



**Turning your tree into a talk**  
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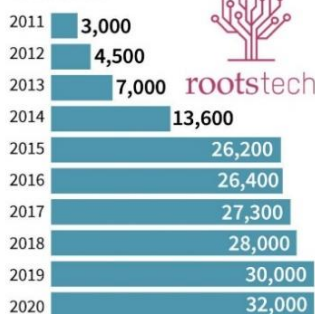


## Overview

I meet many people who tell me the fascinating story of their family tree and what invaluable records they used to break down their brick walls. I then say that *"this would be a great talk."* The response is usually *"I wouldn't know where to begin"* or *"I don't think I'm good enough"* or *"You're a professional, it's easy for you."* Everyone has to start somewhere, and having that fascinating family tree and the invaluable methodology already done, is a great start. This 3-part series aims to help those who would like to do so, to construct an engaging and professional presentation.

## Roots Tech

### GROWTH OF ROOTSTECH SALT LAKE CITY HELD IN SALT PALACE CONVENTION CENTER



RootsTech family history and technology conference and trade show is held annually in the Salt Palace Convention Center, Salt Lake City, Utah, USA since February 2011. The first RootsTech conference was attended by about 3,000 people. In October 2019, RootsTech held a conference in London, with c10,000 people attending.

### RootsTech Connect

RootsTech Connect 2021 was transitioned to a free virtual experience hosted online in 11 languages. It was attended by over 1 million participants from 242 countries who were able to watch c2,000 genealogical class sessions on-demand taught by experts, archivists and companies. A million+ participants enjoyed 1,500+ interactive experiences in 30+ languages during RootsTech 3-5 March 2022.

**Maybe you want to be a Roots Tech speaker?**

## Choosing a topic



- have an interest
- gather information
- research the topic more
- save those items
- compile a list to include
- will you be a "sage on the stage" or a "guide on the side"

**your name here in the future**



## Section 1 - turning your tree into a talk

### The presentation (or 'talk')

1. construct a title
  - simple summary
  - use alliteration or
  - be cryptic
2. devise a short summary (abstract)
3. describe what your session will cover - longer summary
4. compile the aims and objectives of the session

5. include a list of useful resources at the end
6. write a handout/ syllabus

### Information that I include in a presentation

- observations about my tree
- information from DNA matches/ about DNA
- photographs
- online searches
- books
- social media threads
- statistics
- newspaper articles
- archives
- memorials
- reflections, ethical dilemmas



### Compiling a handout

- presentation title, name and contact detail at the top
- use emboldened subheadings; use standard font
- check spelling, punctuation, grammar
- teach people something
- gives examples
- key takeaway points
- compile a resources list
- edit it after it is finished
- name, date, copyright at the bottom as a 'footer'
- "A4" for UK; "letter" for US



## Section 2: presentation skills

**Presentation slides - PowerPoint** is very popular

### Layout



- background theme; slide numbers
- fonts, size, colour
- page title/ not
- bullet points or full sentences
- your running commentary - ad lib or notes
- include images
- will you use 'transitions'/ embedding

### Images

- include diversity: race, age, gender, but avoid stereotypes
- use copyright free/ stock photo; acknowledge copyright
- Canva [website](https://www.canva.com) which create professional designs, which you can share or print

### Speaking in-person

1. accepting the booking
2. on the day

3. during the presentation
4. after the presentation

#### In summary



- plan ahead
- practice for confidence and timings
- research potential audience
- gauge travel time
- investigate the venue
- confirm with organiser



#### Recording your presentation

- Kevin Stratvert [YouTube video](#) 6m44s
- sending it to someone - use a website which specialises in sending large files

#### When recording, be aware of



- how you present yourself
- lighting
- keeping eye contact with (imaginary) audience
- sound level and clarity
- the background
- interruptions (mobile phone, alerts, doorbell, animals, ticking clock)

#### Exporting

1. **export slides to a handout**  
most of the information will save, but some items in boxes won't, and if the presentation is image heavy, you will need to summarise points made
2. **export slides to a video**  
MP4 format, if you have been accepted as a speaker, upload the recording to the RootsTech speaker portal

#### My inspiration for presentations

My interest	Turned into a presentation
Comparing my 2 adopted and bio trees	<i>Searching for ancestors when you're adopted</i>
I didn't understand my DNA test results when I received them	<i>Mixing DNA with a paper trail</i>
Why do people compile a tree?	<i>The psychology of searching</i>
Why do people expose other people's secrets and lies?	<i>Are you an ethical genealogist?</i>
How did LDS converts journey from the UK to Utah?	<i>Leaving Liverpool</i>

#### What about these ideas for presentations, for example?

- a fascinating ancestor
- ethnicity and travel routes

- births, marriages, and deaths in a specific country
- researching a trade

#### What would your presentation be about?

- you need to teach people *about* something or
- teach people *how to do* something



#### RootsTech guidelines and requirements for recorded classes

*"Keep it to 10 - 20 minutes and focus on one subject. RootsTech data shows the average attention span seems to be about 14 minutes. It is important to know we are aiming for well-done and energetic recordings, not professional production."* RTC recommend [Screen Recorder \(screencast-o-matic.com\)](https://www.screencast-o-matic.com)

#### All RTC videos are reviewed to ensure they follow these overall principles:

- **appropriate** - all content should be family friendly and appropriate for audiences of all ages
- **relevant** - content should support discovering and sharing family stories, history, and culture
- **inspiring** - content should motivate people to connect with their family past, present and future

### Section 3: Marketing your presentation and yourself

You need to let people know about your potential presentation/s. You can alert family history societies and conference organisers. When you have bookings, inform [Conference Keeper](#) to publicise.

#### You will need to have already prepared:

- your bio
  - name
  - context
  - expertise
  - experience
  - contact details
- headshot (clear and uncluttered)
- email address (to contact you)
- website: free or paid for
- logo/ branding

#### Fees

- it takes me about 3 months to compile and write each presentation and accompanying handout
- *know your worth*

**\*\* good luck, and I hope to see one of your presentations soon \*\***

#### Stay in touch:

- Email: [penny\\_walters@talk21.com](mailto:penny_walters@talk21.com)
- Website: [www.searchmypast.co.uk](http://www.searchmypast.co.uk)
- full list of forthcoming presentations

#### Author of:

- *'Ethical Dilemmas in Genealogy'* 2019
- *'The Psychology of Searching'* 2020

Both available on Amazon in paperback or kindle

