

Guidelines for a Palaver talk

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These guidelines are intended to help speakers to prepare a Palaver talk.

In the past, Palaver talks have often been too challenging for many attendants. They appeared to be too technical, too detailed or simply overloaded with information.

To achieve a Palaver which is comprehensible and therefore instructive for the majority of Palaver attendants, please mind the following points:

- **The Palaver is not a working group meeting.**

The aim of your talk is to inform them about the things going on in their scientific neighbourhood - not to account for your recent research.

- **Appreciate your audience**

The audience is mixed: there are Professors as well as Bachelor students attending the Palaver.

- **Mention who you are and what you do first.**

Not everyone in the audience knows you by sight. Introduce yourself, mention the group you work in and the field your topic belongs to. Otherwise it might be difficult to picture what you are going to talk about, especially for unacquainted attendants. If you are a PhD student, in which year? Have you been abroad or are you a guest scientist?

- **Introduce your topic.**

Tell what your group does, what you do, why you do it and especially why you don't do it in a different way. Are you a Lattice guy? Do you do transport theory?

- **Focus on overall connections**

The palaver is a chance to realize hidden links between your topic and the common research area of your audience. Emphasize similarities, not differences.

- **The less formula the better.**

People will not be able to follow or remember long formula. Leave them out and explain what they express instead.

- **Mention your methods.**

Do you do analytical calculations by hand? Do you write codes? Do you interpret results? Tell the audience where the numbers and plots you show come from!

- **Enrich your citations**

Refer to your colleagues: Which persons in and outside the institute influenced or inspired your work? Can you mention review papers for a kick start into your subject?

- **Give the audience time.**

Remember: The audience has probably never thought about your topic before. People for example need time to get used to a graph they are shown. Describe the obvious things like axes labels or the structure of an expression before you start to explain details.

- **Speaking of time...**

Don't underestimate how long things take. To explain a large expression with all its parameters might take 3 to 5 minutes. Do describe a single figure might take at least 2 to 3 minutes. You present a 25 minutes talk – can you really provide enough time for all your figures? If not, leave them out.