Book Review

Presenting Your Research: Conferences, Symposiums, Poster Presentations and Beyond

By Lucinda Becker
London: Sage (2014).

Hardcover £60.00 (ISBN: 9781446275887)
Paperback £19.99 (ISBN: 9781446275894)

Reviewed by **Julia Rodriguez**

I am an International EdD 3rd year student who read this book in a week. I produced my first poster and conference presentation last year and I wish I had read this book before then.

Lucinda Becker's style is not only clear and concise, but also full of examples and checklists. When you are new to giving papers and presentations, and I am speaking from personal experience, you have plenty of questions not necessarily related to academia that sometimes may seem so obvious to others that you do not dare to ask. This is where I found this book especially handy and different from other more formal guides. It takes you from the envy or need to do a presentation to the whole process of actually doing it.

In the introduction in chapter 1, the author reflects upon ten reasons one may have to give a presentation or do a poster, which are quite thought provoking. She shares her personal experience and guides the reader through the several ways in which the book can be read, from a linear more traditional way to a "go to the section you may need to read first". This is useful for new as well as for more experienced professionals. There are also plenty of exercises in each section, top tips and checklists, which are very informative and enable the reader to put theory into practice.

Chapter 2 tackles practical issues such as planning when, where, what type of conference and the funding that may be available, so researchers can have a more accurate idea of the whole process and what it implies. In chapter 3, the author explains how the conference system works, how to find conferences in your area of interest, the role of supervisors and what to expect from the "call for papers". Chapter 4 highlights the structure of abstracts, what an abstract is, and how the call for papers helps to produce a specific proposal. Chapter 5 explains the different types of presentations, chairing conference sessions, participating in round-table discussions, etc., and their pros and cons in a very uncomplicated and practical way so you do not have to spend a lot of time reading to decide the event that fits you best. Chapter 6 is especially useful as you can find guidelines on the content, shape, and length of the paper and where to find the relevant materials. In chapter 7 we find advice on how to prepare and plan. The next two chapters, 8 and 9, look at the different tools that can be used to deliver a presentation, taking into account practical problems that may arise such as, timing, formality, nerves, boredom levels, etc. and rehearsal methods. Chapter 10 follows with tips on how to use voice, accents, pace and silence moments and body language.

In many books on presentations advice can be found on how to control nerves presenting and during the most dreaded moments of handling questions. In chapter 11 and 12, we also find how to make your nerves work for you with a checklist of effective ways on how to use them to your advantage. The last two chapters, 13 and 14, are concerned with poster presentations and making the most of participating in a presentation by networking, getting feedback, or just

enjoying it by feeling part of a community, as mentioned in the introduction of this book.

While I think this is a book that is really worth reading and using, there are a couple of remarks that I would like to add. The first one concerns the use of references in presentations, as it is a quite fuzzy area, and unfortunately I could not find anything related to this matter in the book. The other remark is that I find these kinds of books more practical and user-friendlier in an e-book format as they can be carried around more easily and the reader can also use the browser and search tool for the useful bits needed anytime, anywhere.