

PowerPoint Tips

PowerPoint presentations are a great way to support a speech, visualize complicated concepts or focus an audience's attention. However, a bad presentation can achieve the opposite. Poorly designed slides with too much text or distracting graphics can lead the audience away from your message. Consider these tips to avoid common mistakes:

1. Create a simple design template.

Use the slide master feature or a provided template to create consistency in your design. The method of content presentation (list, image, text) depends on the content, but consistency with other elements such as font, colors, background, throughout the presentation is essential. Establish consistent contrasting colors (dark/light) for text and background.

2. Use appropriate font and size.

Choose your font and size carefully. Use sans serif fonts (such as Arial Rounded MT Bold) and 32 point font size for text. Anything smaller is difficult to read. Avoid all caps. Use color to highlight. Limit punctuation. Follow the 6x6 rule: No more than 6 lines of text per slide and no more than 6 words in each line of text.

3. Use good quality images.

Images should reinforce and complement your message. They should be impactful, not space-fillers. Empty space on the slide will actually enhance readability. Don't clutter the slide with images unless they add value. Also, test your images to make sure they retain quality when projected on a larger screen.

4. Avoid too many special effects.

These features seem impressive at first, but they tend to distract from your message and get old quickly. Transitions, text fly-ins, animations and sounds may reduce the professionalism you desire to portray. Special effects are similar to graphics, they should impact the presentation not detract from the presentation.

5. Limit the number of slides.

Limit the number of slides according to the time you have available for the presentation. Flipping to the next slide constantly and rushing through the presentation not only distracts the audience, but typically does not get your message across. A good rule of thumb is one slide per minute.

6. Learn to navigate your presentation in a non-linear fashion.

PowerPoint allows the presenter to move forward and backwards without paging through interim slides. Practice moving forward and backward within your presentation. Your audience may want to see a previous slide or you may want to skip ahead to something of immediate relevance.

7. Do not read from your slides or speak to them.

Don't face the screen and read your slides. The bulleted information on your slides should be supplementary to what you are saying. Use the slides to trigger your comments or to pace yourself, but do not read them. The audience can read. Remember that your slides are only there to support, not to replace your talk! You'll want to tell a story, describe your data or explain circumstances, and only provide keywords through your slides. If you read your slides, the audience will get bored, stop listening and not get your message.

5 Simple trick to keep in mind

Trick 1: Create a Custom Background Size

If you've ever tried to create an infographic or virtually anything else that won't fit in the default slide size in PowerPoint, you've probably felt this pain before. So go ahead, free yourself from the binds of the standard PowerPoint slide by using the Page Layout tools to customize the slide to your needs.

Trick 2: Edit Your Slide Template

If you've ever tried to get your marketing department to stay on-brand when developing SlideShares or giving presentations, you know how annoying it is to try to get everyone on the same page. All you need to do is edit your Master Slides, and then let the branding commence!

Trick 3: Save Slide Components as an Image

The problem with saving each slide as an image is that you often get unwanted background colors in them, meaning it becomes difficult to make versatile images in PowerPoint. Select all the parts you want to combine and save as an image, then group them, and right click the grouped object and choose **Save As Picture**.

Trick 4: Align All of Your Objects

You can manually try to line up your images, but we all know how that works out. Get rid of your guessing game and let PowerPoint work its magic with its Alignment tools.

Trick 5: Turn Square Images Into Custom Shapes

We all know how important it is to use photos in your, but do you know how to customize them? Fit into your favorite shapes in PowerPoint by using the Picture formatting tools.

Trick 6: Use balanced Colors

If you want to ensure that the colors you are working with are balanced when try going the www.color.adobe.com and using their tool to give you harmonious color schemes.

