Contrary to what we just told you about the teaching presentation, the research presentation is precisely the moment where an excerpt from your dissertation is most appropriate. Your audience purports to be exactly what it is—a gathering of colleagues. Use the research presentation as an opportunity to showcase your skill at making your research accessible and be sure to add tidbits of why this line of research is ideal for this school. Assistant Professor of Chemistry Jacqueline Trischman, for instance, suggested the following, campus-specific references a candidate could cite in the research presentation:

- The ready availability of proper instrumentation on-site.
- Low start-up costs for your type of research.
- Opportunities to involve undergraduates in research.
- The cutting edge aspects of your projects.
- Links to other departments.

If you've been giving conference presentations all along, you're already accustomed to encapsulating bits of your research into brief, discussion-provoking chunks that can be delivered orally. You probably have your own system of marking key words in your back-up text and for finding your place again once you've looked up to make an extraneous point. You may have even practiced performing multimedia presentations. Since your research presentation will most likely be part of your dissertation, you will also have talked about the material repeatedly, in different configurations, with different audiences and varying intents as your writing developed. So, you know your material quite well, and have already practiced delivering it in public.

However, the rhetorical task of the research presentation is not identical to the conference presentation. Whereas the conference presentation aims only at getting information across and (when things go well) generating a discussion with colleagues, the research presentation is geared to showing something about your own professional style, as well. Associate Professor of Management Regina Eisenbach tells us that, in her discipline, candidates are expected to present their scholarship at on-campus interviews. She encourages candidates to focus on making the paper presentation interesting and accessible to the widest range of potential hearers: from the undergraduate with no coursework in the major to the senior faculty member in the discipline. As Eisenbach points out, candidates who are able to make their research presentation accessible and interesting to faculty and students alike are also demonstrating their teaching skill. In other words, your research presentation should simultaneously be a teaching moment.

One professor we interviewed offers a good example of a "teachable moment" that occurred in one of her on-campus research presentation. Just as she began to explain the significance of the data on the overhead she presented, an audience member raised her hand to point out an error in the data. The presenter admits to feeling embarrassed at first, but says that she decided rather quickly to use her typo as a teachable moment. She played into the comment by saying, "I have made this presentation three times and you are the first person to bring that error to my attention. That error has implications for my analysis. Let me show you what some those implications mean for my research results." Rather than crumbling in chagrin or slinking off in utter failure, this candidate took charge.
of seemingly being "caught out." She showed how she could think on her feet, and how she could teach through those awkward moments. Cheryl calls this a "good save" when she teaches interviewing to her undergraduate social science writers.

The best research presentations, then, show how teaching and research connect. And, if you can draw community service into this mix (as in, for example, a dissertation on professional issues backed up by related service in the academy, as our contributor Alan Kalish has done) you are way ahead of your competition. Since, as we discussed above, your dissertation research will probably already have generated several possible presentations for you, your task in crafting the research presentation is adding that personal/relational dimension to the intellectual content already extant. How can you be personable, intellectual, and even entertaining and still communicate vital information to a large group of people in a short space of time?

Leonard Bernstein, the late conductor of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, was a master at this. His "Young People's Concerts," which spanned the late 50's through the early 70's, lured a generation of children into thinking about tricky bits of musical "rhetoric" such as intervals, modes, and bitonality. We strongly recommend watching videotapes of these concerts, especially the later ones: they demonstrate a clear, passionate, accessible presentation of small scholarly treasures (see appendix 5 for titles). Bernstein is clearly in love with his subject, his medium (the orchestra), and his audience, and his obvious delight in drawing the three together absolutely radiates from this tiny podium. Incredibly, camera pans of the audience show that he has the rapt cooperation of his small, squirmy auditors. What is he doing? What can you do without a teleprompter and the New York Philharmonic to back you up during your presentation?

How to "Conduct" Your Research Presentation

o Choose a manageable chunk of your complex subject to share with your listeners. Don't try to get too much information in too small a time slot. (Bernstein often took an entire hour's program to explain one musical concept.)

o Choose material that you've used before, preferably that you've presented in different conference and classroom settings.

o Present material you will enjoy talking about. Try to find a part of your dissertation that you still accost people to talk about at parties.

o Remember that people recall only a small portion of what they hear; some researchers say information is only remembered once it's been repeated five times. If you argument is really complex, give your audience a painfully clear frame to hang it on.

o Prepare good notes, and refer to them when you need to, but don't perform a formal "reading." (Bernstein left his notes casually on the piano and, in later concerts, seemed to use them only as launching points.)

o Back up your points with visual and experiential media (your Philharmonic).

o Tie in complex ideas to ones your audience is already familiar with. (Bernstein often-seemingly on
Impulse-leaned over the piano and played a popular song or advertising jingle to illustrate complex terms like the "mixolydian" mode.

Step into your role as "conductor." Rather than presenting information in a linear path from you to your (ostensible) judges, think about inviting the audience to participate in your enthusiasm for a topic you've explored in some depth. Make your presentation a communication triangle among your material, your media, and your audience. If you relate only to your audience, you're relying on the component of this triangle over which you have the least control.

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