

Presenting your job talk

What's it for?

The panel want to know:

- about your research. Is it interesting? Does it fit well with the department's interests?
- about your lecturing ability. Do you make material seem interesting? Do you present it in an accessible way? Do you engage the audience's attention?
- about how you interact with others. Did you answer the questions in a friendly and constructive way, or were you dismissive, overly defensive, ...?

1. Be informed

Find out as much as you can about what's expected:

- How long should it be; and how long for questions?
- How to pitch it: at staff? At advanced undergraduates? Roughly how many people will be there?

2. A basic strategy

- Make the talk as accessible as you can.
- Don't just summarise your research area: be focussed (think of it as more like a conference presentation).
- Use some kind of visual aid (powerpoint or handout).
- DON'T read it.
- Finish on time (or a minute or two early).
- Be nice in the question session!

3. Be prepared!

- PRACTISE your talk.
 - Make sure you know exactly what's on the powerpoint or handout.
 - Speak slowly and clearly.
 - Make sure you know exactly what you want to say and aren't tempted to digress/add material on the hoof that may take you over the time limit or go wrong.
- Know your audience. Think about what kinds of questions might be asked, given staff research interests.
- Make sure your job talk is all ready: do they know you're using powerpoint? Have you done enough handouts?