

How to give a bad talk

The Ten Commandments
after David A. Patterson

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1. Thou shalt not waste space

- Transparencies and hard-discs are expensive.
- If you can save five slides in each talks per year, you save 7.00/year in transparencies!
- This is equivalent to 350 kB precious memory!
- 2. Thou shalt not be neat
- 3. Thou shalt not covet brevity
 - Do you want to continue the stereotype that engineers can't write? Always use complete sentences, never just key words. If possible, use whole paragraphs and read every word.
- 4. Thou shalt cover thy naked slides
 - You need the suspense! Overlays are too flashy.
- 5. Thou shalt not write large
 - Be humble -- use a small font. Important people sit in front. Who cares about the riff-raff?
- 6. Thou shalt not use color
 - Flagrant use of color indicates uncared research. It's also unfair to emphasize some words over others.
- 7. Thou shalt not illustrate
 - Confucius says ``A picture = 10K words," but Dijkstra says ``Pictures are for weak minds." Who are you going to believe? Wisdom from the ages or the person who first counted goto's?
- 8. Thou shalt not make eye contact
 - You should avert eyes to show respect. Blocking screen can also add mystery.
- 9. Thou shalt not skip slides in a long talk
 - You prepared the slides; people came for your whole talk; so just talk faster. Skip your summary and conclusions if necessary.
- 10. Thou shalt not practice

1. Thou shalt not waste space

- Transparencies and hard-discs are **expensive**.
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2. Thou shalt not be neat

- Why waste research time on prepare slides?
 - Ignore spell'g, grammer and legibility
- Who cares what 30 people think?

2. Thou shalt not be neat

- Why waste research time on preparing slides?
- Ignore **spelling**, **grammar** and **legibility**.

Who cares what 30 people think?

3. Thou shalt not covet brevity

- Do you want to continue the stereotype that statisticians can't write? Always use complete sentences, never just key words. If possible, use whole paragraphs and read every word.

3. Thou shalt not covet brevity

- Use **key** words.
- Don't **read** your slide.

4. Thou shalt animate to the limit

- You need the **suspense!**

Overlays are too flashy
Animations can irritate.

5. Thou shalt not write large

- Be humble -- use a **small font**...
- ...especially for the relevant part.
- Important people sit in the front.

6. Thou shalt not use color

- Flagrant use of color indicates uncareful research.
- It's also unfair to emphasize some words over others.

7. Thou shalt not illustrate

- Confucius says
 - “A picture is a 1000 words,”
- but Dijkstra says
 - “Pictures are for weak minds.”
- Who are you going to believe?
 - Wisdom from the ages or
 - the person who first counted goto's?

8. Thou shalt not make eye contact

- You should avert eyes to show **respect**.
- Blocking screen can also add **mystery**.

9. Thou shalt not skip slides in a long talk

- You **prepared** the slides and suffered, make them suffer too.
- People came for your whole talk; don't cheat them out of anything.
- So just talk **faster**
- Skip your **summary** and **conclusions** if necessary.

10. Thou shalt not practice

- Why waste research time practicing a talk?
 - It could take several hours out of your two years of research.
 - How can you appear spontaneous if you practice?
- If you do practice, argue with any suggestions you get and make sure your talk is longer than the time you have to present it.
- Commandment X is most important. Even if you break the other nine,
- this one can save you.

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