

Making PowerPoint Slides: Avoiding the Pitfalls of Bad Slides

Tips to be Covered

- **Outlines**
- **Slide Structure**
- **Fonts**
- **Colour**
- **Background**
- **Graphs**
- **Spelling and Grammar**
- **Conclusions**
- **Questions**

Outline Slides

- **Make your 1st or 2nd slide an outline of your presentation**
 - **Ex: previous slide**
- **Follow the order of your outline for the rest of the presentation**
- **Only place main points on the outline slide**
 - **Ex: Use the titles of each slide as main points**

Slide Structure – Good

- **Use 1-2 slides per minute of your presentation**
- **Write in point form, not complete sentences**
- **Include 4-5 points per slide**
- **Avoid wordiness: use key words and phrases only**
- **Show one point at a time:**
 - **Will help audience concentrate on what you are saying**
 - **Will prevent audience from reading ahead**
 - **Will help you keep your presentation focused**

Slide Structure - Bad

- **This bullet contains too many words for a presentation slide. It is not written in point form, making it difficult both for your audience to read and for you to present each point. Although there are exactly the same number of points on this slide as the previous slide, it looks much more complicated. In short, your audience will spend too much time trying to read this paragraph instead of listening to you.**
- **Do not use distracting animation**
- **Do not go overboard with the animation**
- **Be consistent with the animation that you use**

Use of Fonts – Good

- Use at least an 18-point font
- Use different size fonts for main points and secondary points
 - this font is 24-point, the main point font is 28-point, and the title font is 36-point
- Use a standard font like Times New Roman or Arial
- Use at least an 18-point font
- Use different size fonts for main points and secondary points
 - this font is 24-point, the main point font is 28-point, and the title font is 36-point
- Use a standard font like Times New Roman or Arial

Use of Fonts – Bad

- If you use a small font, your audience won't be able to read what you have written
- CAPITALIZE ONLY WHEN NECESSARY. IT IS DIFFICULT TO READ
- Don't use a complicated font

Use of Color – Good

- Use a color of font that contrasts sharply with the background
 - Ex: blue font on white background
- Use color to reinforce the logic of your structure
 - Ex: light blue title and dark blue text
- Use color to emphasize a point
 - But only use this **occasionally**

Use of Color - Bad

- Using a font color that does not contrast with the background color is hard to read
- Using color for decoration is distracting and annoying.
- Using a different color for each point is unnecessary
 - Using a different color for secondary points is also unnecessary
- Trying to be creative can also be bad

Slide Background – Good

- Use backgrounds such as this one that are attractive but simple
- Use backgrounds which are light
- Use the same background consistently throughout your presentation

Slide Background – Bad

- Avoid backgrounds that are distracting or difficult to read from
- Always be consistent with the background that you use

Use of Fonts/Backgrounds with color

- Research states
 - tinted background colors + darker font color = better for visual presentations and more and color

Spelling and Grammar

- **Proof your slides for:**
 - **speling mistakes**
 - **the use of of repeated words**
 - **grammatical errors you might have make**
 - **If grammar is not your specialty, please have someone else check your presentation!**

Your Conclusion

- **Use an effective and strong closing**
 - **Your audience is likely to remember your last words**
 - **Use a conclusion slide to:**
 - **Summarize the main points of your presentation**
 - **Suggest future avenues of research**
- **End your presentation with a simple question slide to:**
 - **Invite your audience to ask questions**
 - **Provide a visual aid during question period**
 - **Avoid ending a presentation abruptly**