

How to Give a Bad Talk

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Tom Anderson, Dave Patterson, ...
(Channeled by Mike Dahlin)

I. Thou Shalt Not Illustrate

Clients	xFS BW	NFS BW
1	5.71995e+05	1.65997e+06
8	4.425325e+06	1.19731e+06
16	1.095445e+07	7.88792e+05
32	1.38927e+07	4.70548e+05

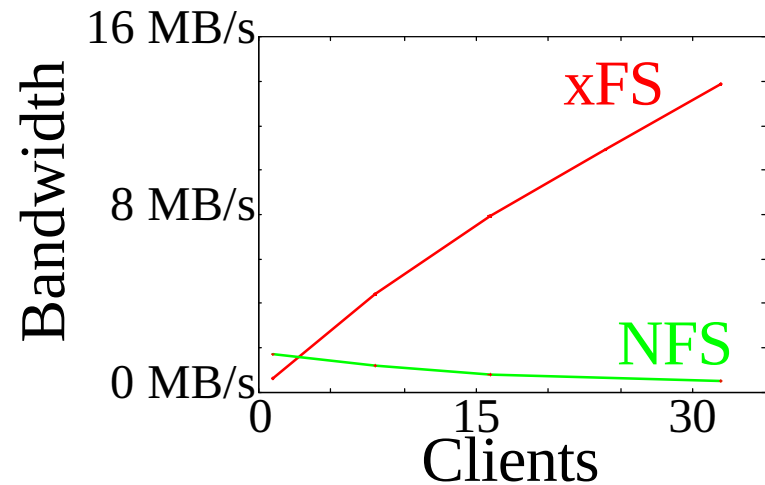


Table:

- Precision
- Allow Audience to Draw on Conclusions

Pictures:

- Confucious: "Picture = 10K Words"
- Dijkstra: "Pictures are a crutch for weak minds"

Who are you going to believe?

II. Thou Shalt Not Covet Brevity

Do not omit technical material from your paper

- You did the work; it is important; make sure the audience understands all nuances of approach and also how smart you are
- Many in audience will never read the paper - they **must** leave the room fully understanding your approach, motivation, and contributions!

Include lots of material in each slide

- Avoid sentence fragments because they may make you look illiterate.
 - Also, if the slides have full sentences, then you can read the slides verbatim and audience will be able to follow along.
 - All points you make orally should also be on the slide, and vice versa.
 - Some may say that no item on a slide should span more than one line. Ignore this! Take as much room as you need to make your point.
 - Take advantage of technology - small fonts allow you to provide information-rich slides.
 - Fonts smaller than 24 point are fine
 - And the important people sit in front anyhow!
 - Make several points on each slide.

Include lots of slides in each talk

- 1 Lampson = 1 slide per minute
- Impress audience with difficulty of material
 - They should leave knowing that you did a lot of work and that it was hard, even if they don't understand all of the details.
- Avoid moving content to "backup slides"
 - You probably won't get a chance to show many of them