Faculty interview preparation: How to do a teaching presentation
Preparing for your Teaching presentations for faculty interviews

Tips and advice from Dr. David Huen

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who has assessed many teaching presentations
Teaching presentation: why and what?

- Can candidate teach?
  - Some minimum threshold expected – higher in teaching-intensive unis
  - Good teaching wanted – more valued by teaching institutions.

- Short
  - Usually 5-15 min range.

- Specified topic

- Audience of teaching staff (and students)
Ticklist

• **What is the brief?**
  • What subject?
  • What year group?
  • Context?
    • e.g. first 5 minutes of a 50 min lecture..

• **What setup?**

• **Virtual or in person**
  • Projector?
  • Your laptop or theirs?
    • Using yours could be a whole world of pain…
  • What pointer?
    • If your own, is your pointer legal (some green pointers have excessive IR power!)?
  • Other facilities?
What are you trying to prove?

• I can teach NOW
  • I’m ready to go. (Good enough to deploy without further training though I’d like that too)

• What am I here to prove?
  • They expect you know your subject well already – not an issue
  • I know the context in which my teaching fits
    • What students know about it already
    • Learning objectives: what I will add to their knowledge today
  • I can engage a student audience
  • I can organise material
  • (I can design a whole body of teaching)
Structure

• I tell you what I am going to teach
• I teach you what I said I would
• I summarise what you have learned
Slides

- Roughly a slide a minute.
- A slide is not a treatise
  - A figure to talk around can be useful
  - Limit yourself to pithy text
Signalling knowledge of context

• Your brief is to deliver a first year lecture on …

• An opening line like “I will teach you about <xxx> today. During the A-levels you have recently done, you will have already learned about <yyy>. I will refresh your memory about that and move on to …”
  • This says I know what the student is expected to have covered.
  • It also says that I will provide an entry route for those who have not covered that background yet via a quick revision.
Signalling knowledge of context

• You have a brief to deliver a third-year lecture on the subject of <xxx>

• An opening line like “This lecture would probably reside within your BI312 module. In your second year, you will have learned about <kkk>”
  • I have taken the trouble to understand your course structure and have some idea about how I can contribute immediately.
Maintaining engagement

• It is difficult to maintain engagement on the basis of content only.
• Let your enthusiasm about the subject show through.
• If you can illustrate a point with something from your previous research, it helps a lot.
• An occasional anecdote about how something you are teaching came to be discovered can help.
• (Appropriate) humour helps.
• If you are daring enough, interact with the audience (some risk).
• Flat monotone/impenetrable accents/etc can lose an audience quickly.
An alternative presentation brief (I)

- Sometimes, you are not asked to do a lecture simulation. Instead, you are asked to propose a module in your specialty within their course.
- For example, how would you set up a module in ecological genetics?
- What you’d want to show:-
  - You know something about their course structure
    - Other modules
    - No of credits per module, etc.
  - You know something about course requirements – e.g. QAA subject benchmarks
  - You have a plan, where you fit in it and reasons for your decisions
An alternative presentation brief (II)

• For example, “How would you envisage contributing to teaching of population genetics in our institution?”

• You’ll want to show:-
  • As with previous slide.
  • What you can uniquely contribute
    • In terms of teaching (with evidence)
    • In terms of practical projects (with evidence)
    • Links with outside parties that could enhance student experience (e.g. opportunities to work with NHM).
  • Your ability to teach is assessed incidentally here.
Summary

• Think of the presentation in terms of signals you want to send to the assessors.
• Ensure those signals are well and truly embedded.
• Ensure you meet all aspects of the brief.
GOOD LUCK

You can get feedback and practise your teaching presentations with the Careers Service – just book an appointment on Handshake