

Kirkman, J.: **Guidelines for Giving Effective Presentations**. 2nd Ed. - Ramsbury Books, Marlborough 1997. ISBN 0-9521762-1-1. 130 pp., GBP 7.95.

This book of John Kirkman, an experienced teacher and consultant of scientific and technical communication, is a useful aid to anyone who wants to learn or improve skills in giving lectures. The book is produced on PC in a simple word processed form to keep the price down: in spite of this, orientation in its content is fairly simple thanks to a clear separation into chapters and a good subject index.

In thirteen chapters every detail of the topic of the book is explained, giving all possible pros and contras and useful recommendations to inexperienced speakers. After presenting a brief overview of the book (chapter 1), an analysis of aims, audience, and context of a talk is given (chapter 2). The following four chapters show how to assemble material, and how to prepare introduction, main body, and conclusion of a talk. Chapter 7 discusses the need for notes, their forms, size, and preparation. Next four chapters are on visual aids (whether to use them, which equipment to use and how to handle it, and how to design visuals). Chapter 12 is on how the speaker should deal with nervousness. Chapter 13 shows how to finally deliver the presentation.

Two appendices are supplemented. The first of them analyses all possible advantages and disadvantages of common types of visual-aid equipment, and gives tips on planning their use. Appendix 2 is a check-list for evaluating presentations.

The reviewed volume is the second edition in which the author extended discussions on the use of computers and other technical equipment (liquid-crystal-display panels, cathode-ray tube projectors, film loops, videotapes, *etc.*) in the presentation of talks. This new information is very useful as such recent techniques may both improve or spoil a lecture. This part and a detailed analysis of the use of handouts prior to or during the talk is an information not found in other handbooks. The text is supplemented with only a few figures: on possible positions of the speaker during a lecture, and some examples of visuals.

The book is full of practical advice, and this is why I recommend it to both students and teachers.

Z. ŠESTÁK (*Praha*)