



SPARK Oral Presentation Tips and Checklist

Before SPARK: Here are some helpful tips as you prepare your presentation

Step 1: Prepare your Content

- A typical structure for your presentation is: Intro → Background → Methods → Results → Discussion/Implications → Conclusion
- Here are some reflective questions to help guide your preparation:
 - Introduction – What is this project and why does it matter?
 - Context/Background – What led to this work?
 - Methods/Process – What did you actually do?
 - Results/Data – What did you find?
 - Interpretation – What does the data mean?
 - Growth & Implications – How did this shape you? What comes next?
 - Conclusion – What should the audience remember?
- Identify your 3–5 key takeaways (those things you want the audience to remember)
- Spell out acronyms on first use and cite sources as needed

Step 2: Design Strong Slides

- Use a professional, clean template for your slide design
- Use high-contrast colors (dark text on light background)
- Font size should be 24 point minimum
- Use bullets instead of full sentences or paragraphs (try to limit to 4-5 bullets per slide)
- Ensure all visuals (tables, charts, graphics) are clean and readable
- Label charts clearly (titles, axes, units)
- Use images intentionally, not decoratively

Step 3: Practice!

- Rehearse your talk at least 2–3 times
- Stay within time limit (typically 10–15 minutes but confirm with your professor)
- Practice transitions and your opening/closing lines

Day of Tips: These tips can help ensure a strong professional presentation

Professional Delivery

- Speak clearly and make eye contact
- Stand up straight, no slouching!
- Minimize use of filler words (“um,” “like”)
- Engage the audience—explain why your project matters
- Avoid jargon
- Pause and breathe if you lose your place
- Try not to rely on your notes too heavily, no one wants to hear someone read directly from their slides

Technology & Logistics

- Arrive early to test slides on the room computer
- Check that images, charts, and videos load correctly
- Bring backups (USB + cloud storage)
- Silence your phone and smart watch
- Bring water
- Stay for your entire session out of respect for peers

Handling Questions

- Listen fully, then respond concisely
- Repeat the question for the audience if needed
- It is fine to say, “I don’t know” and suggest where the answer might come from
- Thank the person asking