

# **The Art of Professional Presentation**

## *Elements of an Electronic Presentation*

***Use sharply contrasting colors.*** Unless you have presented in the exact room with the exact equipment previously, you probably do not have a strong sense of the quality of darkness in the room and the sharpness of color contrast. Do not spend weeks developing a project and hours preparing a presentation only to find your audience cannot read anything on your slides.

***Use large fonts.*** Your audience will concentrate more on its inability to read than on your substantive content if you place incomprehensible small characters on the screen. Do not distract your audience this way. Keep your font sizes to a minimum of 18 points. *Absolutely* never drop below 14 points, even in tables, graphics, and map legends. When you insert a graphic that includes text, make sure you compare its font sizes to known sizes in your presentation software.

***Number your slides.*** If you have numbers, someone with a question can refer to slide 16 much more easily than asking, “Back when you were talking about... uh... something about cars and volumes... uh... I wasn’t clear.”

***Follow the rules of outline format.*** You never have a number one without a number two. Similarly, you should never have only one bullet at any level... always two or more.

***Standardize your style.*** Whether you choose to put your bullets in title case or sentence case, stay consistent throughout your presentation.

***Use parallel structure.*** You choose your standard, but if you have three bullets starting with a verb, do not start the fourth bullet with a noun. Make sure that all bullets consistently take the form of nouns, verbs, adjectives, *or* (rarely) sentences. Never mix forms.

***Include references.*** Even though your time is limited in presentation, academic integrity still demands that you give credit where credit is due. If you use a direct quote, put it in quotation marks. If you paraphrase a bullet point, put the name of the author in parentheses at the end of the line. If you present an entire concept from someone else, put a name (and perhaps even the full reference) in an innocuous place on the slide, such as the lower right corner.

## **Content**

***Take credit.*** Include your name and affiliation on the title slide. You might also include an affiliation logo on the title slide. If done discreetly, this logo may also appear as part of the slide template for all subsequent slides.

**Allocate time strategically.** Think about the amount of time you have for your presentation from the start. Depending on the content of your presentation, each slide will take between 30 seconds and two minutes to present... even if it is only a picture. You will only include a picture if you have a story to tell about it, and that story will typically take at least 30 seconds. If you have ten minutes to present, you simply cannot cover 30 slides. Given that you cannot say everything you know about your topic. Do you really want to spend seven out of ten slides discussing the background of your topic? You might need to cut the introductory material down to three slides to allow the bulk of your presentation time to go to describing your methodology, identifying your results, interpreting their implications, and explaining your conclusions.

**Know your audience.** As a corollary to allocating time strategically, you need to target the interests of your audience. If you are speaking to academicians, they will take great interest in your methodology and research approach. The general public generally wants you to move quickly to your findings, the bottom line, and what needs to be done. Other audiences will have other areas of interest. Always know before you start preparing your presentation what the audience will want to get out of time spent listening.

**Outline your presentation.** Typical presentation elements include slides for:

- Title
- Outline/objectives
- Introduction / problem statement / motivation
- Background / literature review
- Goals and objectives
- Methodology and site location (if appropriate)
- Findings
- Discussion of results/implications
- Conclusion

**Capture attention.** Your first substantive slide should make your audience sit up straight with eager ears. If you start with a definition, you do nothing to raise interest. Make the audience immediately identify with the problem you are addressing, the motivation for investigating the problem, and your topic's importance.

**Do not write paragraphs.** Visual aids in presentations are meant to supplement your verbal presentation. You cannot expect your audience to read extensive sentences. Even with your close familiarity with your material, you yourself will have difficulty reading verbose slides. Use as few words as necessary to communicate your points.

**Provide visual variety.** Use a mixture of slides with text, graphics, and tables. Long stretches of any of these elements will hypnotize your audience, but people will eagerly follow five slides of text if you put a slide with a map or a table in the middle of them. Similarly, you will lose your audience if you give them slide after slide of equations or tables with numbers. Keep your audience's attention by constantly offering new attractions for interest.

## “How To Create And Make A Presentation”

In less than 60 minutes you can easily master powerful techniques to quickly become a polished presenter.

You'll discover:

- ✓ **How to start** when all that's staring you in the face is a blank screen or piece of paper.
- ✓ The secrets behind "**Naming Your Presentation**" so that audiences will literally scramble to hear you speak.
- ✓ Why most people **fear public speaking more than dying**, but how anyone can overcome that fear to become a great public speaker and presenter.
- ✓ Where to get your hands on hundreds or thousands of additional quality **PowerPoint Templates**, so you don't have to bore your audience with the same old dreary slides.
- ✓ How to make your presentation absolutely **reek of credibility** from beginning-to-end.
- ✓ Which presentation style and equipment is right for you, your subject matter and your audience.
- ✓ Why there are so many myths surrounding making presentations and public speaking and which ones you should totally ignore.
- ✓ How to properly **brainstorm for your presentation** - most people go about this the wrong way and the audience response is usually telling!
- ✓ How to leave an overawed audience just wondering where you ever learned to present like a true professional.
- ✓ Plus much, much more...