

GUIDELINES FOR DESIGNING POWERPOINT PRESENTATIONS

Quick Reference Card

FOR THE PRESENTER

- Know what equipment you will be using to do the presentation, and learn to use it correctly. If needed, plan ahead and request a brief training session with the technical/support staff.
- Make use of PPT tools such as headings, bullets, and numbering, and other methods to show the organization of information and to highlight main concepts.
- Be understandable; think about the level of learners in the audience. Remember, **people do not like to have what is on the screen read to them verbatim.**
- Provide a handout of the slides. If needed, plan ahead and decide who will be responsible for copying and distributing the handouts.
- Be sure your **slides are consistent in content and order with the course pack, notes and handouts.**
- Spell-check your presentation.

ABOUT COPYRIGHT

- Respect copyright restrictions and **ALWAYS** provide attribution.
- If using any images, audio or videos in the presentation, 1) make sure you own the materials or have received permission in writing to use the materials, or 2) use resources that are freely usable under a Creative Commons License (also provide attribution).
- If using third-party text in the presentation, be sure to provide attribution.
- Links to external resources/websites should be clearly identifiable as non-MSU content, typically by using labels and making those links open in a new window.
- All instructional materials used in the presentations must meet MSU copyright standards.
- For general questions about copyright, consult Amy Blair, Copyright Librarian and Head, Distance Learning Services (blaira@msu.edu, 432-6123 X 253, Fax 432-3693), or Lynne Woods, MA, Course Materials Program Manager, Printing Services (woodsl@msu.edu, 355-1724, Fax 355-1690).
- For specific questions about electronic use of third-party materials, talk with Amy Blair; Lynne Woods will answer specific questions about use of third-party materials in hard copy.

- Assistance with permissions for electronic use is available from Cecilia Malilwe, Digital Media Center, Main Library (malilwe@msu.edu, 432-6123 X296, Fax 432-4795).

FONT

- In order for your presentation to fit on most screens, text and images should be placed within 95% of the PowerPoint slide.
- In general, remember the larger the text, the better. Slides must be readable, even at the back of the room, or at a distant site (if broadcasting a presentation).
- Choose font faces that are simple and easy to read, sans-serif fonts are recommended (e.g., Arial, Tahoma, Verdana).
- Always use a text layout slide that includes a defined title box, so that the title can be captured by a lecture capturing system (e.g., Camtasia) and included in a table of contents list.
- Use upper and lower case - **ALL CAPITALS ARE DIFFICULT TO READ QUICKLY.**
- Avoid *italics*, except to use for emphasis in “quotes” and to highlight thoughts or ideas.
- Be aware of how many lines of text are on screen – Limit slides to ten lines of text or less.
- A good slide title size is 40 points, for body text use between 32-36 points, and 28-24 points should be used for second/ third level text.
- Text used for describing an image on a slide (caption) should be at least 24 points.

FONT COLOR

- Choose colors for **good contrast** against backgrounds; Black and white are good.
- Reds and oranges are high-energy but can be difficult to stay focused on.
- Greens, blues, and browns are mellow, but not as attention grabbing
- Reds and Greens can be difficult to see for those who are color blind.

BACKGROUNDS

- Use a single **simple background** for each slide – background changes or complexity distracts the viewer’s attention.
- For printing, a white background is recommended.

GUIDELINES FOR DESIGNING POWERPOINT PRESENTATIONS

- If printing a handout of slides with a dark background, use the "*pure black and white*" printing option. The printout will convert the background to white, all text to black and graphics to grayscale.

BULLETS

- Keep each bullet to **1 line, 2 at the most**.
- Use bullets to provide a 'preview' to the audience on what you're going to say on the slide. This gives the audience a 'framework' to build upon.
- Left align bullets (**do not center bullets**).
- Limit the number of bullets in a screen to approximately five. Too much text on the slide looks busy and is hard to read.

GRAPHICS AND MOVIES

- Place your PPT presentation and all movie clips in the same folder before inserting the movies in your presentation.
- Minimize graphics file size. Use an image editing program to reduce file size before inserting them in PPT. Export images as JPEG files for photos and gradients and GIF for simple illustrations.
- Keep graphics off center and leave more room for text.
- Use left placement of graphics on the slide, it leads eye to graphic.
- Crop graphics to show only what is relevant to the audience.
- Use audio/visual elements only when needed, otherwise they become distracters instead of communicators.
- If you need to include a busy table, provide it in a handout.
- Include extra notes and graphics in the handout if they do not fit onto the slides.
- Use tables or charts instead of text when appropriate.
- Simple diagrams are great communicators.
- Use PowerPoint Package for CD feature to save your presentation when moving from one computer to another or sending your presentation to someone. This feature will set up your presentation (including linked files) on a CD or folder so that the slide show will run correctly for any recipient.

ANIMATION / EFFECTS

- Limit animation – Too much animation can be distracting.
- Be consistent with animation and have all text and photos appear on the screen the same way each time.
- There are many animation modes to choose from, but it is best to use just one effect throughout; keep effects as simple as possible.
- Only animate certain pictures and diagrams, not every one; and only if needed to make a point.
- Avoid transitions – If you must use, simple transitions (dissolve, fade through black) work well.
- Any transition must be quick.
- Some build effects can be effective in showing a diagram or sequential information. A 'build' effect is when you gradually expose text and images until the whole slide is shown.

References

- Creating Effective PowerPoint Presentations <http://www.cmu.edu/teaching/index.html>
- Guidelines for preparing PowerPoint Presentations <http://www.che.ncsu.edu/kilpatrick/>
- How to Prepare Course Presentations for Online or Disk Delivery: A Step-by-Step Tutorial Before you record. http://www.law.cornell.edu/background/distance/codec/tutorial_2.htm
- Instant Lesson Design. Stephen L. Yelon, 2008.
- Lecture Webcasting <http://www.cmu.edu/teaching/index.html>
- Lecturer's Guide to Preparing and Delivering Excellent Lectures Handout. The University of New Mexico- Health Sciences Center
- Nick Dvoracek, UW- Oshkosh, PowerPoint Tips.
- PowerPoint Presentation Guidelines <http://www.arma.org/LearningCenter/>
- PowerPoint Narrations Center for Teaching Innovations University of Idaho http://www.its2.uidaho.edu/cti/tutorials/audio/powerpoint_narration.htm
- Point, Click & Wow!, A quick Guide to Laptop Presentations. Claudyne Wilder and Jennifer Rotondo. Jossey-Bass/Pfeiffer, A Wiley Company. Copyright 2002.
- Preparing PowerPoint Presentations for Lecture Streaming. <http://www.canberra.edu.au/icts/>
- Preparing PowerPoint presentations for video conferences and streaming web casts <http://www.vbs.vt.edu/helps/pwpt.html>
- Recording a PowerPoint with Camtasia Studio <http://www.techsmith.com>