**Creating an Effective PowerPoint Presentation**

**Hints for a successful presentation:**

* + Plan carefully
  + Do your research
  + Know your audience
  + Time your presentation
  + Practice your presentation
  + Speak comfortably and clearly

**Effective PowerPoint Slides**

* + Use design templates
  + Standardize position, colors and styles
  + Include only necessary information
  + Limit the information to essentials
  + Content should be self-evident
  + Use colors that contrast
  + Be consistent with effects, transitions and animation
  + Too many slides can lose your audience

**Text guidelines**

* + Generally no more than 6 words a line
  + Generally no more than 6 lines a slide
  + Avoid long sentences
  + Larger font indicates more important information
  + Font size generally ranges from 24 to 48 point
  + Be sure text contrasts with background
  + Fancy fonts can be hard to read
  + Words in all capital letters are hard to read
  + Avoid abbreviations and acronyms
  + Limit punctuation marks

**Clip Art and Graphics**

* + Should balance the slide
  + Should enhance and complement the text, not overwhelm
  + No more than two graphics per slide

Top Eight Rules for Creating a PowerPoint Presentation

* + 1. Remember that you are the presenter, not PowerPoint. Use your slides to emphasize a point, keep yourself on track, and illustrate a point with a graphic or photo. Don’t read the slides.
    2. Don’t make your audience read the slides either. Keep text to a minimum (6-8 lines per slide, no more than 30 words per slide). The bullet points should be headlines, not news articles. Write in sentence fragments using key words, and keep your font size 24 or bigger.
    3. Make sure your presentation is easy on the eyes. Stay away from weird colors and busy

backgrounds. Use easy-to-read fonts such as Arial and Times New Roman for the bulk of your text, and, if you have to use a funky font, use it sparingly.

* + 1. Never include anything that makes you announce, “I don’t know if everyone can read this, but....” Make sure they can read it before you begin. Print out all your slides on standard paper, and drop them to the floor. The slides are probably readable if you can read them while you’re standing.
    2. Leave out the sound effects and background music, unless it’s related to the content being presented. If you haven’t made arrangements with Mr. Beard before your presentation, your audience members might not be able to hear your sound effects anyway. The same goes for animated graphics and imbedded movie files.
    3. Sure you can make the words boomerang onto the slide, but you don’t have to. Stick with simple animations if you use them at all.
    4. Proofread, proofread, and proofread. You’d hate to discover that you misspelled simple words in your presentation in front of staff, students, and family.
    5. Practice, practice, practice. The more times you go through the presentation, the less you’ll have to rely on the slides for cues and the smoother your presentation will be. PowerPoint software allows you to make notes on each slide, and you can print out the notes versions if you need help with pronunciations or remembering what comes next.

From <https://www.pharmacoepi.org/pub/>

<http://www.garrreynolds.com/preso-tips/design/>

# Slide Tips

# 1. Keep it Simple

PowerPoint uses slides with a horizontal or “Landscape” orientation. The software was designed as a convenient way to display graphical information that would support the speaker and supplement the presentation. The slides themselves were never meant to be the “star of the show” (the star, of course, is your audience). People came to hear you and be moved or informed (or both) by you and your message. Don’t let your message and your ability to tell a story get derailed by slides that are unnecessarily complicated, busy, or full of “chart junk.” Nothing in your slide should be superfluous, ever. Your slides should have plenty of “white space” or “negative space.” Do not feel compelled to fill empty areas on your slide with unnecessary graphics or text boxes that do not contribute to better understanding. The less clutter you have on your slide, the more powerful your visual message will become.

## 2. Limit bullet points & text

Your presentation is for the benefit of the audience. But boring an audience with bullet point after bullet point is of little benefit to them. Which brings us to the issue of text. The best slides may have no text at all. This may sound insane given the dependency of text slides today, but the best PowerPoint slides will be virtually meaningless with out the narration (that is you). Remember, the slides are meant to support the narration of the speaker, not make the speaker superfluous. Many people often say something like this: “Sorry I missed your presentation. I hear it was great. Can you just send me your PowerPoint slides?” But if they are good slides, they will be of little use without you. Please remember to never, ever turn your back on the audience and read text from the slide word for word.

  
This slide is not unusual, but it is not a visual aid,it is more like an “eye chart.”

  
Try to avoid text-heavy (and sleep inducing) slides like this one.

  
Aim for something like this simple slide above.

  
And this is even better…

## 3. Limit transitions & builds (animation)

Use object builds and slide transitions judiciously. Object builds (also called animations), such as bullet points, should not be animated on every slide. Some animation is a good thing, but stick to the most subtle and professional (similar to what you might see on the evening TV news broadcast). A simple “Wipe Left-to-Right” (from the “Animations” menu) is good for a bullet point, but a “Move” or “Fly” for example is too tedious and slow (and yet, is used in many presentations today). Listeners will get bored very quickly if they are asked to endure slide after slide of animation. For transitions between slides, use no more than two-three different types of transition effects and do not place transition effects between all slides.

## 4. Use high-quality graphics

Use high-quality graphics including photographs. You can take your own high-quality photographs with your digital camera, or use the plethora of high-quality images available on line (be cautious of copyright issues, however). Never simply stretch a small, low-resolution photo to make it fit your layout – doing so will degrade the resolution even further. Avoid using PowerPoint Clip Art or other cartoonish line art. Again, if it is included in the software, your audience has seen it a million times before. It may have been interesting in 1993, but today the inclusion of such clip art often undermines the professionalism of the presenter. There are exceptions, of course, and not all PowerPoint art is dreadful, but use carefully and judiciously.

  
Try to avoid cheesy clip art like this.

  
This edited photograph is more effective and professional.

Photography of people tends to help the audience connect with the slide on a more emotional level. If the photographic image is secondary in importance, then I decrease the opacity and add a Blur or motion filter in Photoshop. If the photographic image is the primary area I want the audience to notice (such as a picture of a product), then the image can be more pronounced and little (or no) text is needed.   
In this title slide, the image is primary.

  
In this slide of the same presentation, the image is secondary and “pushed” to the back by editing it first in Photoshop.

## 5. Have a visual theme, but avoid using PowerPoint templates

You clearly need a consistent visual theme throughout your presentation, but most templates included in PowerPoint have been seen by your audience countless times (and besides, the templates are not all that great to begin with). Your audience expects a unique presentation with new (at least to them) content, otherwise why would they be attending your talk? No audience will be excited about a cookie-cutter presentation, and we must therefore shy away from any supporting visuals, such as the ubiquitous PowerPoint Design Template, that suggests your presentation is formulaic or prepackaged. You can make your own background templates which will be more tailored to your needs. You can then save the PowerPoint file as a Design Template (.pot) and the new template will appear among your standard Microsoft templates for your future use.

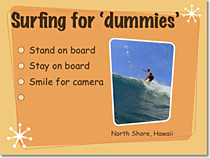
## 6. Choose your fonts well

Fonts communicate subtle messages in and of themselves, which is why you should choose fonts deliberately. Use the same font set throughout your entire slide presentation, and use no more than two complementary fonts (e.g., Arial and Arial Bold). Make sure you know the difference between a Serif font (e.g., Times New Roman) and a Sans-Serif font (Helvetica or Arial). Serif fonts were designed to be used in documents filled with lots of text. Serif fonts are said to be easier to read at small point sizes, but for on screen presentations the serifs tend to get lost due to the relatively low resolution of projectors. San-serif fonts are generally best for PowerPoint presentations, but try to avoid the ubiquitous Helvetica. I often choose to use Gill Sans as it is somewhere in between a serif and a sans-serif font and is professional yet friendly and “conversational.” Regardless of what font you choose, make sure the text can be read from the back of the room.

Times  
Times

  
Arial Black and Arial

## 7. Use video or audio

Use video and audio when appropriate. Using video clips to show concrete examples promotes active cognitive processing, which is the natural way people learn. You can use video clips within PowerPoint without ever leaving the application or tuning on a DVD. Using a video clip not only will illustrate your point better, it will also serve as a change of pace thereby increasing the interest of your audience. You can use audio clips (such as interviews) as well. Something to avoid, however, is cheesy sound effects that are included in PowerPoint (such as the sound of a horn or applause when transitioning slides). The use of superfluous sound effects attached to animations is a sure way to lose credibility with your audience.