lapa
PRESENTATION SKILLS

Cambridge International

PRESENTATIONS
DESIGN, PREPARATION, & EXECUTION

Presentation Skills

Excellent presentation skills are essential within the profession of architecture. In client and competition presentations, the delivery of a presentation can be equal in importantance to the project material itself. By giving an excellent presentation the architect demonstrates professionalism, capability, and confidence in the project and team.

There are many different ways to design and execute an effective presentation, however the main goal is constant: **A clear delivery of the essential information required to understand and evaluate an architectural design or project.**

Presentation delivery skills can only be perfected through practice and experience. This lapa guide to Presentation Skills is intended to assist with the "Design, Preparation and Execution" of architectural presentations, and to provide tips to help improve the quality of architectural presentations within studio and in practice.

Designing a presentation
KEY MESSAGE

Develop a single simple KEY MESSAGE.

Be exact and precise.

The KEY MESSAGE is what the audience should remember after your presentation.

STORY BOARD

Use a STORY BOARD to design the narrative of your presentation.

Ask: "Where, What, Why, and How" about your project.

Create a list of all the issues you wish to cover in the presentation, then EDIT and ORGANIZE the topics into a narrative.

Ensure the "flow" of the narrative is logical.

EDIT the content and reduce it to a directed and POSITIVE message.

Keep the message simple. Complex demonstrations are difficult to follow and remember.

If possible relate the presentation topic to the audience and their location.

The narrative should always end in an overall CONCLUSION.

The CONCLUSION should reinforce the KEY MESSAGE, and can also be used to influence the subsequent discussion.

TIPS
Initially write the presentation as though you do not have any graphic material to refer to.

Write your presentation quickly.

Write your presentation so that it makes your material understandable and. accessible to the audience.

Write your presentation so that it is easy to remember; for both you, and your audience.

Provide a visual guide - or legend - within the presentation, to represent where you are during the presentation
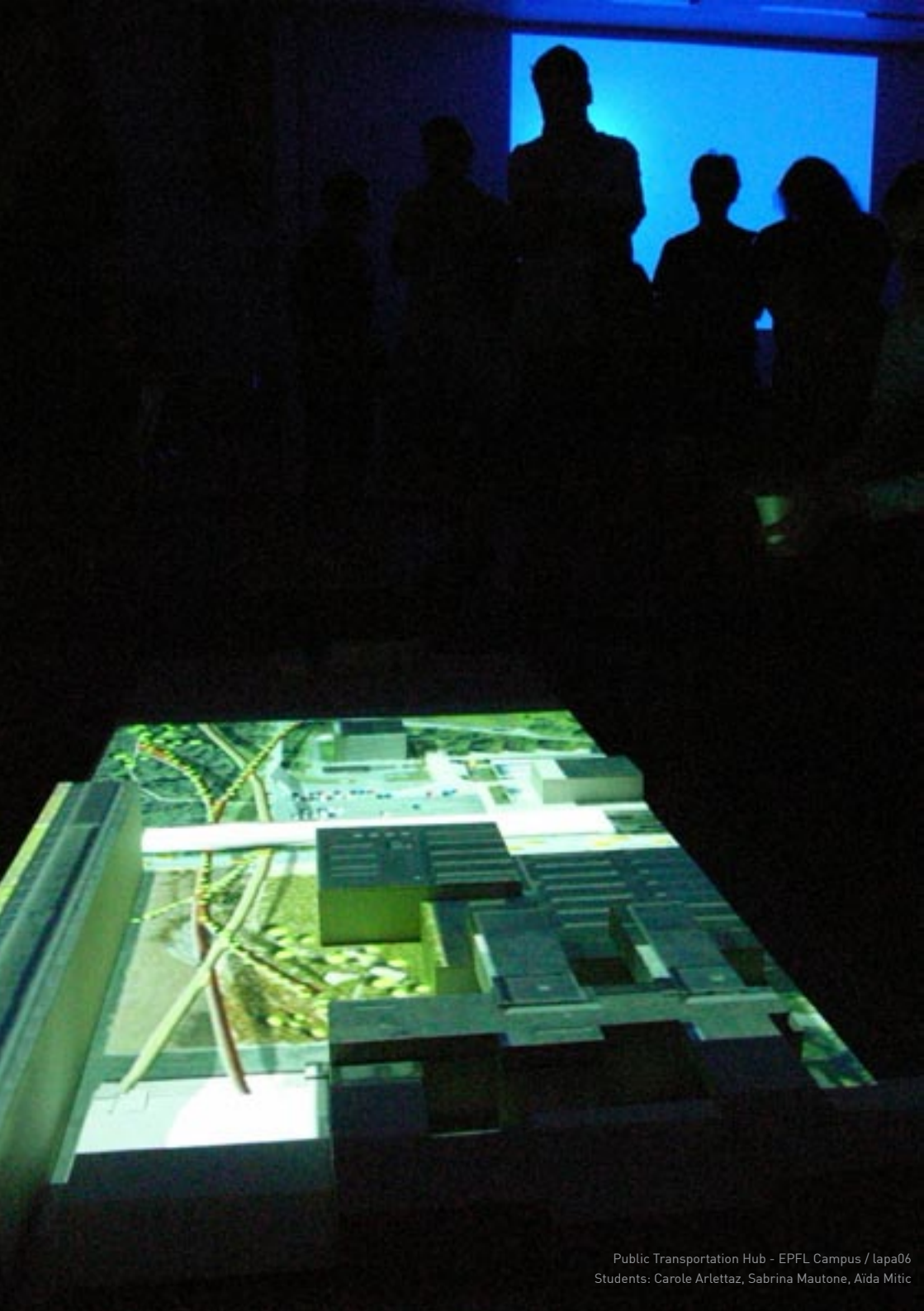
Preparing for a presentation

Begin the preparation of the presentation as far in advance as possible. A story board will act as both a "to do list" and as a template, for the insertion of final production material. It is much easier to "insert" final data as it becomes available than it is to build the entire presentation at the last minute. Additionally the longer a presentation has been "in production", the more familliar the presenter will be with it's content.

ORGANIZATION

Who will present, and how will the staging be coordinated if it is a team project?

What medium and technology will be used?

Who and how will Q&A be dealt with?

Remember that there are different visual and physical media that can assist with presentations:
- Physical: drawings, models, prototypes...
- Active: blackboard, overhead, demo...
- Digital: Slides, video, web references,...

EDITING AND PRACTICE

Always edit slides for spelling mistakes, and ensure that you used the correct language editor.

You MUST practice your presentation. It will help you edit, refine, and perfect both the content and delivery.

TIPS

If you are concerned about style, content, comprehension, or legibility – ask a friend to listen to your practice session. After the presentation ASK THEM WHAT YOU SAID. This will show you what made the most impact.

Before the presentation prepare a Q&A list, and practice delivering the answers.

TECHNOLOGY

Avoid complex visual aids that are too complicated to understand immediately.

Avoid any "kitschy" slide technology or graphics that may be distracting.

Have multiple BACKUPS of your presentation ready should any equipment fail (depending on importance of the presentation: second computer, CD, USB key, file posted on the internet/server).

Practice with the presentation beamer at minimum once before the presentation.

Ensure all text and graphics are legible, all colours and images are well presented, and all content is properly positioned.

Ensure all files, programs, video, and sound work!

IMMEDIATELY BEFORE PRESENTATION

Double check your physical support materials (drawings, models, prototypes...)

Know how to plug your computer into the beamer.

If required have your MAC beamer adaptor.

Check your battery level and power cable.

Check internet connection if required.

Check any other technology (laser pointer, wireless presenter).

Know how to operate the room lights and the sound equipment if necessary.

Ensure that your appearance is appropriate, not distracting, and that you are presenting the desired outward image.

ACADEMIC   BUILDINGS

ACADEMICAL

Executing the presentation

A well executed architectural presentation will provide the audience with a clear and concise message, and enough information to understand and evaluate the project. The presenter should begin by introducing the main topics of the presentation to the audience, then proceed by delivering the main facts and explanations, and conclude with a summary that reinforces the most important and impressive ideas.

DELIVERY

1. Greet the audience, and introduce yourself and your team members (when appropriate)

2. INTRODUCTION: Tell the audience what you are going to tell them, and communicate the KEY MEASSAGE.

3. CONTENT: Present the STORY BOARD

4. CONCLUSION: summarize what you have told them and reinforce the KEY MEASSAGE.

5. After the presentation allow for questions. Do not intimidate the audience, but also remain in control of the discussion - do not let it deviate off topic from the presentation material.

A strategic organization of the narrative can allow the presenter to properly emphasize key parts of the presentation. By controlling the narrative and the way the information is presented, the presenter can already be "setting up" the primary issues for discussion. If practiced this technique can be used to advantage in critiques.

TIPS

Rehearse your presentation beforehand and do not deviate from your rehearsed presentation

Face your audience, do not face the screen.

Speak clearly, judge the room acoustics.

Avoid moving about too much (distracting)

Additional team members should remain attentive and be aware of their body language, even when not presenting (makes an impression on the viewers)

Use your hands to demonstrate – but do not over-gesticulate.

Avoid using the laser pointer too much.

Pace yourself – don't rush, but also don't be too slow

Deliberately pause at the most important points of your presentation. Allow the audience time to "get it"; to understand the importance of your statement.

Do not fixate on one individual in the audience. In larger audiences concentrate on the back of the room (it will help your vocal projection)

Watch your audience and their body language, cut your presentation if there is a majority of negative body language.

Conclude in a positive manner, with a focus on the main things YOU want to discuss

Keep to the time allowed & leave enough time for discussion

ENJOY YOURSELF – your own mood will translate to the audience - if you are confident in your material the viewers will feel this as well.