

The 10 Dos and the 10 Don't s for a Seminar Talk

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The 10 Dos

1. Read not only the papers provided but also the papers referenced to in these
2. In preparation, communicate with your instructors
3. Use also the blackboard (e.g. for side calculations or stuff that is to remain)
4. Carefully introduce all your terminology
5. Don't overcrowd your slides, explain everything on them
6. Always connect to the audience
7. Speak slowly and clearly, take your time (give the audience time to think, to cherish your work)
8. Confine yourself to a clear and beautiful story
9. Rehearse your talk several times, also with audience (it should have the spirit of a theater performance), hold some part before your instructor (in advance)
10. Enjoy your talk (then the audience will do the like)

The 10 Don't s

1. Don't believe the literature. It's often faulty and too complicated, you may be able to correct and simplify
2. Don't take preparation too lightly, start early
3. Don't brood too long over things you don't understand, talk to peers and your instructors
4. Don't slur over complicated things and start mumbling
5. Don't lament that you have not enough time, the topic be too complicated, etc.
6. Don't skip details that are boring to you but essential for the audience
7. Don't please the specialists only, also make the general audience happy
8. Don't show off but stick to scientific modesty
9. Don't say too often: "this is interesting but I am not gonna talk about this"
10. Don't improvise (you can start doing so after your hundredth talks); improvisation is legitimate and greatly recommend, however, when referring to a previous speaker, previous questions, etc.