

Tips For An Effective PowerPoint Presentation

1. Sans serif fonts (such as Arial) are easier to read than serif fonts (such as Times New Roman). Compare:
 - a. Arial 14 point
 - b. Times New Roman 14 point
2. Choose a size of type and style of lettering that are easy for the audience to read. Main titles should be no smaller than 20 point. The remaining text should be no smaller than 16 point. Avoid using all capital letters—it is hard to read.
3. Use colors to reinforce key points, remembering to:
 - a. Limit the use of colors to THREE per slide.
 - b. Choose a combination of colors and maintain this choice throughout the entire presentation, or through an entire section of material.
 - c. Although PowerPoint comes with a variety of predefined design templates, if you decide to create a presentation using the “blank presentation” option, consider using one of the following color combinations—which studies indicate are the most easily read:

Black on yellow	Yellow on blue
Black on white	Green on white
Yellow on black	Blue on yellow
White on blue	White on green

Dark letters against a light background or light letters against a dark background.

Many experts feel that a dark blue or black background works best in a large room and dark letters against a light background are best for smaller rooms.

Avoid red-green combinations because a significant fraction of the human population is red-green color blind.

View your slides in gray scale to ensure that there is adequate color contrast in each slide.

4. Be consistent with slide/overhead layout, style, and text color choices throughout your presentation.
5. Break up the information you have in your outline into coherent “chunks” rather than placing unrelated information all together on one crowded slide. Basic rule:
 - a. No more than six words in height or width.
 - b. Header should not exceed five words.
6. Be generous with empty space.

7. Your PowerPoint presentation is an aid, not the presentation in itself. Less is better. Never read your presentation.
8. Use a home slide repeatedly to build a theme over time and enable the audience to catch up.
9. Use transitions, effects, and sound to add variety and animation to your presentation, but do not overuse these tools so that they distract from the information you are trying to convey.
10. Clip art and graphics should balance the slide not overwhelm. Use no more than two graphics per slide.
11. Have a Plan B. You never know when an equipment malfunction or incompatible interface will force you to give your presentation on another computer.
12. When presenting, don't parrot your PowerPoint. One of the most prevalent and damaging habits of PowerPoint users is to simply read the visual presentation to the audience. Not only is that redundant—short of using the clicker, why are you even there?—but it makes even the most visually appealing presentation boring to the bone. PowerPoint works best with spoken remarks that augment and discuss, rather than mimic what's on the screen.
13. Time your remarks. Another potential land mine is a speaker's comments that coincide precisely with the appearance of a fresh PowerPoint slide. That merely splits your audience's attention. A well-orchestrated PowerPoint program brings up a new slide, gives the audience a chance to read and digest it, then follows up with remarks that broaden and amplify what's on the screen.