What makes a good workshop?

Anand S. Merchant
Scientific Manager, BTEP
NCI CCR OSTR
No.1 Content!Content! Content!

- Bite-size training modules
- Logical flow of information
- Infographic-style Slides
- Be ready with handouts

- Minimize information overload
- Answer the WH- and How Qs
- More info through links/FAQs
- Support forums
No.2 Know Your Audience

- Ask the coordinator on the makeup of the attendees
  - graduate students
  - post-doctoral fellows
  - senior research staff

- Level of proficiency
  - overall grasp of GUI/CLI
  - familiarity with software
  - novice or superuser

- Do they have ready-to-use data for the software tool?
No.3 Outline + Timeline

• Almost everyone provides an outline of topics

• Important to give context and say briefly what’ll be covered under each topic

• More importantly, try to give estimated timeline for workshop

• Do not include anything that you may have to skip later
No.4 DIY exercises

• Short exercises to keep their attention

• “Show and Tell” theme

• Relatively easy data analysis flow that builds confidence

• Step-wise instructions with screenshots if possible

• Reactive modulation of pace

All of these lead us to No.5, which is…
No.5 Actively managing the class

• Being conversational and walking around the room

• Sharing your insights and thoughts on using the tool

• Recruit a support person who knows the software

• Single-page training workflow cheat sheet
Thank you