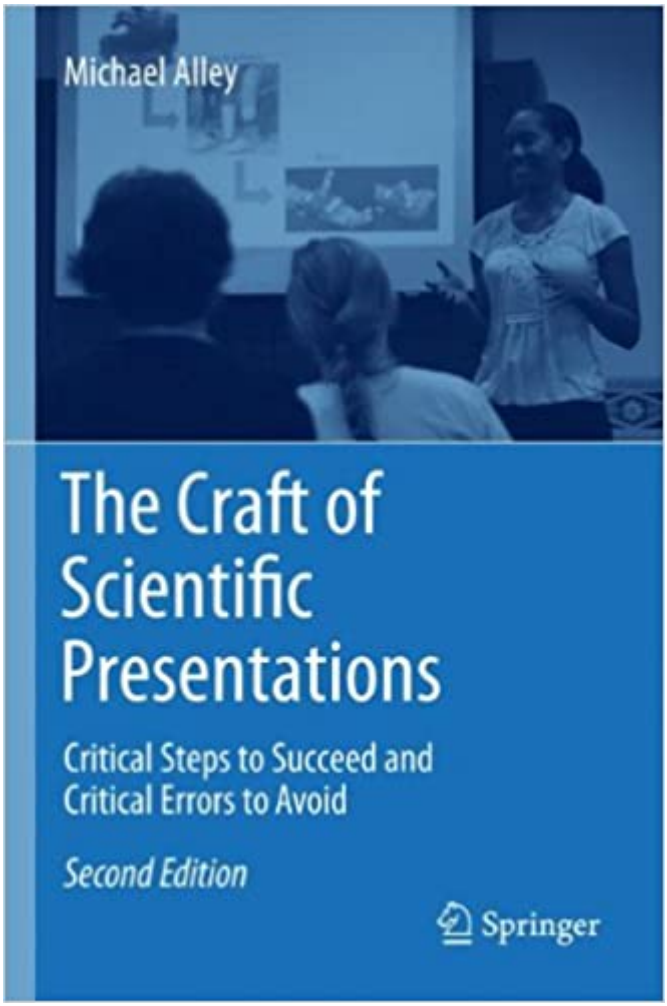
The Craft Of Scientific Presentations: Critical Steps To Succeed And Critical Errors To Avoid



Synopsis

The Craft of Scientific Presentations, 2nd edition aims to strengthen you as a presenter of science and engineering. The book does so by identifying what makes excellent presenters such as Brian Cox, Jane Goodall, Richard Feynman, and Jill Bolte Taylor so strong. In addition, the book explains what causes so many scientific presentations to flounder.One of the most valuable contributions of this text is that it teaches the assertion-evidence approach to scientific presentations. Instead of building presentations, as most engineers and scientists do, on the weak foundation of topic phrases and bulleted lists, this assertion-evidence approach calls for building presentations on succinct message assertions supported by visual evidence. Unlike the commonly followed topic-subtopic approach that PowerPoint leads presenters to use, the assertion-evidence approach is solidly grounded in research.By showing the differences between strong and weak presentations, by identifying the errors that scientific presenters typically make, and by teaching a much more powerful approach for scientific presentations than what is commonly practiced, this book places you in a position to elevate your presentations to a high level. In essence, this book aims to have you not just succeed in your scientific presentations, but excel.About the AuthorMichael Alley has taught workshops on presentations to engineers and scientists on five continents, and has recently been invited to speak at the European Space Organization, Harvard Medical School, MIT, Sandia National Labs, Shanghai Jiao Tong University, Simula Research Laboratory, and United Technologies. An Associate Professor of engineering communication at Pennsylvania State University, Alley is a leading researcher on the effectiveness of different designs for presentation slides.

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Customer Reviews

From the reviews of the second edition:Ã¢â ¬Å“AlleyÃ¢â ¬â„¢s book as an important and must-read guide for anyone in the scientific field. Professors, researchers and students will greatly benefit from AlleyÃ¢â ¬â„¢s work. The book also has the benefit of being short and concreteÃ¢â ¬â œa plus for the busy scientist.Ã¢â ¬Â• (Philosophy, Religion and Science Book Reviews, bookinspections.wordpress.com, March, 2014)Ã¢â ¬Å“The second edition ... of this readable and informative volume highlights 13 critical errors to avoid in scientific presentations. Alley (Virginia Tech) provides examples through words and images about how to best convey ideas and meaning by understanding, connecting with, and engaging the audience. Ã¢â ¬Â¦ This is a valuable work for academic and research libraries supporting, in particular, faculty, researchers, and graduate students. Summing Up: Highly recommended. Upper-level undergraduates through researchers/faculty.Ã¢â ¬Â• (J. Clemons, Choice, Vol. 51 (5), January, 2014)

The Craft of Scientific Presentations, 2nd edition aims to strengthen you as a presenter of science and engineering. The book does so by identifying what makes excellent presenters such as Brian Cox, Jane Goodall, Richard Feynman, and Jill Bolte Taylor so strong. In addition, the book explains what causes so many scientific presentations to flounder.One of the most valuable contributions of this text is that it teaches the assertion-evidence approach to scientific presentations. Instead of building presentations, as most engineers and scientists do, on the weak foundation of topic phrases and bulleted lists, this assertion-evidence approach calls for building presentations on succinct message assertions supported by visual evidence. Unlike the commonly followed topic-subtopic approach that PowerPoint leads presenters to use, the assertion-evidence approach is solidly grounded in research.By showing the differences between strong and weak presentations, by identifying the errors that scientific presenters typically make, and by teaching a much more powerful approach for scientific presentations than what is commonly practiced, this book places you in a position to elevate your presentations to a high level. In essence, this book aims to have you not just succeed in your scientific presentations, but excel. About the AuthorMichael Alley has taught workshops on presentations to engineers and scientists on five continents, and has recently been invited to speak at the European Space Organization, Harvard Medical School, MIT, Sandia National Labs, Shanghai Jiao Tong University, Simula Research Laboratory, and United Technologies. An Associate Professor of engineering communication at Pennsylvania State

University, Alley is a leading researcher on the effectiveness of different designs for presentation slides.

The 2nd edition of Alley's "The Craft of Scientific Presentations" is an important modernization of his original work. I was keen on getting this edition because the 1st Edition was written in 2002. Alley wrote about transparencies and slide carousels then and while these technologies are not entirely obsolete, the ubiquity of projected slides has pushed them to the sidelines. In this edition, Alley deliberately focused on the projected slide, courtesy of Microsoft PowerPoint or your favorite slideware. Although Alley's discussion of the pros, cons and appropriate use of older technologies in the 1st edition was greatly appreciated, he completely omitted it in the 2nd. I find this a wasted opportunity as the short discussion could have still been substantial material for the Appendix. Despite today's technology, carousels and transparencies still have some advantages over LCD projectors.If the 1st Edition cautioned the reader on 10 Critical Errors, the 2nd Edition cautioned on 13. Notably, Alley dedicated 2 (new) Critical Errors to criticizing Microsoft PowerPoint and its role in perpetuating poor presentations as we know them today. Furthermore, he blasted PowerPoint's topic-subtopic default and advocated the assertion-evidence format. He defends his advocacy and strengthens his credibility by citing his work as a multimedia learning specialist--a task he did not do in the 1st edition. The 3rd (new) Critical Error is simply an older chapter broken down.If it weren't for the 2 substantially new Critical Errors, the 2nd Edition would only have been a reorganization of the 1st. Although I have to say the 1st Edition felt more coherent, professional and organized. The outline of the 1st Edition was very clear while the 2nd Edition felt as if I was wandering through Alley's rants and stories. The 1st Edition seemed more professionally done.Finally, the last point of Alley's modernization were his hat tips to the giants of modern day slide communication. He incorporated examples from TED and ideas from the Heath Brothers (Made to Stick: Why Some Ideas Survive and Others Die), Garr Reynolds (Presentation Zen: Simple Ideas on Presentation Design and Delivery (2nd Edition) (Voices That Matter)) and Nancy Duarte (slide:ology: The Art and Science of Creating Great Presentations). He also advocated newer presentation styles such as the Pecha Kucha, evidence-assertion (in addition to the original assertion-evidence), and the Lessig Method.Overall, Alley's book as an important and must-read guide for anyone in the scientific field. Professors, researchers and students will greatly benefit from Alley's work. The book also has the benefit of being short and concrete--a plus for the busy scientist.What makes this book very important is that it is one of the few books centered on scientific presenting. Many of what are available right now are skewed towards presenting in business and to the general public. If ever

there are, they are short discussions or a chapter at most. Scientific presentations have certain norms and nuances which Alley carefully takes into account.Owners of the 1st Edition will appreciate the modernized update, especially if you find yourself constantly going back to refresh. If you are a scientist and are currently looking for your first presentation book to invest in, then look no further.For maximum effect, supplement this book with Garr Reynolds and Nancy Duarte. Then you will never look at presentations the same way again. Ever.

Absolutely a must-have for anybody delivering scientific or technical presentations, from undergraduates to full professors. I have been delivering scientific presentations for almost 15 years, and I was stunned on how many good advices you can find in this book. Some of them I was already following purely by experience and intuition, but here you can find the tips clearly formulated and scientifically justified. Each chapter is directly to the point with clear language and clear exmaples, much different from other books on presentations that are basically just empty words and nice pictures, but quite useless. If you have to choose just one book to improve your presentations, got this one without a doubt.

As you excitingly discuss your well researched topic to an audience with glazed looks in their eyes, this book can help you immensely. I used it as a guide to teach a Presentation Skills class for researchers, and the ideas were very warmly received, and importantly, implemented to great success by the participants.

This book is comprehensive, evidence-based oriented and very helpful for scientific presentations. The author goes into great depths about the concept of presenting and goes beyond the usual "font-type, color selection" tips in other books about presentations. I have followed the basic concepts of this book for my last 2 medical contents presentations and they have been extremely better than all my past presentations. This is definitely a must-have for people who frequently do presentations,

I love this method. Be prepared for a whole new way to use PowerPoint. It forces you to have your material down for this method to work, but hey, shouldn’t you have it down anyway? Tried it out on some technical folks and they really stay engaged and asked a lot of questions.

I’m a research scientist at a well-known pharmaceutical company, and I’ve sat through way too

many stultifying presentations. Alley's prescription for scientific presentations is spot-on! Now if I can just persuade some of my colleagues to follow this model too...This is a must-read, must-*do* book for any STEM worker who makes presentations.

The book focuses primarily on the "assertion-evidence" style of presenting scientific results. In a nutshell, an assertion-evidence slide provides a sentence-like statement at the top, followed by supporting photos, figures, equations, tables, etc. In contrast to the bullet-point oriented, topic/sub-topic style of most presentations, this approach has advantages both for the audience (e.g., harnesses multiple paths to learning) and for the speaker (e.g., focuses attention on the main points).The book also contains a lot of supporting material, ranging from high-level structure, to delivery, to nitty-gritty details like font size. Along the way, it cites a lot of historical anecdotes, and shows real-life examples of both good and bad slides. It also briefly mentions a few other alternatives to the bullet-point style, and provides recommendations on when these techniques do and don't work.I came to this book after the author, Michael Alley, presented some of these ideas at my Lab. He made a convincing case, and in the time since then, I've seen co-workers give presentations that the assertion-evidence approach clearly improved. If you've seen Alley speak, I would say the book is written a bit more stiffly than his on-stage delivery, and has more repetition, but I think these result from his desire to make each chapter stand on its own.The contents are research-based, but presented (for the most part) non-dogmatically, with a clear sense that these are guidelines which can be violated as the need arises.

This book presents a reasonsble alternative to typical scientific presentations. It is an easy read and thought-provoking treatise worthwhile for anyone who regularly presents research results.

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