

Some Topics to Consider when Critiquing Talks

Overall: In general, was the talk wonderful? good? medium? . . .

Content:

- Message stated
- Message clear
- Clear explanations
- Selection of information
- Amount of material
- Slow beginning
- Good science
- Balanced presentation
- Sufficient background and definitions

Sections of Talk:

- Introduction
 - significance/importance
 - background information
 - purpose/question
- Methods
 - experimental design
 - your methods
- Results & Discussion
 - compare your results to paper

Organization:

- Logical flow
- Clear
- 3-part framework (“Tell them what you’re going to say; say it; tell them what you said”)
- Outline (given, followed)
- Parallel form used as needed

Visuals:

- Visible
- Simple
- Emphasis on important information, bullet points are short phrases or sentences, not paragraphs
- Each slide has a title that is a phrase or sentence giving the main message of the slide (not just one or two words like “Introduction”, “Results”, “Figure 1”)
- Selection
- Number (not too many or too few; ~15 for 15 minute talk)
- Variety
- Spelling and grammar

Lecturing Style:

- Audience contact and awareness
- Eye contact
- Attitude (friendly, calm, enthusiastic,...)
- Emphasis on important information
- Knowledgeable
- Answered questions well
- Use of pointer (not circling)
- Voice (loud, soft, monotonous)
- Accent, enunciation
- Pace
- Talking (not memorizing)
- Well prepared
- Well practiced