Paul van Delst writes:

> Most people (myself included) pack waaaaay too much in their
> presentations. Less is more I reckon. But then it becomes a
> balancing act between covering the material contained in
> a few slides to fuller effect, and keeping people interested
> over several months because that's how long the course will
> take to complete.

I used to go to great effort to keep myself "technically
naive". This was quite a bit harder than you might think
it would be! But, I thought I was a much better teacher,
especially of the introductory material, if I didn't know
too much.

Over the years, of course, I learned more about IDL in
spite of my very best efforts. Then, I went through
a period of several years where I knew *everything*
about, say, contour plots, and I would take two days
to cover the material!

It took me quite a bit longer than you might imagine
to realize that the blank looks I was getting were
because NOBODY CARES! I backed way off, and cover
considerably less material now. (Although anyone who
is interested can read my book, where I spew forth
everything I know about the subject!)

I'm happier with the classes now. I don't cover as
much material as I used to, but I do think what I do
cover sinks in (more or less). And I still write
programs on the fly, trying to get people to type
them with me. Making and fixing mistakes is *still*
the best way I know to learn a programming language,
and God knows most people make plenty of mistakes
if you make them type something! :-)

Cheers,

David

--
David Fanning, Ph.D.

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Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: http://www.idlcoyote.com/
Sepore ma de ni thui. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")