

# How I *try* to make my talks engaging

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13th Logic Mentoring Workshop

23rd June 2025

School of Computing, National University of Singapore, Singapore

# Overview

**1 – Soft Skills**

**2 – Slideshow Basics**

**3 – Self Improvement**

# Use Your Voice

Speak loudly

Speak slowly

Be expressive

# Eye Contact

**Don't avoid everyone's eyes!**

**Don't fixate on one person!**

**Try the *figure-of-eight* pattern**

# Positioning and Movement

**Don't stand behind your laptop**

**Move from side to side**

# Body Language and Gesticulation

**Assume an open stance**

**Move your arms!**

**Imagine silently describing your ideas**

# Personableness

Be kind to the audience

Tell us a joke! (sometimes)

# Story Telling

**“Your audience members are log-space machines”**

**Tell simple stories**

**Repeat important points thrice**



# Recap

## 1 – Soft Skills ✓

Use your voice

Share eye contact

Move around

Gesticulate

Show personality

Tell simple stories

# Recap

## 1 – Soft Skills ✓

Use your voice

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## 2 – Slideshow Basics

## 3 – Self Improvement

# Know Your Slides

*Never* read off your slides

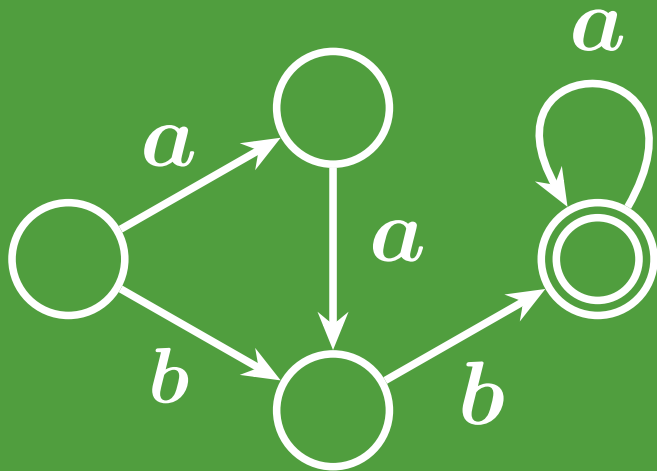
*Always* simplify your slides

Try different methods to remember

# One Point Per Slide

# Less is More

Pictures > nothing > unnecessary text



vs

Let  $\mathcal{A} = (\Sigma, Q, \delta, q_i, F)$   
be an automaton...

# Title Slides are Important



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LICS'25: Seminar Room 1

25th June 2025

School of Computing, National University of Singapore, Singapore

# Conclusion Slides are also Important

Don't use a blank “Thank you!” slide

Write down the main takeaways

Make it obvious when the audience should clap!

# Overview & Recaps Slides

“Tell them what you are going to say”

“Say it”

“Tell them what you said”



# Recap

1 – Soft Skills ✓

2 – Slideshow Basics ✓

Know your slides    One point per slide    Less is more  
Title and conclusion slides are important    Do recaps ;)

# Recap

1 – Soft Skills ✓

2 – Slideshow Basics ✓

Know your slides    One point per slide    Less is more  
Title and conclusion slides are important    Do recaps ;)

3 – Self Improvement

# Easy Option: Practice Presentations

Present to at least 2 people

Make your audience give you feedback

Try giving your talk to a “outside friend”

# Intermediate Option: Record Yourself

Record both practice and “live” presentations

Watch them back!

Identify one weakness to improve on

# Hard Option: Try Public Speaking

*Really* practise your soft skills

After this, academic talks feel easy!

Valuable (way) beyond academic talks

# How I *try* to keep my talks engaging

## 1 – Soft Skills

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Move around

Gesticulate

Show personality

Tell a simple story

## 2 – Slideshow Basics

Know your slides

One point per slide

Less is more

Title and conclusion slides are important

Do recaps


## 3 – Self Improvement

Practise, Practise, Practise

Record yourself

Try public speaking

# Thank you!

*Presented by Henry Sinclair-Banks, University of Warsaw, Poland* 

*13th Logic Mentoring Workshop in National University of Singapore, Singapore* 