

Talking heads

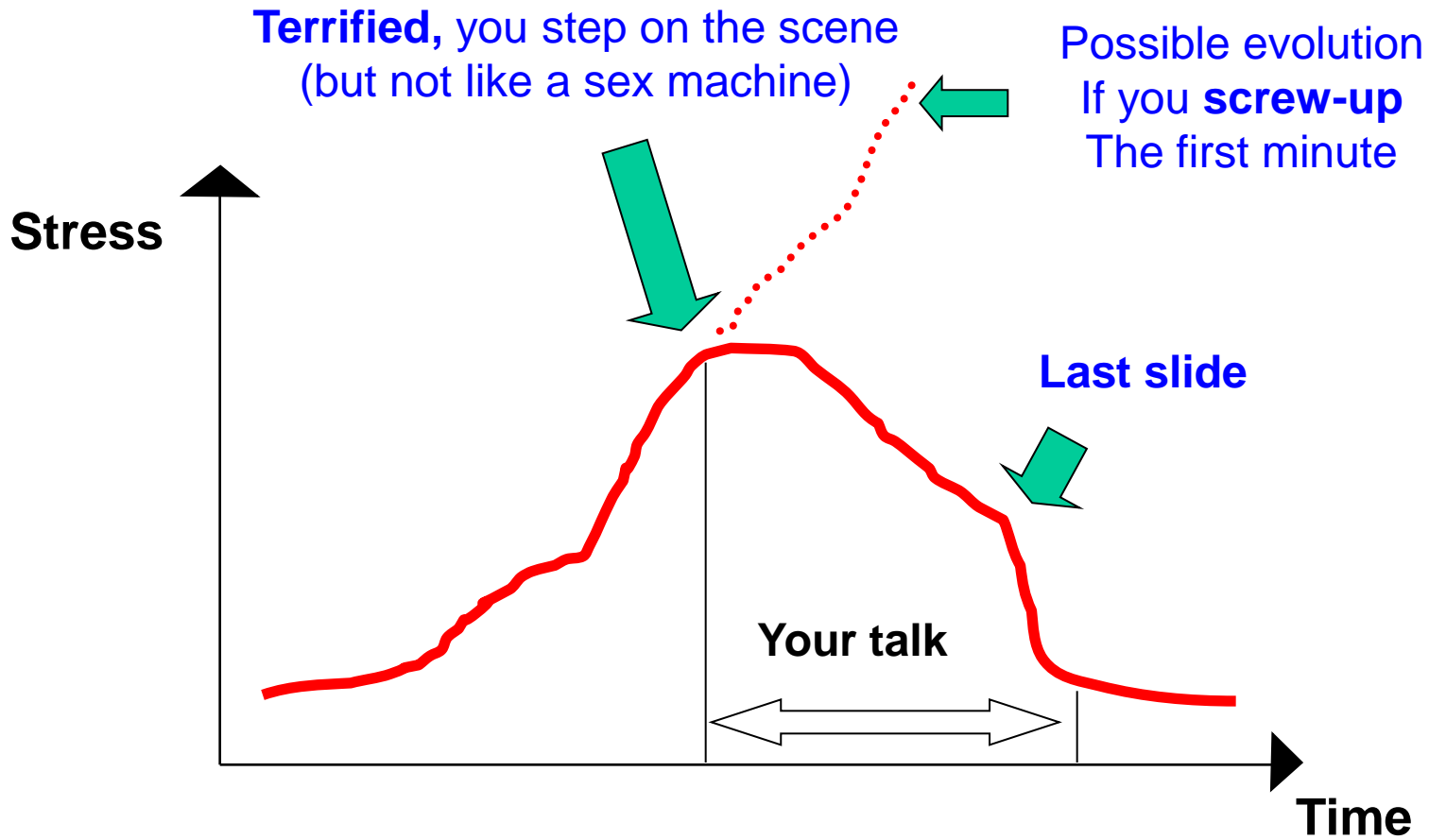
Golden rules

or

What you **must** know
to avoid failure
In front of an audience... or a jury

Denis Poinsot

UE Scientific English & Communication



A typical talk

Why do you feel **stressed** before speaking in public ?



Why do you feel **stressed** before speaking in public ?

error n 1

« It is because of the jury »



Why do you feel **stressed** before speaking in public ?

error n 1

« **It is because of the jury** »



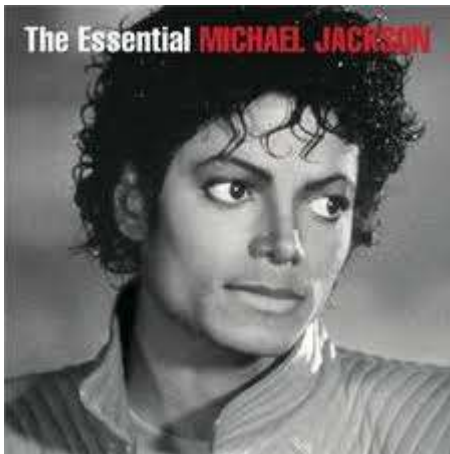
Why do you feel **stressed** before speaking in en public ?

error n 2

« I need more experience »



Do **they** need more experience ?



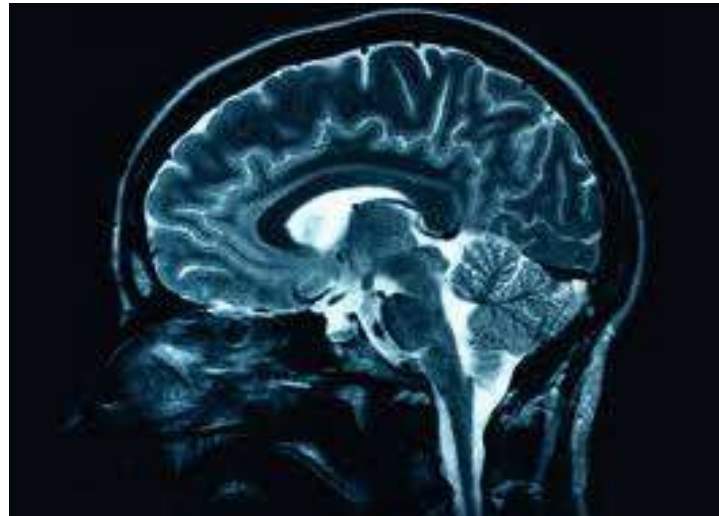
error n 2

« I need more experience »



The awful truth

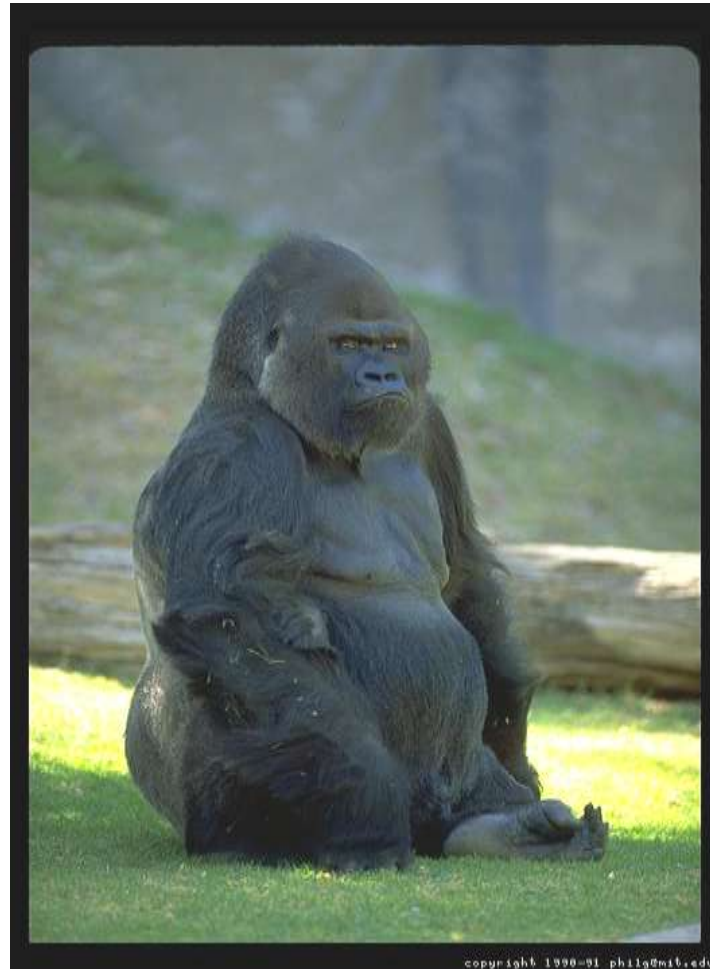
You **cannot** avoid stress :
it has a **biological** basis



Staring at a mammal ?



VERBODEN !



« *Hey, you ! Are you staring at me ?* »



This is how your reptilian brain
sees the audience !

And now ladies and gentlemen...

The tricks of the trade

Rule n 1

And in the Book was written :

**Let the first ones
be the last ones**

Times New Roman

Times New Roman

Garamond

Garamond

Book Antiqua

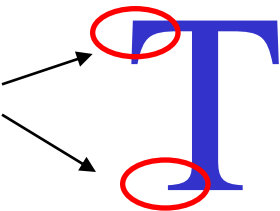
Book Antiqua

Bookman Old Style

Bookman Old Style

'nice' fonts...

...make **poor** slides

« serifs »  a 'serifs' font

The 'serifs' fonts : *nice...*

...but difficult to read from a distance

T

A 'sans serifs' font

Sans serifs fonts : ***basic***...

... but ***very easy*** to read from a distance

Arial

0299456789

Tahoma

0299456789

Verdana

0299456789

Comic sans serif

0299456789

simple fonts...

...make **efficient** slides

Now **get up**, and...



...**line up** at the back of the room, please.

Most slides

Prepared by beginners

Use fonts which are

Much too small for the size of the screen.

For the people seated at the back of the room,

Reading is very difficult

When not damn impossible !

50pts

30pts

20pts

16pts

14pts

12pts

10pts

Most slides

Prepared by beginners

Use fonts which are

Much too small for the size of the screen.

For the people seated at the back of the room,

Reading is very difficult

When not damn impossible !.

50pts

30pts

20pts

16pts

14pts

12pts

10pts

Even a sans serifs font
cannot do **miracles**

16pts is a minimum – THIS is 16 pts

Many beginners make the mistake to read what is written on their slide.

This is **wrong**, for at least **three** reasons :

- (1). If it is on the screen, reading aloud is useless, since **your audience can read** as well as you do
- (2). Even a poor reader **will read faster than you can talk**. Your audience will always be one paragraph ahead of you.
- (3). Even good readers **can't read and listen to you at the same time**. A reading audience is a **deaf** audience.

correct equivalent of previous slide :

Do not read your slide: it is not a book.

1. People **can** read
2. They read **faster** than you can talk
3. They can't read **and** listen to you at the same time.

You do the talking.
Let them do the reading.

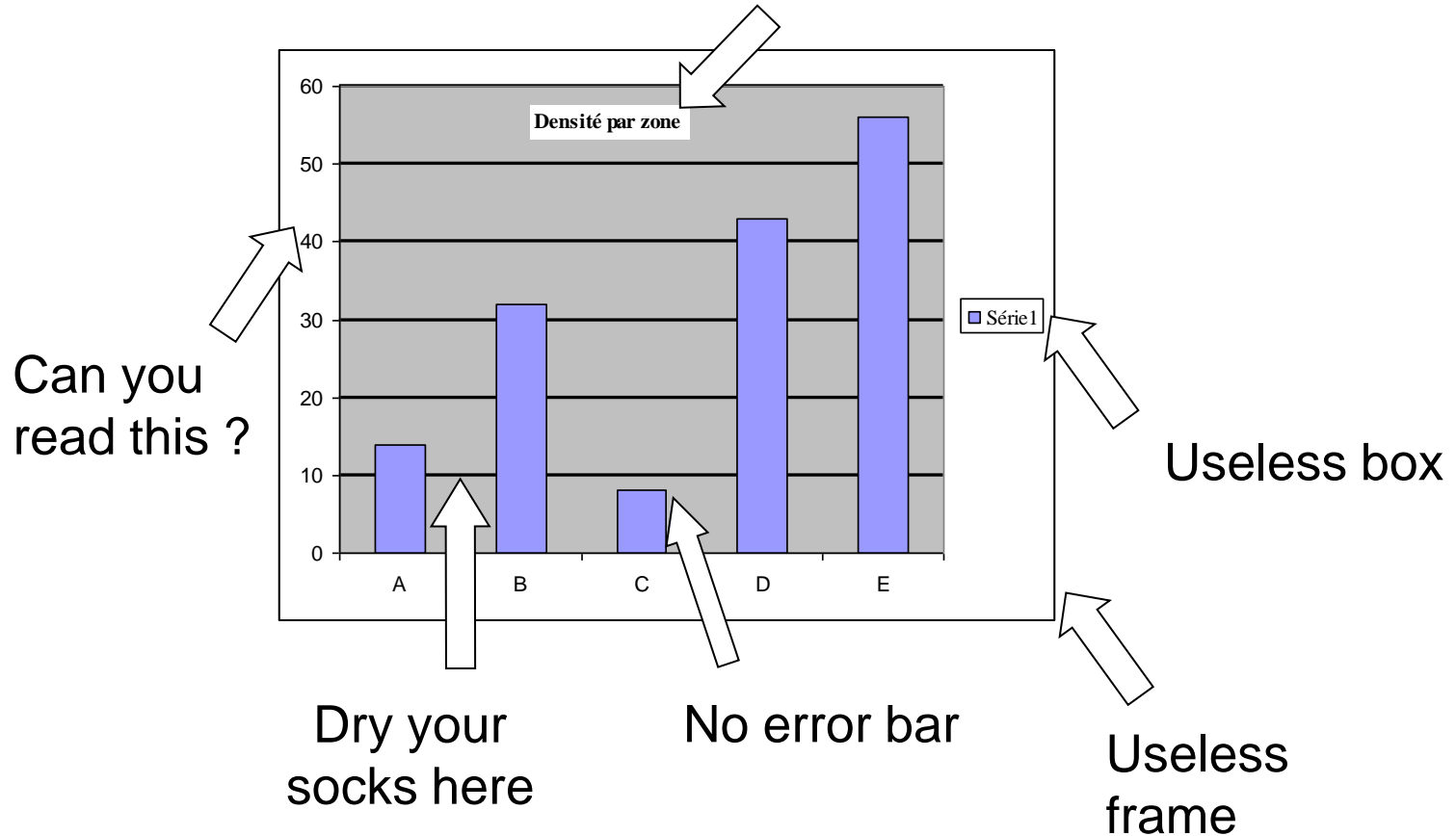
Submit a manuscript to *Biologos*
or we kill this rabbit !



save Lilou the lapinou !

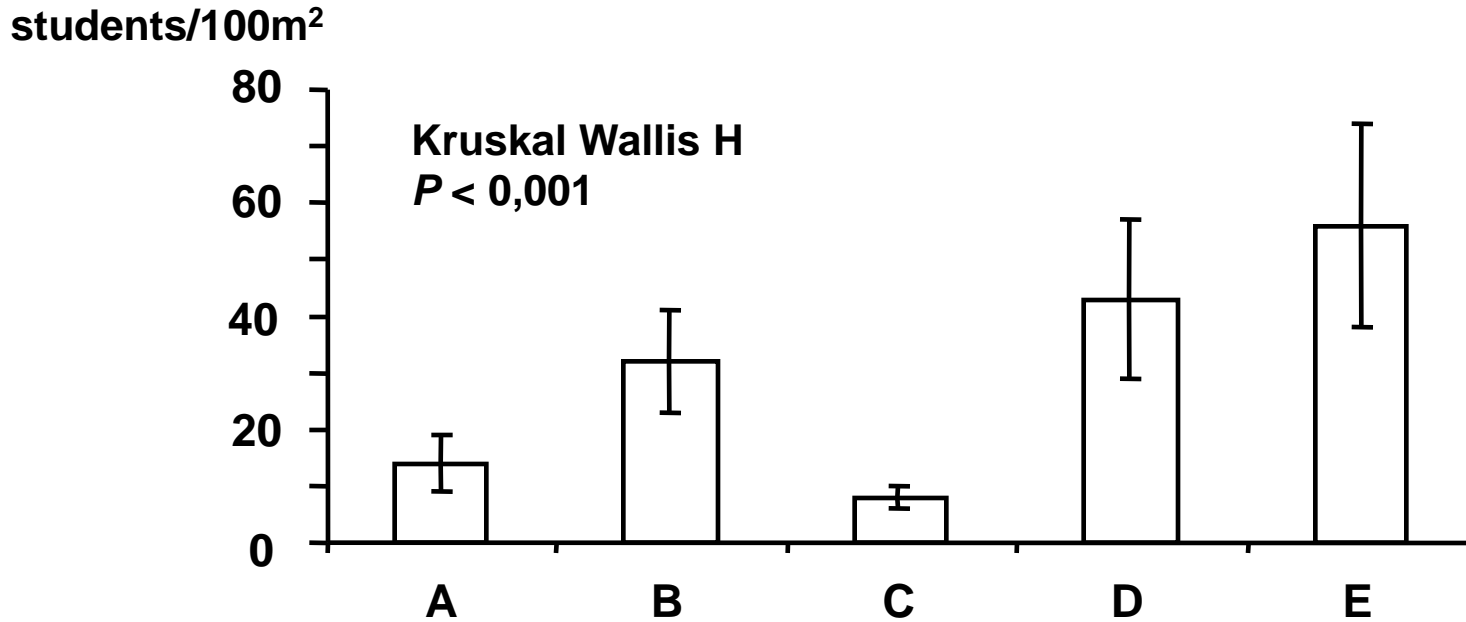
<http://biologos.univ-rennes1.fr>

Minimal and illegible legend



**The typical 'default' Excel graph
in all its ugliness**

Same graph, but better !



Distribution of students in Paimpont research station.
Bars : standard error.

- A. working in TP room n°1
- B. working in the field
- C. working in TP room n°2
- D. hiding in dormitory
- E. drinking at the pub

Tables have their legend on **top** but..... **Figures** do not.

Why?



Table 1. Productivity of Sblodov Sovkhoze in the mid fifties

	Wheat (tons)	Potatoes (tons)	Anvils (units)
1952	250	1250	125
1953	280	912	215
1954	240	743	320
1955	302	514	621

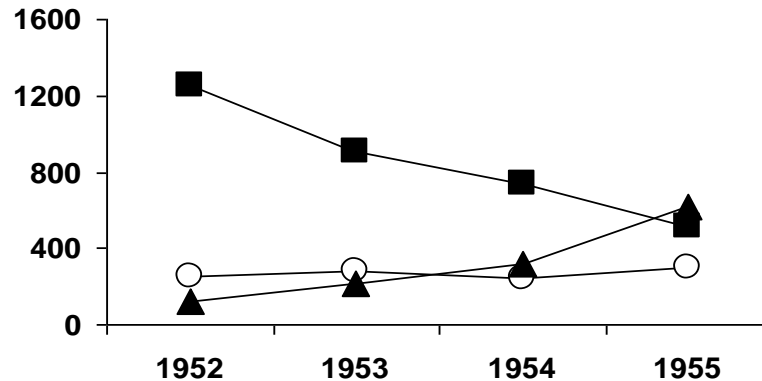


Fig 1. Production of wheat (circles, in tons), potatoes (squares, in tons) and anvils (triangles, in units) in Sblodov Sovkhoze in the mid fifties.

Tables have their legend on **top** because
a **table** looks like a **page of text**

Your eyes **automatically** jump
to the top-left corner
(reading reflex)



Table 1. Productivity of Sblodov
Sovkoze in the mid fifties

	Wheat (tons)	Potatoes (tons)	Anvils (units)
1952	250	1250	125
1953	280	912	215
1954	240	743	320
1955	302	514	621

**Do not fight against years
of brain conditionning**

Figures have their legends at the **bottom**
because your brain gives **top priority to images**

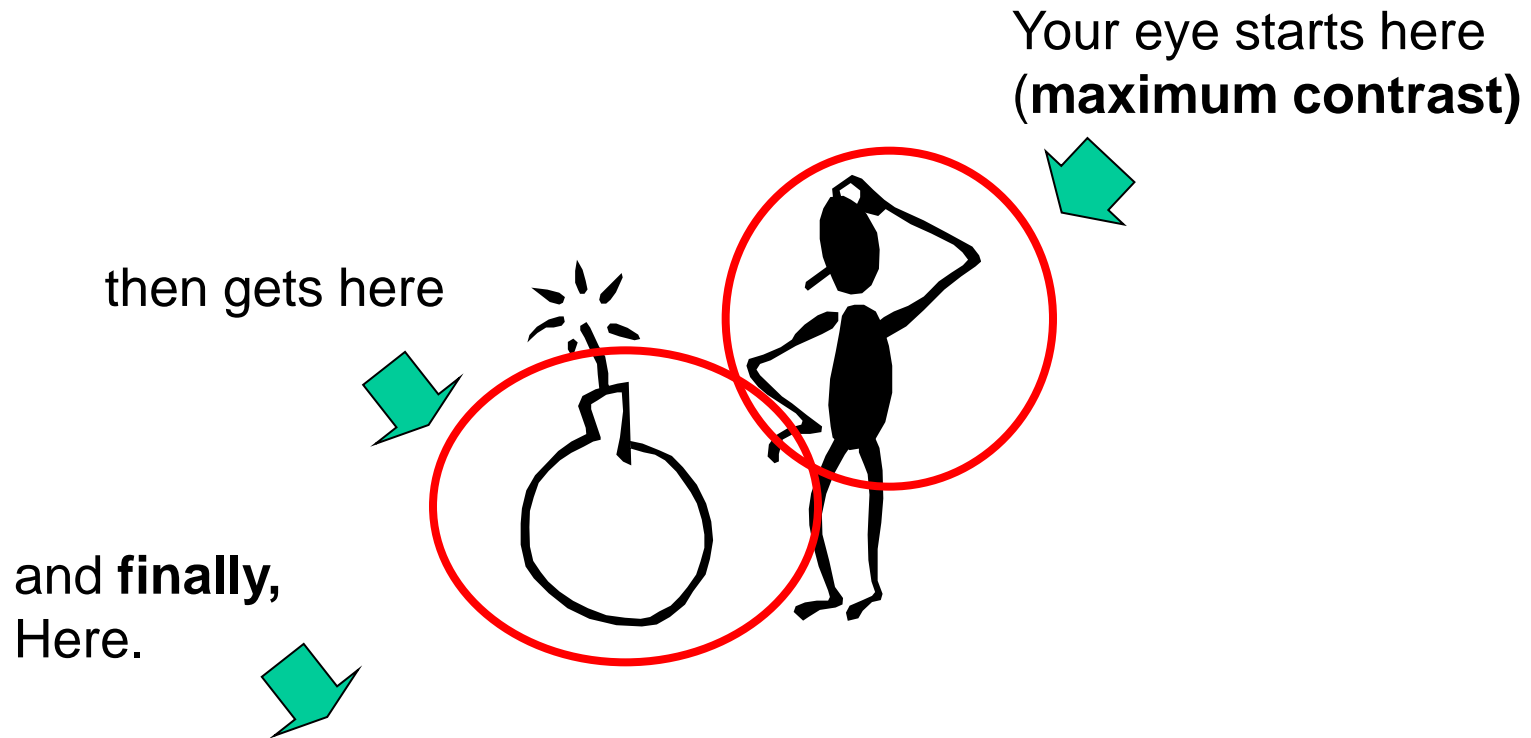


Fig 1. Student thinking about his talk.

image processing is instinctive
word processing is hard work

A dark font on a dark background is hell for your reader.

A light font on a light background is the same

Be kind to your readers :
give them **maximal contrast**
between your text and the background

This black text is very easy to read
on a plain white background

Even with a moderately contrasted background,
It becomes more difficult (rem : 24pts !)

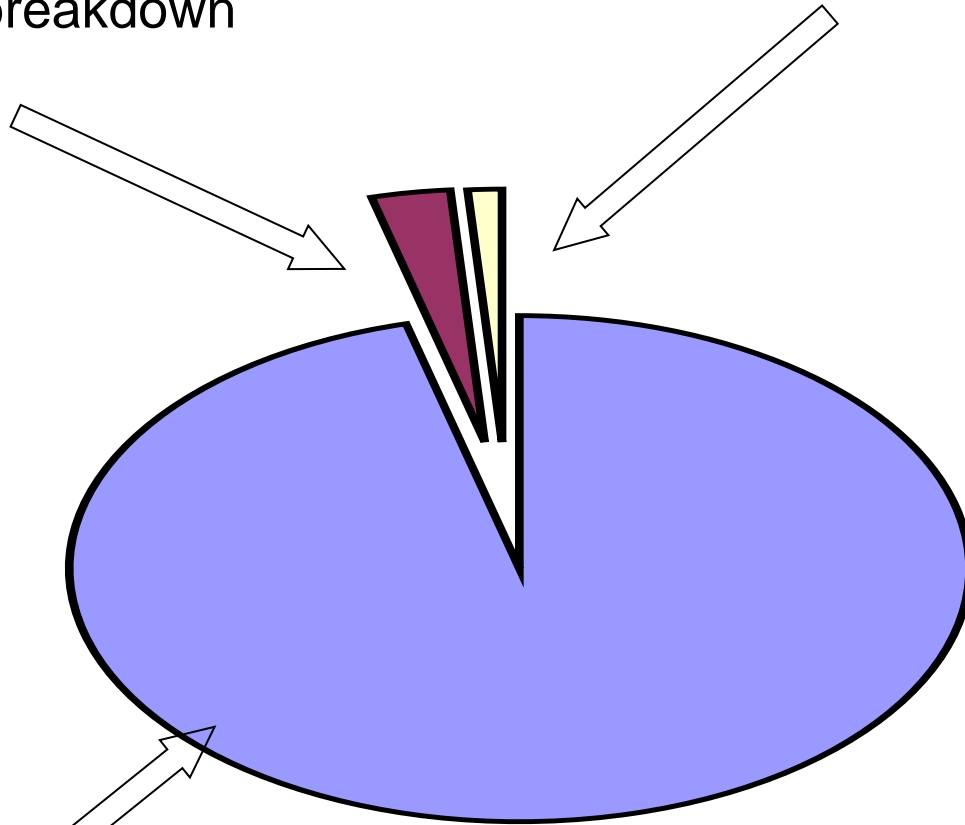




And with a contrasted background,
It becomes damn impossible to read !

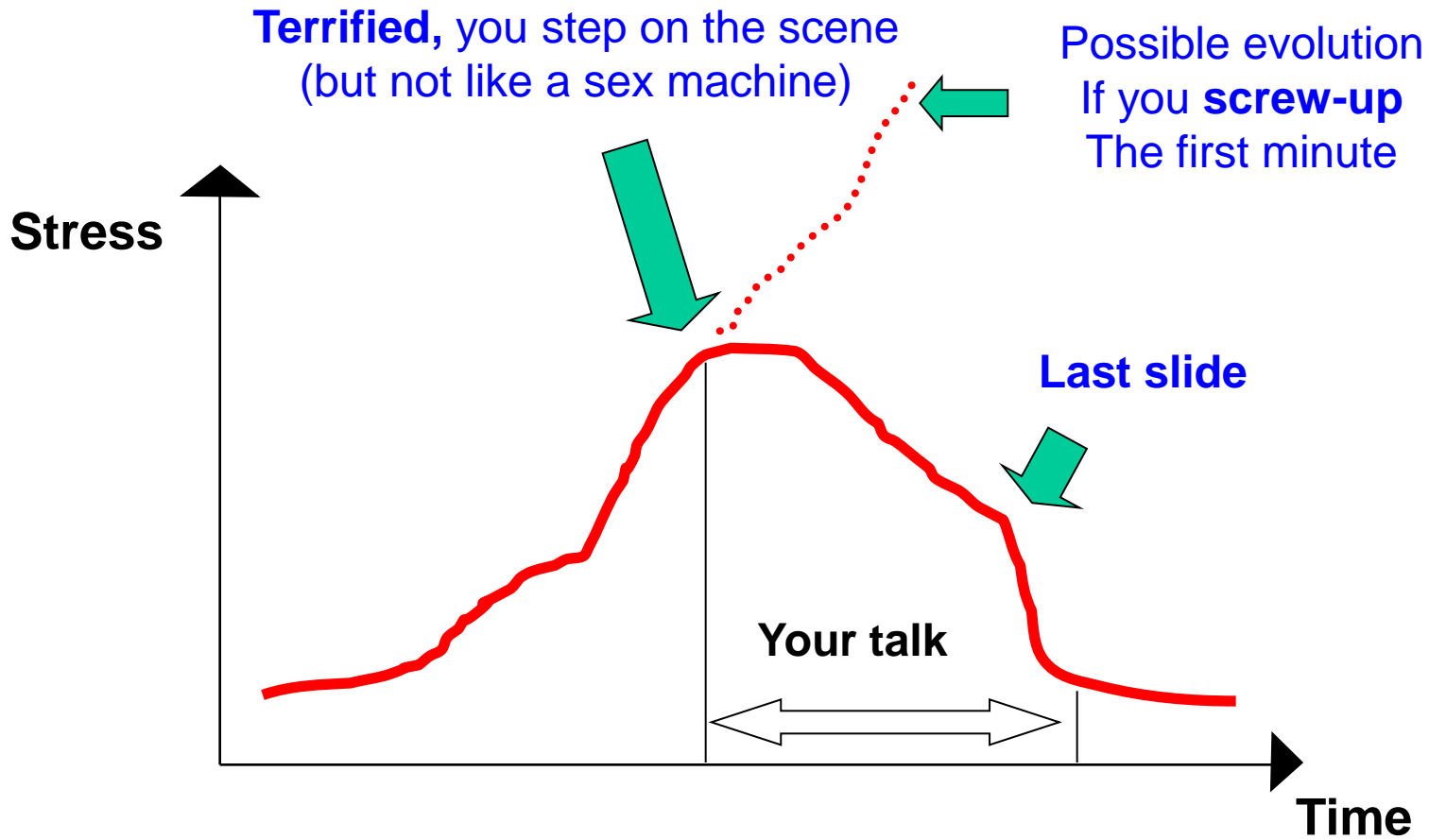
2. Earthquake (and other rare events)

1. Vidoprojector breakdown



3. Not enough work

**The three possible causes
of a poor powerpoint presentation**



All you need is here

Introduction

= Your first lines : **by heart**



« ~~Bon... alors...~~, *to be or not to be ?* »

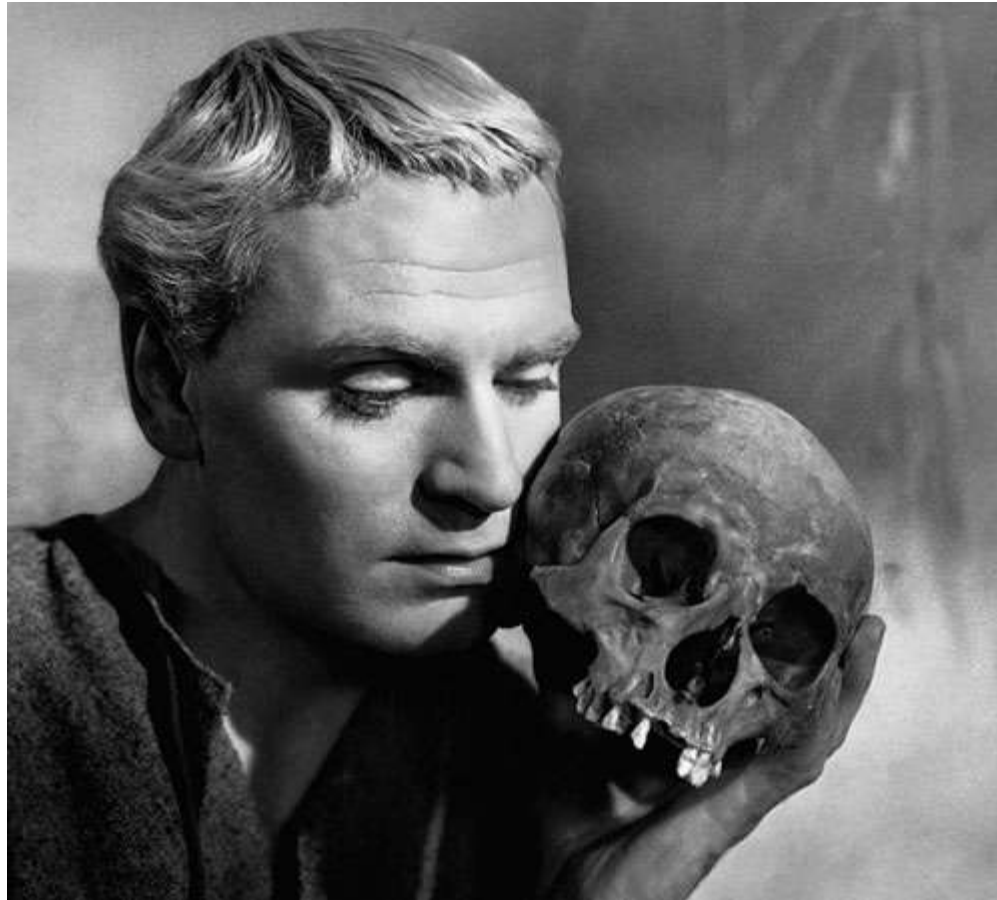
After the first minute : use landmarks



each image has a story to tell

Conclusion

= your famous last words : **by heart, too**



« ...and lose the name of action. ~~Et voilà !~~ »

Take-home messages

1. The image

- sans serifs fonts
- 16pts **minimum** (this is... 24pts)
- **maximum contrast**
- **look at** the public, you are talking to them

Take-home messages

2. The sound

- keep your head **up** !
- pump up the **volume** !
 - first and last minute : **by heart**
- rehearse – rehearse – rehearse (chrono !)
- The two ending signals :
 - in **conclusion**...
 - ... I **thank you** for your attention.

Conclusion

- simple rules
- it cannot fail
- no excuses...

Good talks !