CREATING EFFECTIVE POWERPOINT PRESENTATION

Creating Effective PowerPoint Presentations

PowerPoint can be a useful tool for creating effective presentations. The results of a meta-analysis study carried out by Baker et al. suggest that PowerPoint alone does not directly influence students' learning but how instructors use it in the classroom directly affects the learning process (Baker et al., 2018). Students believe that instruction with PowerPoint is more organized and helps sustain their attention and enables them to focus on important information (Apperson et al., 2006; Hill et al., 2012). In Szabo and Hastings' study (2000), over 90% of students reported that PowerPoint "is more attention capturing than the traditional method of lecturing," (p. 179). Below are a few tips that will help you while creating a PowerPoint presentation.
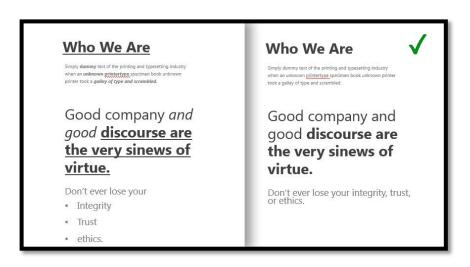
Choose appropriate fonts. Serif fonts (Times New Roman, Garamond, Bookman) are best for *printed pages*, and sans-serif fonts (Helvetica, Tahoma, Verdana) are easier to read on *screens*. If you'd like to add some more typographic personality, you may try the free fonts. It is a good idea to select font size "30 - 48 point" for *titles*, "24 – 28 point" for *text* so that students can read the text from a distance easily.

Avoid overstyling the text. Using bold, italics and changing the color are the easiest and most effective ways to draw attention to text, but there is no need to have every word of every bullet point capitalized, or to have all your bullet points in title case.

Follow 5 X 5 rule. You can try the 5×5 rule to keep your content concise and good looking. The 5×5 rule means no more than five bullet points per slide and no more than five words per bullet point. Leaving lots of "white space" on a slide helps people focus on your key points. Below is a sample that displays the difference in slides depicting the same topic.

Use questions. Gier and Kreiner (2009) and Valdez (2013) compared PowerPoint presentations with no questions with PowerPoint presentations that contained several questions for students to answer during instruction. Results showed that embedding several questions during a PowerPoint presentation increased students' learning.

Keep your text simple and minimize the amount of text on your slides. According to Phillips (2014), each slide should have one central objective to deliver the main idea or question, which helps to break complex ideas down into manageable pieces. You don't need to add a lot of distracting text to the presentation, especially if it's information you'll be saying anyways. To avoid long paragraphs and an abundance of bullet points, use key phrases and the most essential information.

Be consistent. You can use the same set of fonts, colors, background designs and overall style, which leads to create cohesion and a more professional-looking PowerPoint. You had better not change color layout dramatically from one slide to another. You can pick one overall template and stick to it.

Use colors. According to White (1997), coloured advertisements can attract people to read the advertisement up to 42% more often than the non-c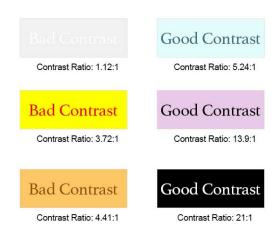oloured advertisement. This shows the importance of colour in making the information or message more attractive. Also, Pan (2010) found that colours have the tendency to capture better attention level and better memory.

Choose color well. You can limit the number of colors and avoid background colors too high in brightness and saturation. Strong colors (i.e., highly saturated) should not be used over large adjacent areas.

Use color **conservatively**; limit the number and amount of colors used.

Use color **conservatively**; limit the **number** and **amount** of colors used.

Contrast your colors. White font on a black background is a good example of high contrast that makes it easy for your audience to read what you're presenting. Sandra (2020) provides some good and bad examples of contrast along with their contrast ratios.

Bad Contrast
Contrast Ratio: 1.12:1

Good Contrast
Contrast Ratio: 5.24:1

Bad Contrast
Contrast Ratio: 3.72:1

Good Contrast
Contrast Ratio: 13.9:1

Bad Contrast
Contrast Ratio: 4.41:1

Good Contrast
Contrast Ratio: 21:1

Using the colour wheel can help when choosing your presentation's colours:

- Colours opposite each other in the wheel are complementary and they create contrast. Using complementary colours makes your text more readable.

- Colours next to each other are analogous and they are harmonious. Using analogous colours makes your presentation more unified. The Adobe colour wheel helps you pick complementary colours for your presentation design.

Review your presentation. You need to proofread carefully for spelling and grammar. Before finalizing your PowerPoint, you should view every slide from beginning to end. Make sure it flows logically and makes sense.

Below are some resources where you can find PowerPoint presentation templates;

Envato Elements	**SlidesCarnival**	**Slidesgo**
Slidemodel	**Miro**	**Visme**

You may go over the items in the checklist below to make sure if everything is in place in your PowerPoint presentation;

Checklist

Did I…

o select sans-serif fonts such as Arial and avoid serif fonts such as Times New Roman? __**Yes,** __ **No**

o use no font size smaller than 24 points? __**Yes,** __ **No**

o use the same font for all headlines? __**Yes,** __ **No**

o use bold and different sizes of those fonts for captions and subheadings? __**Yes,** __ **No**

o use larger fonts to indicate importance? __**Yes,** __ **No**

o use upper- and lower-case text, not all capitals? __**Yes,** __ **No**

o use different colors, sizes and styles (e.g., bold) for impact? __**Yes,** __ **No**

o avoid long sentences? __**Yes,** __ **No**

o use key phrases rather than long sentences? __**Yes,** __ **No**

o use no more than 5 words per line and no more than 5 short lines per slide? __**Yes,** __ **No**

o use no more than four colors on one chart? __**Yes,** __ **No**

o use colors that are clearly visible and readable? __**Yes,** __ **No**

o use strongly contrasted colors rather than similar ones? __**Yes,** __ **No**

o use a consistent background throughout the presentation? __**Yes,** __ **No**

o use bullets as anchor points? __**Yes,** __ **No**

o proofread all visuals for spelling and grammar? __**Yes,** __ **No**

References

Apperson, J. M., Laws, E. L., & Scepansky, J. A. (2006). The impact of presentation graphics on students' experiences in the classroom. *Computers & Education, 47*, 116–126.

Baker, J.P., Goodboy, A.K., Bowman, N.D., & Wright, A.A. (2018). Does teaching with PowerPoint increase students' learning? A meta-analysis. *Computers & Education, 126*, 376-387.

Gier, V. S., & Kreiner, D. S. (2009). Incorporating active learning with PowerPoint-based lectures using content-based questions. *Teaching of Psychology, 36*, 134–139.

Hill, A., Arford, T., Lubitow, A., & Smollin, L. M. (2012). "I'm ambivalent about it": The dilemmas of PowerPoint. *Teaching Sociology, 40*, 242–256.

Pan, Y. (2010). Attentional capture by working memory contents. *Canadian Journal of Experimental Psychology/Revue canadienne de psychologie expérimentale*, *64*(2), 124.

Phillips, D. J. (2014). How to avoid death by PowerPoint. *TEDxStocholmSalon.*

Szabo, A., & Hastings, N. (2000). Using IT in the undergraduate classroom: Should we replace the blackboard with PowerPoint. *Computers & Education, 35*, 175–187.

Valdez, A. (2013). Multimedia learning from PowerPoint: Use of adjunct questions. *Psychology Journal, 10,* 35–44.

White JV. (1997). *Color for impact*. Ohio (US): Strathmoor Press.

Contrast & Color Accessibility by Sandra Childers (2020). Texas University.

https://learntech.engr.tamu.edu/faculty-tutorials/accessibility/accessibility-series/contrast-color/

60 Effective PowerPoint Presentation Tips & Tricks to Improve your Skills by Brad Smith (2021).

 https://business.tutsplus.com/articles/37-effective-powerpoint-presentation-tips--cms-25421

TED Talk 101: What TED Teaches About Successful Presentations (2021).

https://slidemodel.com/ted-talk-presentations/

Tips for Creating and Delivering an Effective Presentation. PowerPoint for Microsoft.

https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/tips-for-creating-and-delivering-an-effective-presentation-f43156b0-20d2-4c51-8345-0c337cefb88b

Tips for Creative Effective Powerpoint Presentations. University of Nebraska–Lincoln.

https://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/connections/tips-creative-effective-powerpoint-presentations

20 Tips for Making a Good PowerPoint Presentation. Career Development. Indeed.

https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/how-to-make-good-powerpoint

Using PowePoint or Prezi Effectively. Hamilton College.

https://www.hamilton.edu/academics/centers/oralcommunication/guides/using-powerpoint-effectively-in-an-oral-presentation

9 Tips for Making Beautiful PowerPoint Presentations by Aaron White (2020). Shutterstock.

https://www.shutterstock.com/blog/tips-on-how-to-make-effective-beautiful-powerpoint-presentations

Further Reading and Resource

- How to avoid death By PowerPoint | David JP Phillips | TEDx
- How to Make a Good PowerPoint Presentation (Tips). HubSpot Marketing.
- 31 Creative Presentation Ideas to Delight Your Audience. Visme.
- 10 Top Presentation & PowerPoint Design Tips. Envato Tuts.