

## **Developing a PowerPoint Presentation**

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The 3 most important things needed for an outstanding presentation include an *enthusiastic speaker*, a *suitable topic* and finally *visuals that support and communicate to your audience*. Because a lot of people process information visually, here are some questions to ask yourself when developing your PowerPoint presentation.

### **What is the purpose of your presentation?**

- Create a one-sentence "Purpose Statement" before starting.
- Is there a single most important idea or fact that you want them to remember?
- Who is your audience and how much do they already know?
- Will they need to have a copy of the entire presentation or a summary of it?
- How many people will you be presenting to?
- What action do I want my audience to take?
- Have a beginning, middle and an end.
- Focus on the content of your presentation not just the appearance! No matter how brilliantly presented, a poorly planned presentation won't motivate your audience to take action.

### **What restrictions do you have?**

- Where will you deliver your presentation? How big is the room? Will it be dark or bright?
- How much time do you have to present? You should allow approximately 2-3 minutes per slide.
- What possible questions and objections might your audience bring up? – Will they be receptive to your ideas – positive, negative or impartial?
- Do you want audience interaction?
- How much material is too much?
- How can I make it interesting so that my audience doesn't get bored?

### **How will you communicate to your audience?**

- How do you want your presentation to 'look'?
- Be consistent with font & background colours. If you are presenting in a dark room, use a dark background with white text, if the room is bright use a light background with dark text.
- Words are important but won't keep your audience's attention. Use the slides to support your spoken words. Nothing bores an audience more than a presenter reading what is on the slides.
- Keep your slides "uncluttered". Don't put too much on one slide. Use pictures and graphs or charts instead of words. Use handouts for the more detailed charts and information that your audience needs.
- Font sizes are important too. Title headings should fit on one line (or two) and should be about 30-32pt. Bullet points should be at least 20-24pt.
- Don't overuse animation (*appearance of text or images onto a slide*) or slide transitions (*movement from one slide to the next*). Too much can be distracting to your audience.

- Include slides to explain your objectives at the beginning and a summary section at the end and have topic slides between sections. It can help your audience understand the flow of the presentation.
- Knowing your audience ahead of time will let you know if you should use clip art or humorous cartoons or other pictures.

### **Review, Delivery & Follow-Up**

- Once you have created your ideas and the look of your presentation make sure you review your creation. Practice what you have written (in front of a mirror if necessary).
- Create speaker notes to use while presenting. There is a Speaker Note section included in PowerPoint.
- Check for spelling, grammar or other errors.
- Make sure you are comfortable with your audio visual equipment. Know how to use it before you get in front of your audience. Can you move forward and backwards or jump between slides if needed?
- Do you need to load your presentation onto other equipment or laptop?
- Have a back-up in case the technology fails (overhead slides, handouts, etc).
- After it is over, review what worked and what didn't.

Keep in mind that the main objective of any presentation is to support and complement the speaker and topic. Neither one can replace the other. If you know your purpose, communicate it well and use basic design elements you will be successful in your presentation. Good Luck!