ENHANCING THE LECTURE FORMAT

Robert Averbuch, MD
Associate Professor of Psychiatry
Director of Medical Student Education in Psychiatry
Associate Director of Residency Training
At the conclusion of this talk, participants will be able to:

- List and describe some of the common mistakes many of us make when lecturing
- List and describe at least 3 ways to change/“enhance” their own lecture technique
- Resolve to make at least one change to an upcoming lecture
- Appreciate the value of using video clips in lecture
Medical Education in 2011

- Medical Education (esp. in pre-clinical years) still largely lecture-based
  - And lecture is still among the most efficient tools of pedagogy
- Millennials showing decline in attention span, hence lower retention
  - Require increased stimulation and motivation to learn
FIRST UP:
NO NO'S
COMMON MISTAKES WE MAKE
“You don’t need to worry about this slide...

“...but I’m going to present it anyway”

“I know you can’t read this figure/graph...

“...but let me show it anyway”

“I’ve got a lot to cover in a very limited amount of time...”

“so let me just speed thru these last 50 slides”
MORE OF WHAT GETS “HEARD”

• “I will now read directly from my slides so you appreciate that there’s no point in coming to class”

• “I didn’t really prepare for this talk- I don’t consider education an important part of my job and that’s why I’m lecturing from someone else’s powerpoint”

• “Please allow me to confuse you with unnecessary details and minutia that you will surely not understand”
MORE UNSPOKEN “NO NO’S”

“I’ve given this same exact talk 7 years in a row and not changed a thing, so you can imagine how excited I am to present it for the 8th time today”

“I’m going to be speaking with no prosody- monotonous and mumbling....enjoy”
MORE UNSPOKEN “NO NO’S”

“Y’all are whinny and entitled and really don’t deserve my time or expertise. Please allow me to speak down to you”

“I’m pimping you to make myself look smarter and make you nervous”
WHAT WORKS:
BEGIN WITH A CLIP OR ANECDOTE

- Gives audience a chance to settle in, focus
- Draw them in with something thought provoking, dramatic, or otherwise of high emotional valence (not just stats)
INSPIRE LEARNERS TO INVEST

- Getting them to show up and want to be there
- Make the classroom experience valuable - that intangible something
- Entertain, keep them in the game
- Challenge yourself to make the mundane interesting
CONNECT WITH YOUR AUDIENCE

- Acknowledge where they’re coming from and the context of your talk, how it fits into the rest of THEIR schedule
- Picture them naked- Not- Picture yourself in their shoes
ACKNOWLEDGE CIRCUMSTANCES OF TALK

- Find Your Audience “Where they’re at”
  - Postprandial?
  - Early morning?
  - Mandatory session? If not, why did they come?
  - Upcoming Exam?
  - Post Call
CONNECT INDIVIDUALLY

- No substitute for one-on-one interactions - both before and after talk
  - Added benefit - familiarity with your audience will lessen your own anxiety....and you will have some anxiety
  - Validate - acknowledge the student’s perspective
“ATTEND TO” INATTENTION

- If they’re fading, WAKE THEM UP
- Acknowledge when it’s boring
- Breaks
“ATTEND TO” INATTENTION

- Vary the presentation modality
- Regularly refocus attention
LESS IS MORE!

- Have realistic expectations about what you’ll cover
- “A bird in the hand...”- better they come away with key points
- Limit content, goals for each lesson
- Continue to edit and revise your material DOWN
- Avoid the minutia- esp. unnecessary statistics
PROVIDE CLINICAL RELEVANCE

- Apply material in clinically relevant examples
- Generous use of case vignettes, illustrations
Better retention when strong emotion attached to learning
PREPARE METICULOUSLY

- No substitute for thorough preparation
- Research your topic thoroughly, know the material
Won’t always find perfect examples, but you can find a way to make it work.
LISTEN TO YOUR AUDIENCE, ADAPT

- Encourage realtime feedback and REVIEW comments and suggestions
- Maintain a positive attitude about suggestions, feedback
- Admit when you’re wrong or when you just don’t know
- Take responsibility for your own mistakes
HAVE FUN

- When you enjoy what you do, your students will see it
- Keep it interesting for yourself—change things up regularly to keep YOUR OWN enthusiasm
- Don’t take yourself too seriously
“Practice Guidelines”

Tips to Enhance Effectiveness of AV Aides
Keep it Short

- Less is more
- Tight edits- nothing extra
- Shoot for 1-2 min MAX
Bring your own Laptop

• Mac vs. PC?
• Embed ALL media- file size will be LARGE
  • Don’t link to files on computer
  • Don’t rely on podium software
  • Don’t count on internet connection
Use at least some clips with high EV

- EV: Emotional Valence
- High EV examples: Humor, Drama, etc.
Use Familiar Characters- Relevant and Current

- Current events
- Popular television characters
- More recent, current movies
- Celeb-reality; “keepin’ it real”
- Try to target all segments of your audience
- Sports figures, entertainment, politics
Wealth of Nonfictional Content Available

- Current events, News segments
- Documentaries
- News Magazines, Expose’s
- Promotional videos from pharmaceuticals
Be Creative

• You won’t always find perfectly clinical material for certain topics
• Find a way to make it work in the presentation
Re-Focusing Attention

- Inherent value of variety, mixing things up, vary presentation modality to refocus
Questions?