



## TIPS FOR PRESENTING IN CLASS WITH POWERPOINT

PowerPoint is an easy-to-use presentation tool – but, like with any tool, its use is only as effective as the presenter who is using it. In putting together your slideshow, you've obviously considered key elements such as:

- Who is the audience?
- What do they already know about the material?
- What do you want them to learn by the end of the lecture?
- Where will the presentation take place and under what conditions?

### BEST PRACTICES FOR DESIGNING YOUR POWERPOINT SLIDES

The first consideration in using PowerPoint in your class is to design the slides with your presentation in mind. A slideshow meant to be viewed alone without a presenter will look very different than one meant to be used in a live presentation. Here are some key considerations when designing your classroom presentation slides:

1. Minimize the number of slides and amount of text. Beginning users of PowerPoint tend to use too many slides with too much text on them, leaving their audience dazed and confused. Don't overwhelm your students with many text heavy slides. Remember to keep the text large and make sure it contrasts well with the background.
2. Limit each slide to one main idea. Doing this will really help your presentation and help you to keep the text to a minimum. You might even find that some slides will need no text at all, and instead you can incorporate a good visual to elicit a strong emotion in your audience to help convey the idea.
3. Don't parrot PowerPoint. It's tempting to simply read the slide to the class, and sometimes instructors find themselves doing that, particularly when they are crunched for time. But, not only is that redundant – almost like reading out loud from the textbook – it also makes for an excruciatingly boring audience experience. PowerPoint is intended to provide a visual element to spoken remarks that augment and go into detail about what is displayed. And, keep in mind that 99% of the time, you should be looking at your students, not the projection screen or your computer screen.
4. Make it interactive. It's easy to get into a PowerPoint rut and to do all of the talking when presenting your slides. But PowerPoint can be used interactively as well. Ask students to anticipate information on an upcoming slide, add a text box area and ask students for input on a concept, or make an interactive games using PowerPoint.

5. Mix up the media. Putting a range of media into your PowerPoint presentations allows you to appeal to a wide variety of learning styles. PowerPoint allows you to bring in many different kinds of media -- including graphic images, sound files, video clips, and, of course, text. You can also hyperlink pages within the presentation to Web pages, as well as to other pages within the presentation.
6. Be compelling - The audience won't focus on your presentation and thus will not remember it, if the content or the presentation (at least one of them) does not captivate them. There is no single recipe for making a compelling presentation, because each topic will present different opportunities and challenges. But some things that make for a compelling slideshow include:
  - a. Storytelling
  - b. Suspense
  - c. Humor
  - d. Strong, quality, graphics (graphics should reflect the essence of what you want to convey on that slide)
  - e. Quality video (keep it short and to the point)

## **BEST PRACTICES FOR PRESENTING YOUR SLIDESHOW**

After you've carefully designed your presentation, take the time to consider how you will present your slides to your class. Here are a few ideas

1. Think about goals of any slide handouts that you provide. Many instructors hand out their slides before the lecture starts, or make them available on Moodle or InsidePC. The handouts are useful to give students a structure to their note taking, but many students are over-reliant on them and fail to write much down. If you are distributing handouts of your slides before your lecture, be sure to discuss with students your goals for doing so and your expectations of what roles the handouts will serve for them. Those same goals will inform your decisions on how you format the pages for printing, as well.
2. Hold up your end. Many students have stronger visual skills than auditory skills, and so PowerPoint is effective in holding their attention. This is great if you have designed your slides with visuals that support learning the concepts. However, occasionally you'll want to draw students' attention to you and off the slides. When those times come, make sure that you are in their foreground – that what you are saying and how you are saying it is compelling enough to keep them focused on you, and not on your slides.

3. Time your talk – Keeping in mind student attention and learning styles. You did keep the number of slides to a minimum, right? Another consideration with timing is to try and not have conflict between audio or visual stimuli. For example, when a new slide is presented the audience will be visually interpreting that slide and they won't have the cognitive energy to consider auditory information. So when you bring up a new slide, give your students a chance to check it out before you begin verbally broadening and amplifying what's on the screen.
4. Give it a rest. It can't be said too often – PowerPoint is most effective as a visual accompaniment to the spoken word, not as the vehicle for all of the content of a lecture. Don't be shy about blanking the screen on occasion when you need your students to focus on you, or to give them a chance to reflect or discuss. You'll find that blanking the screen is an effective means by which to change the energy from watching and listening to interaction, such as a group discussion or a question-and-answer session.
5. Hide your pointer. Some students are easily distracted when the pointer (the arrow) moves across the screen during the presentation. This happens when you move the mouse in the Slide Show View. To circumvent this problem, use the space bar to advance slides, (or the arrow keys to navigate forward and back), or hide the pointer. To hide the pointer, once the Slide Show View is started, press the Ctrl-L key combination. This hides the pointer even if the mouse moves. If you need to display the pointer during the presentation, press the Ctrl-A key combination.
6. Rehearse before presenting. This is one of the easiest but most important things you can do to make your slideshow effective. Even if you've given a lecture a hundred times before, it's going to go a quite differently when you use slides. Practicing your presentation in the slideshow view in your office will help you anticipate any glitches that you didn't see when you were focused on getting content onto your slides, and will help you to see how your verbal input changes the presentation. You will very likely find that after rehearsing, you can cut out even more information from your slides. The more barebones you can make your slides, while still providing visual elements for the cognitive processing of your content, the better your slides will be.

## KNOW YOUR MOVES

In addition to being a smooth presenter, you'll need to make sure you know the basic keyboarding techniques for technically moving through your presentation. Different presenters use different key options. Find the ones that work well for you, and soon they'll be second nature.

Go to the next slide:

- Press spacebar
- Press the enter key
- Press the forward arrow
- Click the mouse
- Right-click, and on the shortcut menu, click next

Go to the previous slide:

- Press backspace
- Press the back arrow
- Right-click, and on the shortcut menu, click previous

Go to a specific slide:

- Type the slide number, and then press return
- Right-click, point to go on the shortcut menu, then point to by title and click the slide you want.

See previously viewed slide:

- Right-click, point to go on the shortcut menu, and then click Previously Viewed.

Temporarily black out the screen during a presentation:

- Press the B key - Shows a black screen (press B again to resume)
- Press the W key - Shows a white screen (press W again to resume)

Annotate on the slide:

- Press the Ctrl+P keys - Turns the mouse into a red pen to write on the slide (press Ctrl+A to return to the arrow pointer)
- Right-click and choose "Pointer Options" - From here change the ink color or choose the pen or highlighter to write on the slide.



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