



AABB Annual Meeting Speaker Standards & Presentation Guidelines

**Required Standards
and Best Practices for
Annual Meeting Presenters**

Have a question?

Contact AABB at professionaldevelopment@aabb.org | aabb.org

Introduction

Thank you for your willingness to share your expertise with the AABB Community. As you prepare your presentation, we ask that you follow the guidelines in this document to ensure compliance with AABB's policies, including continuing education compliance. This guide also provides tips for developing a successful presentation.

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Continuing Education Compliance

AABB offers various types of continuing education and is required to adhere to the standards set by the various accrediting bodies. To ensure compliance, we ask that all faculty check-in to the speaker-ready room at least four hours in advance of their presentation to allow for slide review, confirmation of disclosures, and any necessary mitigation of potential conflicts. Please see the [AABB Annual Meeting online program](#) for speaker-ready room location and times.

Author Disclosure & Conflict of Interest

- **DISCLOSE ALL FINANCIAL RELATIONSHIPS.** All speakers and program planners must complete the ACCME disclosure form. You are required to report all financial relationships in any amount with **ineligible companies** that occurred within the last 24 months, regardless of whether you believe the relationship is relevant to your content. The peer review process will determine relevance and work to mitigate any potential conflicts of interest.
- **CONFLICT RESOLUTION.** In cases where a conflict of interest cannot be mitigated, the CME credit for that session may be removed or the speaker may be replaced. Transparency in disclosure protects the integrity of AABB's educational activities and its ability to maintain ACCME accreditation.

Avoiding Commercial Bias & Presenting Balanced Content

- **KEEP CONTENT FREE OF COMMERCIAL BIAS.** Presentations must not promote a specific product or proprietary business interest. If commercial products are discussed, present objective information based on generally accepted scientific evidence. Do not engage in product marketing during your presentation. Program Chairs are instructed to intervene if this occurs.
- **USE OF COMPANY AND PRODUCT NAMES.** With little exception, products should be referred to generically (e.g., acetaminophen and not Tylenol). Logos should never be included in presentations and will be removed as part of the review process. If trade names are necessary, include trade names from all of the products in that class – never from a single company.
- **PRESENT BALANCED CLINICAL OPTIONS.** Present a balanced view of available therapeutic approaches, techniques, and treatments. Support your recommendations with evidence and accurately represent the strength and limitations of available options.

Necessary Slides

An AABB Annual Meeting PowerPoint slide template is available in the Speaker Resource Center for your use. For consistency across presentations, we ask that you use the template unless your organization requires that you use an organizational template.

- **MODERATORS/PROGRAM CHAIRS FOR ALL SESSIONS:**
 - Title slide
 - Disclosure slide
 - Your disclosure only
 - Please ensure the information matches what you provided in the online platform
 - Objectives (the overall session objectives)



○ **SPEAKERS FOR ALL SESSIONS:**

- Title slide (for your portion of the presentation)
- Disclosure slide
 - Your disclosure only
 - Please ensure the information matches what you provided on the online platform
- Objectives (optional – you may opt to provide objectives for your portion of the presentation)
- Reflective Question (see Active Learning Requirements)

Designing for Interprofessional Audiences

If your Program Chair indicated during the submission process that your session is intentionally designed as interprofessional education, ensure your content and delivery reflect that design. Interprofessional education brings together members of two or more professions to learn with, from, and about each other. This means using examples, language, and learning objectives that are relevant across the professional groups in your audience, highlighting how collaborative practice improves team performance and patient outcomes, and avoiding profession-specific jargon without explanation. Given the cross-functional nature of the field, most sessions are expected to be intentionally designed for interprofessional audiences.

If you have questions about whether your session is designated as interprofessional, contact your Program Chair to clarify before finalizing your slides.

Active Learning Requirement

Reflective Questions

All presentations must include “active learning” elements. Although the minimum standard is achieved in the live program through an interactive Q&A period, active engagement becomes passive when attendees view the recorded version. To ensure that viewers of on-demand sessions have an opportunity to participate in “active learning” and reflection, we ask that all speakers include at least one reflective question in their presentation. When presenting the reflective question, please pause for 5-10 seconds after reading the question.



Sample Reflective Question Slides

Please create reflective questions that are specific to your content.

 **Reflective Question**

Based on what you've heard today, what is one change you might consider making in your practice, process, or approach?

 **Reflective Question**

How might these findings influence your approach to unexpected serologic results?

Audience Response System (ARS)

Polling the audience during your session is an effective way to engage attendees and facilitate active learning. Speakers will have the opportunity to use the Audience Response System (ARS) where attendees can answer the questions in real-time on the meeting mobile app. Instructions to embed questions in the presentation slides are included in the Speaker Resource Center. Support will be available onsite in the speaker-ready room at the AABB Annual Meeting for assistance and to test your slides.



ACCME Compliance Checklist

Before finalizing your presentation, please review your slides using this AABBB ACCME Compliance Checklist, which outlines requirements that help ensure that accredited education is evidence-based, balanced, appropriately sourced, and free from commercial bias. Speakers are responsible for addressing these requirements before submission; AABBB will conduct an additional compliance review in the speaker-ready room and may require revisions.

Are trade names and/or product logos included in the presentation?

☐ Yes, trade names and/or product logos are included

If yes, suggested resolution:

- Replace all trade names with generic product names.
- If necessary to use a trade name, trade names from several companies must be used.
- Product logos must be removed.

☐ No

Does the presentation includes discussion of off-label use or indication in question is not currently approved by the FDA for labeling or advertising?

☐ Yes

If yes, suggested resolution:

- Please add a statement identifying the recommendations are not “standard of care” and cite evidence to support changing based on new clinical trial data.
- Modification is not required due to unique clinical circumstances.

☐ No

Is the information presented appropriately sourced and appropriate credit given?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If no, suggested resolution:

- Please add appropriate references for research cited as part of the presentation.

Is the content for this presentation, including any therapeutic options, well-balanced, evidence-based and unbiased?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If no, suggested resolution:

- Please make the presentation more balanced by mentioning alternative treatments.
- Reference the best available literature.

All scientific research cited, reported, or referenced in this presentation conforms to generally accepted standards of experimental design, data collection, and analysis.

☐ Yes

☐ No

If no, suggested resolution:

- Delete presentation of data from presentation that does not adhere to generally accepted standards of experimental design, data collection, and analysis.
- Withdraw presentation.



Designing for Learning Outcomes

- **START WITH LEARNER NEEDS.** What do your attendees actually need to know? What will they do differently when they leave?
- **DEFINE CLEAR OBJECTIVES.** Be specific about what knowledge or skills you want them to take home. Let your objectives guide every slide.
- **BUILD FOR APPLICATION.** Provide the tools, examples, or frameworks your audience needs to apply what they learn in their own setting.
- **KEEP IT CONCISE.** Every slide, statistic, and graphic must move your audience toward your learning objective. Focused presentations help learners retain and remember.

Preparation & Planning

- **CONNECT WITH YOUR PROGRAM CHAIR.** Align on time allotment, scope, and logistics before you start creating.
- **PLAN BEFORE YOU CREATE.** Outline your objectives and key messages before opening PowerPoint. Never wing it.
- **GET PEER FEEDBACK.** Share your draft with colleagues for comment. They may catch errors or add missing insight.
- **CHECK ACCME COMPLIANCE.** Review your slides against the ACCME Compliance Checklist on page 6 before finalizing. AABB will conduct an additional review in the speaker-ready room.

Consistency of Style & Tone

Style:

- **USE A CONSISTENT DESIGN:** Speakers are encouraged to use the official AABB presentation template, available on the AABB website. Use of the template is optional.
- **BE CONSISTENT:** Apply the same formatting, capitalization, fonts, colors, and heading styles throughout your presentation.

Tone:

- **FRIENDLY:** Use welcoming, inclusive language and create opportunities for dialogue and audience engagement.
- **AMBITIOUS:** Encourage participants to explore new ideas, expand their knowledge, and apply what they learn to advance their work.
- **CREDIBLE:** Communicate clearly and concisely, support statements with evidence, and accurately represent the strength and limitations of the available information.
- **CONFIDENT:** Know your material, practice your presentation, and deliver it clearly and confidently.



Copyright & Permissions

- **OBTAIN PERMISSION FOR COPYRIGHTED WORK.** You must obtain written permission before using copyrighted material in your presentation, including artwork, photographs, charts, tables, graphs, poems, song lyrics, cartoons, videos, movie or TV clips, audio interviews, music, speeches, written text, and logos or trademarks. Permission must specify how you are allowed to use the material and how to acknowledge it.
- **PUBLIC DOMAIN MATERIAL DOES NOT REQUIRE PERMISSION.** Material produced by the federal government, material with expired copyright, and material placed in the public domain by its creator do not require permission. If you cannot find explicit language stating material is in the public domain, assume it is copyrighted.
- **CREDIT YOUR SOURCES SCRUPULOUSLY.** When you use someone else's work, provide clear acknowledgment (e.g., "Used with permission from ____"). Follow any specific attribution requirements the copyright holder specifies.
- **NOTE ON PRODUCT LOGOS.** Logos and trademarks of commercial products should not be used in your presentations. See the ACCME Compliance Checklist on page 5 for guidance on trade names and logos.

Copyright Resources: For more information on U.S. copyright law and fair use, visit <https://www.copyright.gov/title17/> and http://fairuse.stanford.edu/Copyright_and_Fair_Use_Overview/chapter9/o.

Accessible & Inclusive Design

This section was developed by the AABB RISE Committee (Respect, Inclusion, Support, and Engagement).

AABB is dedicated to the core values of respect, civility, and professionalism in all AABB-sponsored activities and to ensure all attendees feel welcome and included. While the AABB Annual Meeting supports the open exchange of ideas and aims to foster an environment to promote meaningful discussion, it is important that these exchanges remain in line with **AABB's Annual Meeting code of conduct** policies. To this end, the AABB RISE committee has provided the guidelines below to help speakers maximize their opportunities to share their work in a manner to reach audiences from diverse backgrounds, and to present in a way that is welcoming and fosters equitable participation from all. Moreover, the first step in ensuring the audience is able to digest information shared in your oral presentations and to equitably participate is to acknowledge that not all audience members will be able to engage with your presentation in the same way, as members may have both visible and invisible accessibility needs and identities.



General Notes on Inclusivity

- Be intentional about addressing a diverse audience with visible and invisible identities that may include all abilities, ethnicities, genders, geographies, nations, races, sexualities, and socio-economic statuses.
- When preparing and presenting your presentation, be cognizant of your own **implicit bias** – your attitude or internalized stereotypes that unconsciously affect your perceptions, actions, and decisions. If you are unsure of your implicit bias, consider using tools (e.g., the **Implicit Association Test (IAT)**) to help identify these biases.
- Consider using **universal design principles** to create a presentation that is both accessible and digestible to a diverse audience.
- Aim to refer to people and individuals with specificity, rather than using broad categories.
 - Person-first language places the person in the description. For example, “man who is deaf and hard of hearing” rather than “deaf man.”
 - When referring to a population of individuals, try to be as specific as possible. For example:
 - Instead of “Asian-Americans”, use “Americans of Vietnamese descent”.
 - Instead of “Hispanic”, use “Honduran”.
- Inclusive language is always changing and highly dependent on the situation. If you are using language that some may question, be transparent and provide both rationale and context for your choices in terminology. Additionally, if you have any doubts or are unsure about your choices in verbiage, ask a colleague or a RISE committee member for assistance.
 - For example, the term “minority” is often used to describe non-white people and implies a connotation of inferiority. However, the term is also used to describe smaller numerical quantities. Thus, in using the term “minority” to describe numerical quantification be extremely clear, and ensure use of appropriate and specific language when describing peoples of non-white communities.
- When preparing and giving your presentation, consider reflecting culturally diverse perspectives throughout. Key examples would be:
 - Providing examples, images, graphics, and visual aids that reflect diversity across a range of characteristics including culture, ethnicity, gender, disability, etc.
 - Try not to use culturally specific terms or expressions which may offend and/or lead to exclusion of some audience members.
 - An example: “grandfathered in” – This can be used by an individual to describe a situation where an individual/entity is exempt from new or updated rules/laws as the individual was already participating in the activity prior to implementation of the new rule. However, the terminology stems from historically racist “grandfather clauses” that were used to keep Black Americans from voting in the United States.
 - Letting the audience know when key information or data is available in additional languages or formats.

Professional Address

As the AABB Annual Meeting is a place to meet new colleagues and further your professional network, it is key to address people in a consistent and professional manner when introducing or referencing colleagues during your presentation. AABB provides the following guidelines to assist with this:

- If you are making an introduction, please include the individual's name, institution, location, and credentials.
- Correct pronunciation and/or styling of an individual's name is of utmost importance. In order to ensure accuracy, please confer with speakers ahead of time to ensure this occurs, especially if there are any doubts.
- When introducing or referring to individuals during formal portions of the AABB meeting, please remember to use professional titles/address (i.e., "doctor" for those with MD and PhD degrees).

Tips for Giving Presentations

In addition to the specific information regarding format and logistics for AABB Annual Meeting speaker presentations, please consider the following:

- If you have a slide that is graphic heavy with few descriptors, consider including a descriptive text-only slide immediately after it such that those with visual and/or hearing impairments may be sure to digest your presentation. For descriptive text, be sure to make sure it describes the meaning of the graphic, not what the graphic looks like. For instance, do not say "plot with green and red bars," state "This chart shows individuals needing an interpreter spend 2.3 times longer at doctor's appointments than those who do not."
- For studies including demographic information, especially clinical trials, it is important to accurately reflect the diversity, or lack thereof, in demographic data and statistics, and implications of these findings. Trial enrollment should reflect the general population, and reference to gender, ancestry, age, race, ethnicity, or other relevant factors (e.g., languages of study participants) of enrolled subjects should be correctly represented. If these criteria cannot be met, there should be transparent disclosure by the speaker concerning the limitations of their study.
- To improve visual access by all:
 - Increase the weight of lines in charts, graphs, and plots.
 - Instead of italics, use underlining to emphasize text.
- To improve auditory access by all:
 - Try to speak clearly at a moderate pace and directly into the microphone, without covering your mouth. This provides time for sign language interpreters to accurately translate your findings.
 - For presentations with videos, include captions for the videos.
 - During the Q&A period, repeat the question back to the audience prior to answering.

*If you have questions regarding Accessible & Inclusive Design,
please contact a member of the RISE Committee to assist you by emailing RISE@aabb.org.
Questions about your presentation or session should be directed to professionaldevelopment@aabb.org.*



Slide Design & Layout: Text

Contrasting Text

- Sharp contrast = Easy to read
- Poor contrast = Hard to read

CAPITAL LETTERS

- ALL CAPITAL LETTERS ARE THE EQUIVALENT OF SHOUTING!
- ALL CAPS ARE HARD TO READ

Font Point Size

- Minimum font size = 24 points
- Preferable font size = 28-32 points
- Titles should be 36 to 44 point size if possible

- Break up your presentation with relevant images and/or graphics. Some people are more visually stimulated and therefore need to see imagery or graphical representations to understand as well as just the words on the screen.
- When choosing imagery use images that have some connection to the slide objective or key messages.
- Choose the right color(s). We recommend using contrasting colors, light type on a dark background or vice versa, like white on cobalt blue, or dark green on a pale yellow. Avoid red type – it looks good on your computer but is virtually impossible to read off of the slide screen. And at all costs avoid bright yellow as a background, it is blinding for everyone.
Little contrast = Little readability.

- Don't use difficult to read fonts like Comic Sans or the Calligraphy style fonts. When in doubt use San Serif fonts.
- Avoid using all capital letters – except for headings. All caps are perceived as SHOUTING, and the words are more difficult to read.
- Don't use anything smaller than an 24 point font – and preferably a 28-32 point as the minimum size. Not only will this larger sized font fill up your slide so there is not so much empty space, it will also limit your text. **Note** – Not all font sizes are the same. A 24 point font might be fine in Arial, but will be smaller in Times New Roman.
- Do be mindful of people with color blindness. Avoid teaming the colors of red and green together.

- Don't create long bullets with several sentences; try to keep your bullets to a single sentence or ideally a few key words.
- Use bullets instead of paragraphs. People find it very hard to read off of the screen and paragraphs can make people instinctively switch off and disengage.
- Don't use more than six bullets per blank slide.
- Don't use more than six words per bullet point on your slides.

Slide Design & Layout: Content

Don't Cram Too Much Information Into One Presentation Slide

- Don't place too many words or too many key messages on one slide

Don't Put Word for Word What You Are Going to Say on Your Slide

- This immediately makes people switch off.

Three Key Messages per Slide

- Key Message #1
- Key Message #2
- Key Message #3

Animation

- Do I really need to animate this slide?

- Don't try to cram too much information into one slide. This is not just the number of words (though that is a big part of it), but also the number of key messages you are trying to cover.
- One slide should really have no more than three key messages. Unless, it is an early positioning slide where you are outlining a number of messages at a high level that you then go into more detail later in the presentation.
- Have some fun with your presentations. The presentations that work best and are most memorable are often the ones where you have a bit of fun and engage with your audience.

- Show enthusiasm for your topic — people listen to other people, if you don't seem to be enthusiastic about your content why should they?
- Don't use acronyms or technical terms unless you have previously prefaced them with the actual title/phrase and/or relevant description.
- Don't put word for word exactly what you are going to say on your slide. This immediately makes people switch off and disengage with your presentation.
- When considering animation of any kind think — do I really need to animate this slide?

Slide Design & Layout: Graphs

Bar Graphs:

If you are comparing two or three subjects (or groups) for two or three variables, then a bar graph is great. A “stacked” bar graph is good if you have to express proportions of the whole (e.g., out of 10 trials, what proportion ended in success vs. failure, with “success” at the bottom of the bar and “failure” stacked on top, and a separate bar for each subject). If the total for each subject (or group) doesn’t add up to 100%, then it is better to put the variables side-by-side, with a cluster of bars for each subject. Think creatively about how to summarize your data so that you have just a few bars up on the screen at any one time.

Line Graphs:

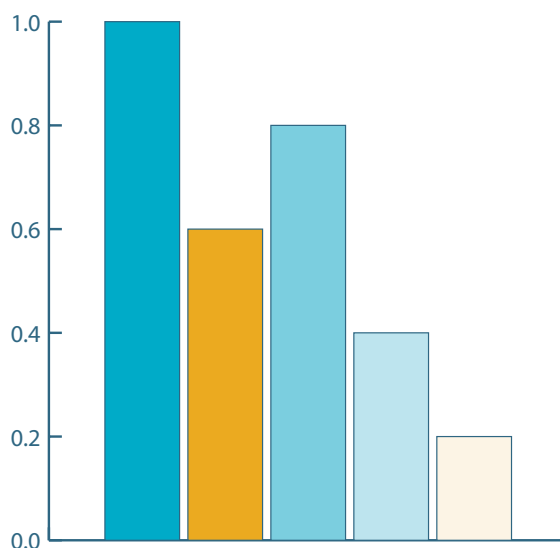
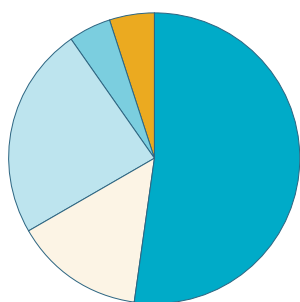
Line-graphs are good for displaying change over time (e.g., how weight increased over the 12 months of testing). One line-graph can accommodate several sets of data but too many lines can get confusing. Again, keep it simple. Three lines is probably the upper limit for any one graph.

Pie charts:

Pie charts are good for presenting proportions of the whole. Two pie charts next to one another allow you to make a comparison. In this way, they are like stacked bar graphs.

Scatter charts:

Scatter charts are often good for presenting data that does not follow an overall trend, but for which the comparisons of points is interesting. If you are going to draw the listeners attention to certain points then it is vitally important that you highlight that point in the chart for that moment of the talk and then add additional slides that draw the reader to each comparison that you are making verbally; rather than just having a splash of dots that the reader can’t differentiate and you waving at them with the laser pointer.



Timing & Delivery

Timing:

- Don't exceed your allotted time. Running overtime suggests a lack of preparation and experience. A good moderator can justifiably be quite abrupt with a speaker who exceeds the allotted time.
- Defining the scope and roughly organizing your material to fit within the specified time are among the first steps in preparing your talk. Never try to squeeze your 30 minute talk into a 20 minute speaking slot.
- Preparing a short talk can be a very constructive exercise for the speaker. Every word must count. Every table, equation or figure must specifically and significantly contribute to the points you are covering.
- Many public speaking experts recommend preparing a talk that is a few minutes shorter than your allotted time. It is better to conclude with a little time left over than to rush at the end (when you are making your final points or summarizing).
- Even if you find that you have run out of time, never close your talk by saying, "I think I'll stop here." It sends a message that you have not adequately prepared. A few, brief words of conclusion or summary are far better than leaving your audience thinking that you just ran out of time.
- Rehearse your presentation before it is presented. You need to rehearse it to fully understand the timing and to understand if the flow is working as you had planned. Your confidence will build the more you rehearse.

Delivery:

- Use a well-modulated speaking voice and a conversational tone.
- Practice using a microphone with someone in the room to help you find your best public speaking volume.
- Avoid language like "ah" or "um" during your presentation.
- Speaking either too softly or too loudly conveys inexperience. Speak clearly and distinctly.
- Speaking too quickly portrays nervousness and a lack of self-confidence.
- Make eye contact with members of the audience. Use the visual feedback you get from them to assess how your talk is being received. If they seem to be drifting off, pick up the pace. If they seem confused or unsure, slow down and repeat important points. Try to have your eyes on the audience 90% of the time you are speaking, particularly at the opening, the closing, and at the end of each emphasized statement.

Timing & Delivery

(Delivery Continued)

- Smile. A smile at the opening and here and there in your presentation sends a powerful nonverbal signal to the audience that you are comfortable, self-assured, and in control.
- Vary the pace of your words. Pauses are essential to a strong delivery. Pause after the introduction of a new key point and after displaying a new visual to give the audience a chance to make the transition.
- If possible, use humor. A joke or two in your presentation engages and relaxes the audience.
- Watch your posture. Standing rigidly, gripping the sides of the podium, tells your audience that you are not relaxed and confident. Draping yourself over the lectern is too informal and conveys indifference.
- Gestures add emphasis to your words and can even provide an outlet for nervousness, but use them judiciously.
- The thing to remember is, while you are speaking, you are in charge of the audience. You control the pace and the tone. You must gain the audience's confidence and capture their attention. It is up to you to interact with the audience and assess their reaction to your presentation.

Q&A:

- Be personable in taking questions. Questions after your talk can be nerve-wracking but are important to the audience experience.
- First, repeat the question. This gives you time to think, and is beneficial to anyone in the audience who may not have heard the question. Also, if you heard the question incorrectly, it presents an opportunity for clarification.
- If you don't know the answer say, "I don't know the answer to this question, I will have to look into that." Don't try to invent an answer on the fly. Be honest and humble. You are only human and you can't have thought of everything.
- If the questioner disagrees with you, and it seems as if there will be an argument, please defuse the situation. A good moderator will usually intervene for you, but if not you will have to handle this yourself (e.g., "We clearly don't agree on this point, let's go on to other questions and you and I can talk about this later.").
- Be respectful; Never insult the questioner.