The opinions expressed in this talk are solely those of the author and are not necessarily those of the Department of Physics or the University of Illinois. But they should be.

#10

Look at the floor

Mumble

Look at the floor while mumbling

Train yourself to maintain eye contact with the audience, and glance at different areas of the audience. Include everyone in your story—don't always look at the same place.

Train yourself to speak slowly and distinctly. Enunciate your words clearly. If you have a soft voice, use a microphone.

If you are a non-native English speaker, have a native English speaker check your pronunciation.

Animations can be an effective tool to control what the audience is seeing at a particular time, but curb your enthusiasm. It's a scientific talk, not a video game. (What *was* that orange thing that streaked across the screen and disappeared anyway?)

#8

Pace around all over the room

Jingle your keys or coins in your pockets

Leave your cell phone on

Wave your arms and the laser pointer

Fiddle with the microphone

Use minimal hand gestures, and remember that a perfectly innocuous gesture in your culture may mean something entirely different to the international guests in your audience.
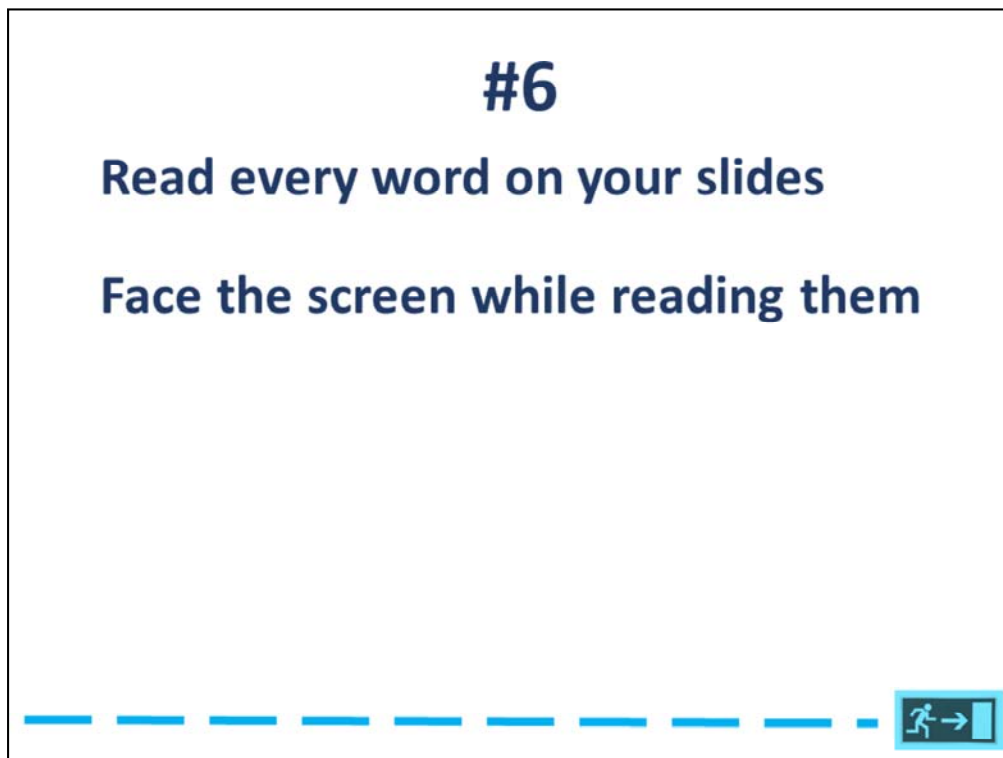
#7

Use UJ, UDTs, and UAs*

Sound smug when using them

*unfamiliar jargon
*undefined terms
*unknown acronyms

Use the simplest word that accurately conveys your meaning, and define every acronym and symbol that you use in your talk.

#6

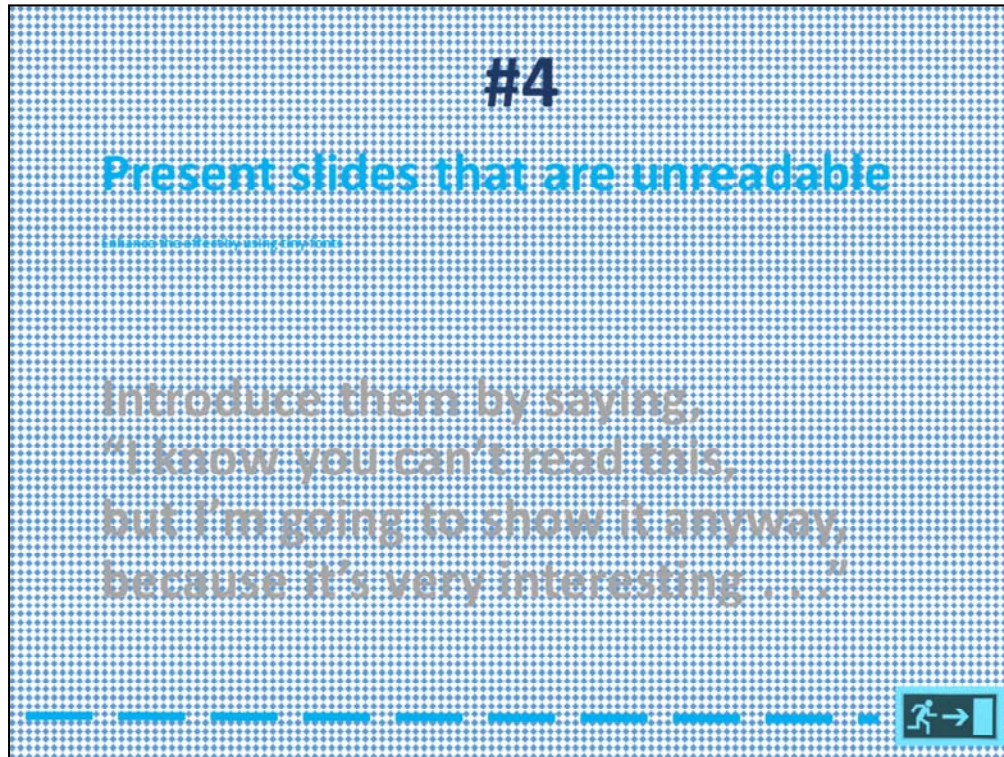## Read every word on your slides

Face the screen while reading them

Every person in your audience is literate. They can all read faster than you can talk. If all you're going to do is read words that they can read for themselves, why do they need *you*? You're completely useless.

#5

Make your slides visually boring. Write out all your points in full narrative text. Don't use short phrases or bulleted lists. Avoid images to illustrate data. Use many equations instead. Eschew color.

Use words sparingly to orient the audience to what they are seeing. Use images and data to explain, exemplify, and give evidence for your words.

Present slides that are unreadable.

Enhance the effect by using tiny fonts.

Introduce them by saying, "I know you can't read this, but I'm going to show it anyway because it's very interesting."

Use a neutral background and high-contrast, legible fonts (min. 24 pt for most talks).

The first rule for any talk is "Know thy audience"!

What do they already know, and what are you going to have to explain?

What words are they familiar with?

What will capture their interest and attention?

Why do they want to listen to you? What do they want to find out?

9

Your purpose is not to describe everything in your paper. It's to summarize one or two main points in an interesting, engaging way that makes the audience want to go look up the paper and read it.

Note to the physicists: speaker time is invariant. It does not expand to accommodate everything you want to say. Ignore the moderator cues, the buzzer, the lights shutting off, the people running to the exits at your peril.