How to do a thing

Establish intent

What do you want? Something about the audience, not just you:

- ▶ convey an idea? teach a skill? prove a proposition? change a preconception?
- ▶ get people to read your paper or use your software?
- ▶ join a community of scholars? get a job? impress people in power?
- ▶ forestall interaction? cover ass? avoid questions? feel superior?

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> ⏱ **Pick one idea** 😬 **Resist thesis creep** ✊🏽

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Establish intent

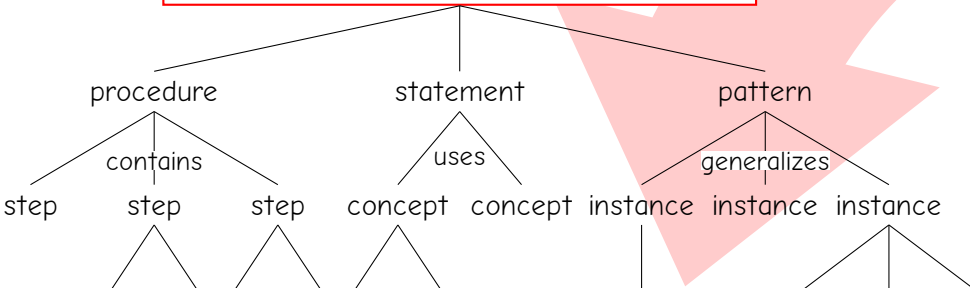**What do you want?** Something about the audience, not just you: 😬

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procedure   statement   pattern

contains   uses   generalizes

step   step   step   concept   concept   instance   instance   instance
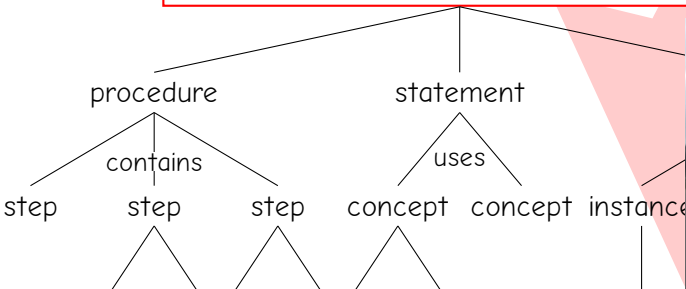
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How to exit freeway like a boss (2013)


```
            procedure              statement
              contains               uses
step     step       step     concept  concept  instance
```
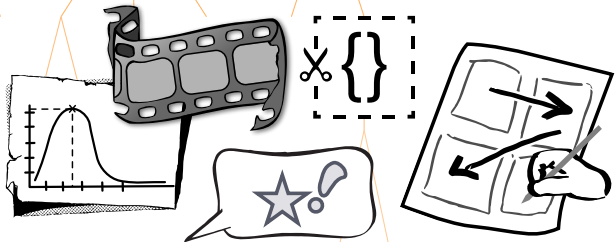
Develop plan

Collect techniques that suit you. What can you do? (Try my advice.)
  constraints that spur you. What can you not do? (Who needs animation.)
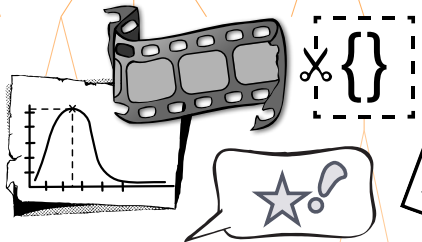 **products** that inspire you. What do others do? (Highlight reels hide work.)

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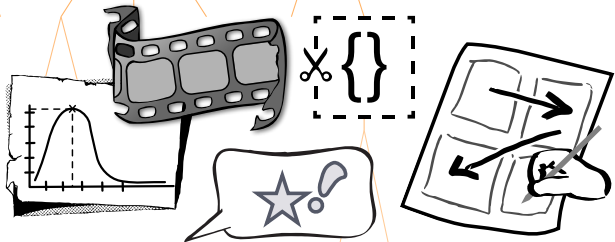**products** that inspire you. What do others do? (Highlight reels hide work.)

Exposed (2013)

Develop plan

Collect techniques that suit you. What can you do
constraints that spur you. What can you n
products that inspire you. What do others

Put in the work. Respect your audience's time.
Start early and gentle. Enjoy the journey.

---

real to-do list this wednesday:
-watch Ru Paul Drag Race, take extremely careful notes on a 2-minute span of 1 episode
-make some tweets and facebooks
-literally please even open the dissertation document and glance at it. don't even look directly at it, just peripheral vision

4:32 PM - 4 Apr 2018

27 Likes

2   27

Tweet your reply

Chung-chieh Shan @ccshan · Apr 4
Replying to @kirbyconrod
Called out 😳

1

Laurie Dermer @lauriedermer · Apr 4
Replying to @kirbyconrod
Ahahahaha I also set this incredibly low bar for myself on occasion with my thesis

1   2

Laurie Dermer @lauriedermer · Apr 4
"Okay self you don't want to do that and that's reasonable. But hey, let's open your thesis to the last part you worked on, and just commit to being in front of the computer for a bit. no pressure"
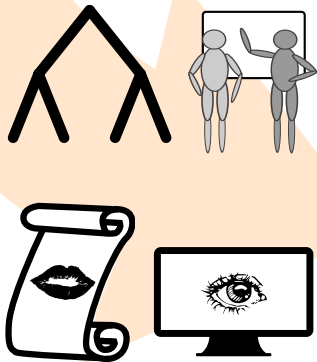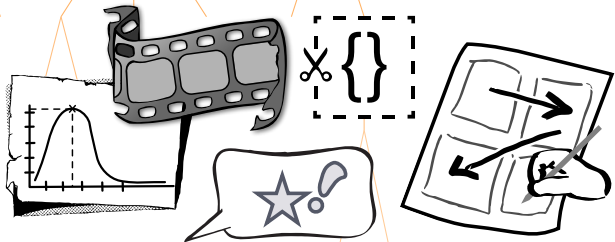
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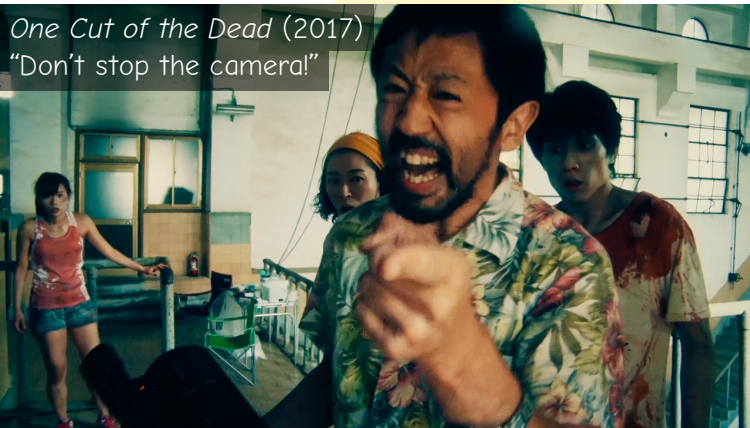
Put in the work. Respect your audience's time.
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Practice script

Practice as **soon** as possible, as **seriously** as possible

- ► Rehearsing even just one slide makes the rest of your plan concrete
- ► Rehearse entire talk (especially (each) beginning), record yourself, and **listen**

One Cut of the Dead (2017)
"Don't stop the camera!"

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Alternate focus between intent (connection) and script (technique)

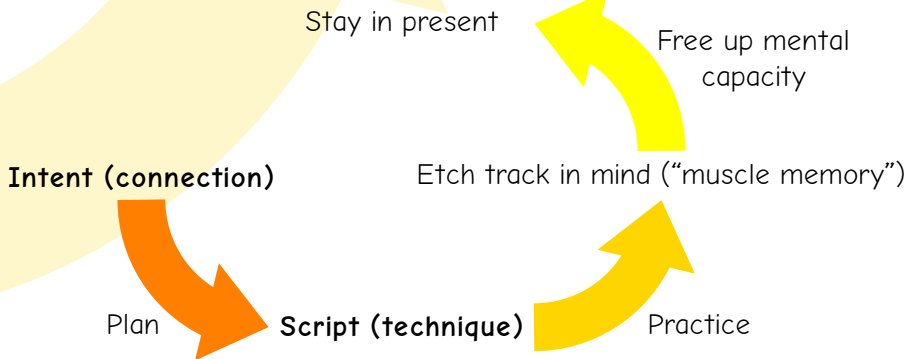*Tacking* (2012)

Intent (connection)

Plan   **Script (technique)**

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Alternate focus between intent (connection) and script (technique)

Stay in present

Free up mental capacity

Intent (connection)

Etch track in mind ("muscle memory")

Plan

Script (technique)

Practice

Practice script

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Engage audience
Manage time
Fix equipment
...

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Engage audience
Manage time
Fix equipment
...

Stay in present

Fado (1910)

Intent (connection)

Etch track i

Plan

Script (technique)

Learn from experience

Intent is not magic
- ► What worked? What didn't? How do you find out?
- ► What will you change, to increase efficacy and reduce collateral damage?
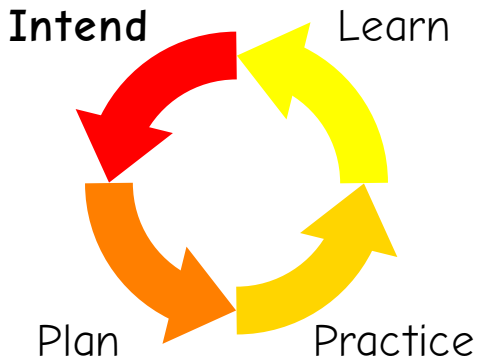
Who do you want to please?
- ► Are you kissing up?
- ► Are you punching up?

If you care, solicit negative **feedback** in the face of politeness
- ► "What are you most confused about?"
- ► "When did you tune out?"
- ► "Thanks! I'll trust your compliment more when you tell me what sucked."
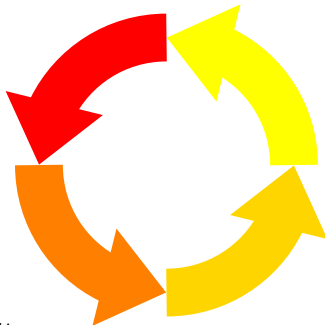- ► Shut up and listen

How to give a talk

How to give a talk

Establish intent
- ▶ Build trust
- ▶ Grow outline

Develop plan
- ▶ Track nodes
- ▶ Track edges
- ▶ Handle diversity

Learn from experience
- ▶ Give a practice talk

Practice script
- ▶ Work with audience
- ▶ Speak in session

Build trust to cooperate with audience

Declare your intent up front:

- ▶ "I'm here to recruit you to do two things."
- ▶ "This is joint work with X and Y, but I'm the one on the job market this year."
- ▶ "At the end of your handout is a question menu, or you can ask your own."
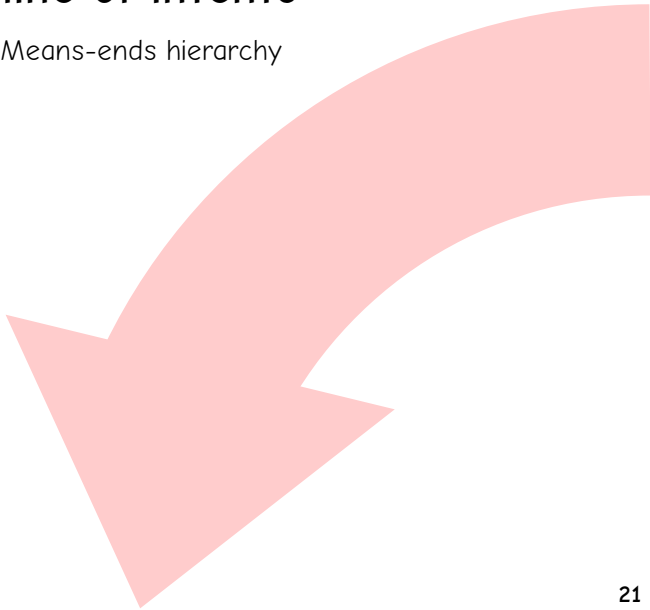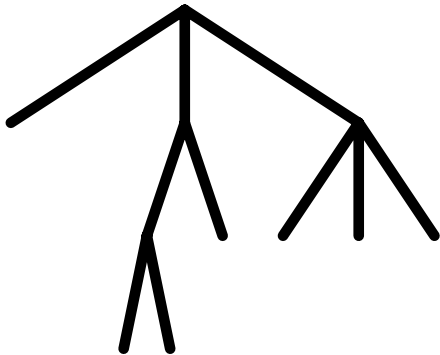- ▶ "I can't take any questions because I have 60 slides and 10 minutes."

I will tune out if you lose my trust because I see you bullshit or punch down.

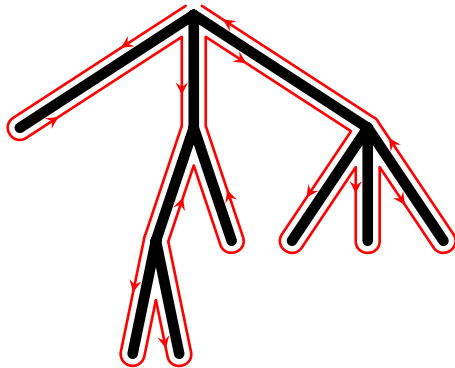*I can't believe what you say, because I see what you do* (1964)

Grow outline of intents

Means-ends hierarchy

Grow outline of intents

Means-ends hierarchy + **linear traversal**

- ▶ prefix (up front)
- ▶ infix (opening gambit/in medias res/
  particular-general-particular/recall plan)
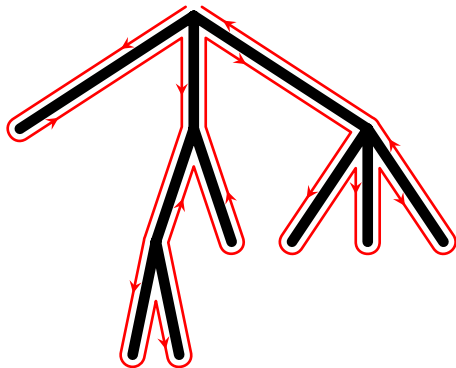- ▶ postfix (conclusion)

Grow outline of intents

Means-ends hierarchy + **linear traversal**
- ▶ prefix (up front)
- ▶ infix (opening gambit/in medias res/ particular-general-particular/recall plan)
- ▶ postfix (conclusion)

Refactor!
- ▶ Prune unused content
- ▶ Unify similar content
  - · design a running example
- ▶ Inline uncommonly used content
  - · expand notation away
- ▶ Introduce commonly used content
  - · (only) by example, not just formally
- ▶ Rename in context
  - · $x_1, x_2 \ \rightarrow \ x, y \ \rightarrow \ src, dst$

Track outline nodes

Stay on point! A node is an intent, like to convey X, seldom just to talk about X. Tell the audience what you want them to notice in each talk/section/slide/plot.

How to point at a topic

Projected is good on multiple mirrored screens
Body is good for commanding attention
Stick is ok if you can't reach
Laser can be hard to see
Your computer screen is invisible to everyone else

Steady
► Pointer movement
► Keep content to digest, across slide changes or on handout

Speech in synchrony
► Slow down (enjoy speaking it)
► Loud and clear, or quiet and suspenseful

Track outline nodes

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comment

How to point at a **topic**

comment

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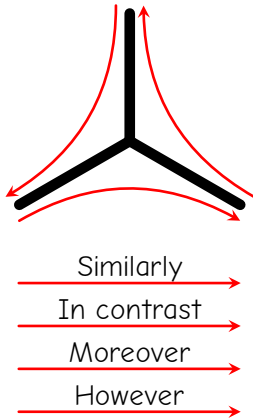Your computer screen is invisible to everyone else

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Track outline edges

For example
More generally
In part
Overall
Because
Therefore
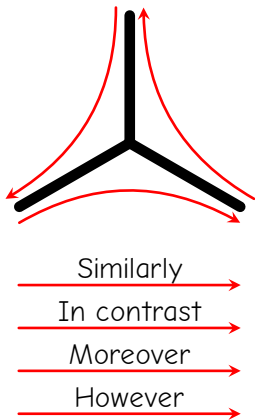To this end
Now we can
And then
But first

Similarly
In contrast
Moreover
However

Specify the relationship at each move

Track outline edges

For example
More generally
In part
Overall
Because
Therefore
To this end
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Specify the relationship at each move

Display

▶ Show the **diagrams** in your mind or on your whiteboard:
  ▶ a compiler pipeline
  ▶ a proof tree
  ▶ a dependency graph
  ▶ a system architecture
  ▶ not just a bullet list or formula

▶ Indicate **similarities** with consistent shapes and positioning

Speech

▶ Disambiguate with radio intonation
▶ Speak complete utterances
  ▶ not trailing off
  ▶ not distracted by slide change

Handle diversity

Not everyone knows/cares.

   Identify broad themes in common → Remind yourself that your work is great

Multiple modalities.

Interaction.

Work with audience

Houfek, *The Act of Teaching* (2000)

Voice coach says:

Stand up straight and breathe.

Remember, **it's about them.**

More ways to respond to questions:

► Say it again for folks in the back
► Rephrase the question to make it make sense before answering it
► "I didn't get the question"
► "I don't have an answer"
► "Let's chat afterwards"

Speak in a conference session

Introduce yourself to session chair
- ▶ name pronunciation
- ▶ pronouns
- ▶ bio?
- ▶ **disambiguate time signals**

Check A/V before session
- ▶ text & color   legible
- ▶ voice & sound   audible (mic distance?)
- ▶ laser pointer   visible
- ▶ remote control reachable
- ▶ wireless mic   wearable
- ▶ interpreter   visible and audible

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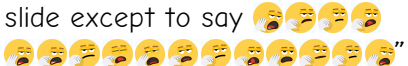- ► **disambiguate time signals**

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Listen to other talks in the session
- ► don't fiddle with your slides

Stay on time
- ► acknowledge time signals
- ► don't say "I'm going to skip this slide except to say 😩😩😩😩😩😩😩😩😩😩😩😩😩😩😩"
- ► last resort:
  switch to last slide and stop

End clearly
- ► **summarize on last slide**
- ► speak "thank you" for applause
- ► hang out after session

Give a practice talk

Explain before:

- ► Talk venue
- ► Audience to simulate
- ► Desired feedback

Collect during:

- ► Timing (per slide?)
- ► Instant feedback (in side channel)

Rehearsal includes audience questions.

Discuss after:

- ► Junior folks give feedback first, because

  They are usually the intended audience

  They should learn constructive criticism

  They can pick off low-hanging fruit first

- ► One piece of feedback per person, because

  ⏱ Pick one idea 😬 Resist thesis creep

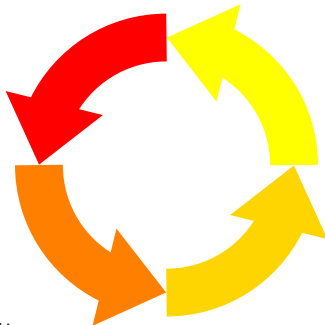**Focus on problem identified by feedback** before solution suggested

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"Honesty."

"Performance is actually one of the only spaces we can be honest anymore."

"People are going to look. Give them something to look at."

—Patrick Blackburn

—Alok Vaid-Menon

—Jefferson Tugger