Advice on Surviving The Job Talk

(Apologies to Woody Beck, U. of GA Soc. Dept., from whom I stole much of this material.)

Haveman's Top 12 List: Most Common Job-Talk Mistakes

1) Being overly technical & complex

2) Presenting too many graphs & tables

3) Not distributing graphs & tables (when they could clarify)

4) Talking too fast

5) Assuming the audience cares as much about your project as you do

6) Not giving enough background

Haveman's Top 12 List: Most Common Job-Talk Mistakes

6) Giving too much background

7) Talking too long

8) Reading a paper rather than presenting it

9) Trying to "wing it"

10) Needless & repetitive "name dropping"

11) Preparing too much (talking too long)

Suggestions to Avoid These Pitfalls

✓ Design the talk as if you were presenting your material to smart people outside your field.

✓ Choose 1 or 2 points that are really important and hit them again & again.

✓ Start & end by telling the audience what your research is all about.

Suggestions (cont'd)

- ✓ Keep it short: 35-40 minutes for a 1.5-hour time slot.
  - ✓ You may get 45 minutes, but departmental screw-ups (e.g., projector not working initially, people arriving late) may cut into your time.

- ✓ Keep telling yourself that your technical competence is not on the line – just your ability to explain.

- ✓ Practice, practice, practice.

Remember the Most Important Rule

Keep it *simple!*