



## MILCOM 2007— SPEAKER'S GUIDELINGS

The purpose of the MILCOM 2006 conference is to share ideas and stimulate new developments in military and commercial communications. As a speaker, you have the honor of presenting your material to the communications community. You are responsible for maintaining the interest of conference participants.

The interest that your audience has in your material and the overall satisfaction they have for the conference as a whole is affected by the quality of your presentation. During previous conferences, surveys revealed what audiences liked and disliked about presentations. We have summarized some of those findings here to help you.

Even if you are an experienced presenter, we suggest you rehearse your material with a small group. Besides helping you become more practiced with your presentation, the group will provide candid feedback to help you refine your presentation.

These specific suggestions will help you reach your audience. If you have questions or need help, contact the person who signed your acceptance letter for assistance.

1. **Use the microphone effectively.** Speak to the microphone. Keep the volume level of your voice constant by pacing your breathing.
2. **Avoid reading your speech.** This is the most common complaint. Use an outline with key points to keep you on track. Each point should allow you to speak from memory for one or two minutes without referring to your notes. Use the outline to avoid running on.
3. **Face your audience.** Make eye contact with the audience and engage them in your speech.
4. **Less is more.** Center your speech on the unique features of the work being described. Provide enough context to allow the audience to follow your presentation. This leaves more time for interactive questions and answers.

Previous audiences have complained that speakers consumed the whole time slot, and conference participants had insufficient time for questions. Your moderator will provide guidance on when to terminate the question and answer period.

5. **Relax.** Stage fright causes people to speak faster. Breathe deeper and slower—speak slower—pause between thoughts.
6. **Have a clear introduction, body, and conclusion.** Summarize key points in the conclusion. Explain why your work is significant.
7. **If time permits, solicit questions.** When answering, repeat the question and then address the key point of the question. Do not make an elaborate second speech.
8. **Use visuals.** Visuals are a valuable asset to your presentation if they are prepared and presented well. If you want the audience to read your material, the text must be large enough to be read easily (at least 20-point text and no more than 8 to 10 lines of copy on any charts). Graph lines should be broad and dark. Use a pointer to draw the audience to the key elements of your visuals. A MILCOM 2007 Power Point template is available for your presentations.
9. **Use visuals as your outline.** Avoid bringing up ideas from the next visual because you could duplicate material. Practice your timing and the sequence of your visual several times; have a contingency in case the visuals are not available.



10. **Feeling nervous about speaking is natural.** You should know that the participants want you to do well; they will support you. Before your speech, you may find it helpful to circulate in the room and find out what interests people. This will help with any nervousness you might be experiencing and provide the opportunity to discuss how your work correlates with the interests of others.
11. **You are an expert and you have a passion for this work – show it!** Your efforts are not some cold, isolated event. You worked hard—sometimes you stayed up all night, sometimes you made mistakes, and sometimes you had brilliant insight. Share some of these moments; tell about the silly idea that blossomed into the discovery and what took you there. That is not in your paper, so share it now with your IEEE companions.
12. **If English is not your first language.** You are to be commended for taking the time and effort to make a presentation under extra pressure. Practice your presentation with a native English speaker and seek advice on pronunciation and timing. Speak slower than in conversation. If your paper has multiple authors, select the one who is most fluent in English to make the presentation.
13. **Fortune favors the brave.**