Tips for Creating Oral Presentations

I. General order of slides
   A. Intro
      1. Start with story / news item / example
         a) Need 30 secs to let audience wake up to your topic
      2. Lit review: 3-5 citations
      3. Hypothesis / Refined Research Question: make this VERY clear
   B. Methods
      1. Can combine materials, participants, procedure in any order
      2. Often works well to make procedure primary, and introduce materials as they come up
   C. Results & Discussion
      1. Restate expected pattern
      2. Give observed pattern
      3. Significance test
         a) Describe what the test was designed to test: e.g., t-test was used to compare the means of these two groups; correlation was used to measure the degree to which these two variables were related, etc.
         b) Give results of test
      4. Interpretation
      5. Limitations
         a) Don’t beat yourself up – spend most of time on your results, not on problems with your study
         b) Do address obvious problems
      6. Future directions
   D. (No need to have a “References” section.)
   E. Ask audience for questions
   F. Say “thank you” when you’re all done.

II. Look at previous presentations for PSY 220 on the course webpage

III. Select design template (color scheme, background graphics) first, before working on text
    A. Use high contrast background and text: e.g., black or dark blue background, white text
    B. Minimum font size: 16. 20 is safer. Must be readable from the back of room 147.
    C. Slide transitions and animations: not distracting, generally use “appear”

IV. Figures
    A. Make as large as possible – fill up page if you can
    B. Generally, do not copy and paste from Excel – figures do not scale well and changes are difficult. Save figures from statistical software in PNG format.
    C. Don’t need to write “Figure 1” – just put a statement at the top telling what the figure is showing: “Music tempo and alcohol consumption.”
    D. Label your x and y axes. Can use text boxes in PPT to replace labels.
    E. Put significance test information next to or under figure, using a text box. Don’t put figure on one page and significance test information on another page.

V. Images / clip art
    A. Okay, but don’t go overboard – should inform, not distract