

Main Title:

Subtitle

This slide should be up for no more than 2 minutes. Some use it as background through much of their talk. Since it isn't an informative slide, it should be seen for what it is: an easy way to introduce yourself, and maybe as a way to politely correct your host's failure to introduce you properly.

[Preface]

In what follows, I set out the way I think slide shows might go. The titles, unless bracketed, are real candidate titles. I like 27 point font on all bullets, and no more than 3 bullets per slide. Titles should be no more than 36 point. There are 18 slides after this one, which at 2 minutes per slide is where you want to be, no matter how long your host told you you have.

The Puzzle

[this is where you set out, without any jargon, what you are trying to explain. If it's a theoretical puzzle, sell it that way; if it's an empirical puzzle, sell it that way]

The Conventional Wisdom

[what does the literature say about your puzzle? Hopefully you can frame this as a debate, as follows:]

- Some see a relationship (X, 1999)
- Some see no relationship (Y, 1999)

The Argument

[this is your hypothesis/argument slide. It must be simple and straightforward. No more than three bullet points. You don't need to spend a lot of time here; you're coming back to this in a few slides with more ammunition. The point is to seed interest and let people know what you are hanging your hat on]

The Evidence

[this is your preview slide. First bullet: what is my sample; second bullet, big point #1; third bullet, perhaps your empirical counter to the conventional wisdom. Especially if you are doing an empirical thesis, this needs to be a great slide. It doesn't have to be the last word, but it does have to be a good first]

Implications

[you get three implications here. One for your study's specific focus, one for IR more generally, and one for policy. You can return to these for elaboration later; the point here is to get the audience interested]

Roadmap of the Talk

- The Puzzle (and perhaps a lit review slide)
- The argument
- The data
- The findings
- Implications
- Future work

The Puzzle

[here you reframe what you did above, except this time with more theoretical gloss. Above you CANNOT use jargon; here you can but you need to talk about what it all means. This needs to be made clear, and made interesting]

The Literature

[last chance to talk about the literature. You need to stop with all your citations after this slide. From here on in, its you, and you only, until you get to Q&A. Again, frame the debate, and put some names to it, but only here, and not again]

Problems with this Wisdom

[now we're on to what gaps you are going to fill in with your argument. These can be theoretical or empirical gaps, the idea being that you explain what it is you think you are doing with respect to the big picture]

The Argument

[Again, its hypothesis time. Here you can be a bit more informative about the development of your hypotheses, tracing out all of your microfoundations. This is also the first slide where you spend a bit more time, offering a bit more emphasis and a lot of enthusiasm]

The Data

[if you created a cool data set, tell this to the audience. But do it in no more than 3 bullet points. The key is that this is part of your thesis research, and you want to explain what it is you did, and what it is you have to work with as a result]

[Special]

[if you've developed a new technique for testing your argument, this is where you discuss it. Or if you've got some new software package you've developed, you can introduce it here. Otherwise, don't put in a slide to tell people you used Tobit or OLS, for example]

The Findings

[you want to get across your main points of interest. You can back this up with several more slides and graphs, but here you offer the bottom line: “empirically speaking, I add a lot of value.” Here, you also stick to relationships: positively related & significant, etc. No tables from your dissertation]

The Substantive Effects

[here you explain that you'd be happy to discuss the results at length, but you just want to focus on the variables of interest, and cool controls, and report first differences, for example. These are the only numbers you should report shy of Q&A. Use graphics to present visually what you are tempted to show in your tables, which you holding in reserve]

Comparative Statics

[this is my Jeff Frieden slide: what about comparative statics? Well....]

Graphics?

[Yes, this is where you insert a big picture graphic(s). You should have all your graphics ready on the side for Q&A, and note that you can produce these, but don't unless asked. Again, these are just the most important graphics, not all of them]

Implications

[this is where you, again, offer three implications of your work, one for your specific topic, one for IR more generally, and one for policy]

Future Work

[this is where you show people that : 1. You know some of the limitations of your work, all of which you are/will be turning to; and 2. You have a whole bunch of cool ideas on point, and this by way of ensuring those in the room that you are going to be a productive colleague