

EDITORIAL

Every presentation requires an introduction. In mathematics, we combine it with the motivation for studying whatever it is we are going to talk about next and it is very tempting to provide this motivation in the form of an easily understood problem or puzzle. But what if this puzzle is so interesting, it occupies the audience for the rest of the time? Good news is that, while people might not listen to what you have to say, they will remember you for the good distraction you provided for your own talk.

I have to admit that this happened to me, as an audience member, recently. I will not reveal the names of the conference or the speaker (but if you are reading this, thank you). Here is the problem:

Prove that for each number

$$n! + 2, n! + 3, \dots, n! + n,$$

there exists a prime divisor that does not divide any other number from this set.

How can one *not* get into this? Go ahead, I know you want to: try a couple of small cases, see if there is a pattern, think of some proof ideas, etc. Unfortunately, I did not catch the original source of the problem, so if you know it or have a particularly neat solution, let me know.

So remember: while you would like your audience to get interested in the subject of your talk right from the start, you want to make sure that your original motivation does not overshadow the rest of the presentation. So tread lightly or be ready to face the consequences of all the questions after your talk being about the first 2 minutes of it.

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