

How to Cheat at a Tech Talk Part 1

By Aaron Grothe

Cheating?

"If you ain't cheatin', you ain't tryin'" - Richard Petty (1972)

This was during a period in Nascar when the following were some of the things happening.

They were putting balloons in the gas tank before the capacity was measured and then popping the balloons, free extra capacity

People were subtly working on the aerodynamics of their cars to improve the speed/efficiency

Cheating?

Not so much cheating as trying to get an advantage at doing your talk

Trying to play on easy mode as the kids would say

Types of Talks

There are two simple types of talks to consider

1. List of Tips/Tricks
2. Tool/Technology intro

List of Tips/Tricks

A classic example of these would be my XX for XX talks I've been doing at NEbraskaCERT for 10 years now.

12 For 12
12 Things to Know/Try for a
Better 2012

by Aaron Grothe
Security+/CISSP/NSA
IAM/NSA IEM

List of Tips/Tricks

Have done versions of this under the following titles over the years

- XX for XX annual NEbraskaCERT talks
- Linux Tapas: A series of Small Dishes
- Security Tapas: A series of Small Dishes
- Next 10 Big Things in the Linux Kernel
- 25 to Try

List of Tips/Tricks

PROs

- Easy to adjust for length
 - Can easily add/remove slides as needed to adjust
- Bite size portions - every tip/trick stands on its own
- Don't have to go into a lot of depth on the topics
- Can invite audience participation as well to help pad length :-)

List of Tips/Tricks

CONS

- People might figure out you're doing a similar structure after 10 years :-)
- By definition lacks depth - each tip/trick doesn't get a lot of detail

List of Tips/Tricks.

Potential Ideas to Consider

- Firefox/Chrome Extensions I use
- 5 Mobile Apps I Can't Live Without
- Learning resources I use
- Tech news sites I hit daily
- 10 Twitter sites you need to subscribe to

Use your personal experience and decide on a topic

Tool/Technology

This one is picking out a tool/technology and providing a quick overview of it.

Tool/Technology

An example of these would be my presentation at the BinToolsSummit on binfmt_misc

binfmt_misc - execute it!!!

March 04, 2022

By Aaron Grothe

<https://www.grothe.us>

Tool/Technology

To provide a very quick overview of the talk I did

`Binfmt_misc` is a way to have Linux launch an emulator to run a file.

E.g. you have a binary compiled for SPARC chips instead of Intel X86. `binfmt_misc` can automatically call `qemu` to run the program.

Look at the talk for a more detailed explanation:

<https://www.grothe.us/presentations/bintoolsummit-202203-binfmtmisc-excuteit.pdf>

Tool/Technology

Why was this a good topic?

- Binfmt_misc is a relatively obscure topic
- Is a useful tool
- Is small enough to do a pretty good introduction to it in the time limit I had 75 minutes

Tool/Technology

Have done dozens of this style of talk

- Docker
- Unikernels
- Tomoyo
- Bunch of others

Tool/Technology

PROs

- Pick the right tool/technology
 - Can do a quick intro pretty easily
- Adjust the length by amount of detail you go into

Tool/Technology

CONS

- Might run into people with a lot of experience at this topic
 - Some of the people in my binfmt_misc talk knew a LOT about the kernel binary support

Tools/Technology.

Potential Ideas to Consider

- Language X
 - X = Forth, brainf***, ArnoldC, LOLcat
- Linux DIstribution Y
 - Y = Linux From Scratch, Manjaro, etc.
- Framework Z
 - Z = Flet, Laravel, Lektor, etc...

Why to Use?, Competitors, etc.

Use your personal experience and decide on a topic. If you use the Brave browser you can do a pretty good talk on that.

Summary

So that covers two simple devices for doing a tech talk

Part Two will cover research tips for your talk.