Guidelines/Suggestions for Laboratory Symposium Presentation

Use these guidelines and our discussion in lab to help prepare your presentation. Prepare it as you would a report, in an organizational sense, with Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion, and References. The presentation should run about 10-15 minutes, with all group members participating equally in preparation and presentation. Consider the following points as you prepare your presentation.

1. Avoid large amounts of text. Use bullets with short points, and then discuss those at greater length.
2. You may want to think about adding pictures of your organisms or setups. You can search the internet for pictures. If you include downloaded pictures, you must include the URL where the picture was obtained, or some other acknowledgement of the source of the picture.
3. Your introduction should address the following questions. What is the general phenomenon under consideration and why is it important? What is your purpose? What is your hypothesis?
4. For methods and materials, avoid long discussion of detailed methods. However, because each group designed their own study, you must go into some detail about your design, how it addresses your hypothesis, and how you analyzed the data.
5. **Results** should not have much text, but should focus more on high quality figures and tables that are readable by someone at the back of the room and back up the points you make about the data. You may want to include one slide of text with major points, which you describe, and then show with your visual aids. Include averages and standard deviations where appropriate.
6. **Figures and tables** can be made in Excel, tables can be made in Word, or both can be made in PowerPoint.
7. **Discussion** slides should emphasize two or three major conclusions. Be sure to address why the research is significant and how you might be able to generalize your conclusions to more than just one species. Do results support research hypotheses, how will your future experiments (that follow up questions from this one) be designed to reduce error or bias, and what new questions arise from this experiment?
8. Presentations often have acknowledgements thanking people that assisted with the project. For instance, Dr. Peroni supplied all the seeds for the LAP lab, and other groups often supplied data for certain populations.
9. Use large fonts and high contrast for ease of viewing by the audience. Apply the principles of preparing professional-quality figures discussed in Exercise 1.
10. Each person in the group should present equal portions of the presentation; you can divide it up by section, or each person can do part of each section.
11. Each person will receive a grade based on the overall presentation, and your individual performance. Grades will be based on: 1) organization and delivery, 2) visual aids (e.g., PowerPoint), 3) ability to convey how your study contributes to the science of biology, 4) ability to focus on 2-3 three major points, 5) ability to stay within the time limit, 6) ability to answer questions at the end, and 7) how well your Discussion addresses the broader significance of the research and relates back to issues raised in the Introduction.