time. You can do it with practice.

7. **REHEARSE YOUR TALK AT LEAST TWICE WITH A PRIVATE AUDIENCE.** Professional actors and politicians rehearse important speeches -- so should you. Ask your rehearsal audience for suggestions and reactions, especially about pacing -- they'll be able to tell you whether you're throwing out new ideas too quickly to be grasped or moving too slowly to maintain high-level interest. Audio/video recording and listening to/watching yourself may also give you valuable pointers; the way you think you sound may not actually be the way you sound! Time your talk, change it to make it clearer. With enough rehearsal you will be able to abbreviate your notes or do without them altogether, and that will let you make much better contact with your audience..