How to Create an Effective Slideshow Presentation

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Create a Uniform and Simple Design

- **Remain consistent** with components like font, color, and background. You may choose to use design templates provided by the slideshow creator.
- **Steer clear of distracting effects** like fly-in transitions and flashy animations. Clean and simple formatting will help build your credibility with your audience.
- **Align all objects and text on a slide**, both vertically and horizontally. Be intentional with the arrangement of items to make your slides visually pleasing.

Keep Text to a Minimum

- **Use key phrases** when citing relevant details. Acronyms, abbreviations, or shorter versions of longer words are all good ways to synthesize information.
- **Use a bullet point format** rather than a paragraph format to improve readability and highlight the most important information.
- **Keep text to approximately six words on a line.** This can help with clarity and can also help make sure that you include the most applicable information.
- **Approximately six lines per slide are recommended.** Using more lines than needed could make your audience disengage from your presentation.
- **Avoid long and complicated sentences.** Make sure your sentences are "easy on the eyes."
- **Try to have about one slide for every minute of your presentation.** Having too many slides or flipping through slides too quickly may lose your audience.

Examples:

Your slide should look like:

Your slide should not look like:

Choose Easy-to-Read Text

- **Limit punctuation** and don't use ALL CAPS. This will create more empty space on your slides and enhance readability.
- **Use high-contrast text and background colors to aid in the ease of reading your slides**. Use dark text on a light background or light text on a dark background. Your slides should be easy to read from the back of the room.
- **Use larger or bold fonts to indicate more important information.** Your audience should be able to see the hierarchy of your ideas.

Select Strong Images

- **Choose quality images over quantity.**
- **Choose images that strengthen and support your message** to build credibility with your audience.
- **Use high-resolution graphics** so your images do not become distorted when you show them on a large screen.
- **Label all figures and tables.** Include units beside charts and graphs.

Presenting your SlideShow

- **Practice moving back and forth between slides**, as your audience may want to see previous slides.
- **Time yourself as you practice** to ensure you stay within the limits of the presentation requirements.
- If possible, **rehearse your presentation on the screen you will use**. Be sure students in the back of the room can see your presentation. The texts and graphics should be big enough to read but not in a way that seems "LOUD."
- **Always have a backup plan** in case of technical problems. You can use handouts to pass out to the class, index cards to remind you of your speaking points, print a copy of your presentation when you're done preparing, or use the whiteboard with a variety of colored markers.
- **Do not read from the slides;** use the points on your slides as topic sentences and extend your ideas instead. This will keep your presentation interesting and your audience engaged.
- **Speak with your back facing the slides**. Your audience are the listeners, not the slides. A pointer is recommended if you want to show the importance of a specific portion of a slide.