

How to Create Great Presentations – Checklist

WHILE PREPARING THE PRESENTATION:

1. Because a typical presentation lasts for about only 15 minutes + 5 minutes for Q/A (Questions and Answers) = Total of 20 minutes, it would be very difficult for you to finish a presentation that has more than 30 slides. Always plan for 1 slide per minute, plus 5 additional slides (for Cover Slide, Q&A slide, etc.)
2. **Always learn ahead of time the time you have available for your presentation. Then plan your presentation accordingly.**
3. **Your slides should have minimal text. Absolutely! Instead of writing the whole sentence you should definitely write down only the essential words in that sentence/statement that will suffice to give the same meaning.**
4. Titles of the slides should start with Capital Letters, but words such as "a, the, for, with" should be small caps.
5. Never ever use ALL CAPS in your text. In titles, it's enough if Only the First Letters are Capital. In subtitles, it's enough if only the First word of the subtitle starts with a capital letter.
6. The text should be as large as possible and bold if possible. This way, even the people who sit far from the screen can read the text. You can make all the text within the whole presentation easily by going to Slide Master (in MS Office 2005: View/Master/Slide Master; in MS Office 2007 View/Slide Master), selecting everything by pressing Ctrl button and pressing A once (Ctrl+A), and making bold by Ctrl+B. Then you can Close Master View by clicking the associated button and return to the normal view of your presentation.
7. As much as you can, try to select white color or light colors as the background of your slides, since this would make things much easier for you when printing your presentation in hardcopy form. Also, tests in psychology show that the color white creates the mood to stay longer in humans. That's one reason why many retail stores such as those of Zara and Mango are decorated with white walls.
8. **For significant **concepts** and **terms** that define, you can use a different color such as **blue**, when you first introduce them.**
9. The color schemes should be consistent throughout your presentation. For example, you should not have a presentation where you have two different color schemes at different slides.
10. Avoid extremely **bright** or **flashy** colors, try to stick with **visible pastel colors** as much as possible.
11. The first slide of your presentation should have your name and your affiliation on it. It's best if you put a logo of your affiliated company/institution, as well.

12. The second slide of your presentation should present the "Outline" of the presentation, which basically is a bulleted list of the presentation's content. At most seven items would be enough for the Outline.

13. In your presentation, the slide before last slide should be the "Acknowledgement" slide, where you thank people who have contributed to your presentation or the study that you are presenting. List their names in the slide.

14. The last slide of your presentation should be the "Questions & Answers" slide, where you literally ask your audience to ask you questions which you can answer.

15. USE A LOT OF LOT OF PHOTOS IN YOUR PRESENTATIONS!

Photographs create a much more positive and professional impression in the eye of the audience compared to clipart, caricatures, etc.

Here are some wonderful web sites for finding high-quality photos:

<http://pexels.com> (free photos)
<http://freepik.com>
<http://www.fotolia.com> (wide selection)
<http://www.istockphoto.com> (includes video and audio)
<http://dgl.microsoft.com>
<http://www.sxc.hu>
<http://www.deviantart.com>
<http://www.flickr.com>
<http://www.gettyimages.com>
<http://www.corbis.com>

Do your best in obeying copyrights.

16. You can also find photos through search engines such as Google and Yahoo. If you "take" a photo from a website you should put its web link (URL) at a slide at the end of your presentation. And you should not use this presentation for commercial purposes and should not distribute it, since you might be violating copyright. If you are planning to distribute your presentation (maybe by posting on a website) then you should definitely obey copyright and either purchase or get permission from the owner of the photos that you've used.

17. When citing long URLs (web addresses), you can use a link shortener, such as bit.ly or tinyurl.com.

18. All the text in your presentations should be your own original sentences. If you are using somebody else's sentence then it should be through appropriate referencing. Thus you should avoid plagiarism. If you take a sentence as it is, then it should be placed in your presentation "in quotes". If you are using critical information from a source (such as a statistic on world population), and if you are using your own sentences, then you do not need the quotes, but you still need to give appropriate reference such as UNESCO (2005). The maximum amount of text "within quotes" should be 10% of your presentation. If you are presenting a paper or book, basically someone else's work, then the first slide in your

presentation should include the title of that paper/book, and the names of the authors of that paper/book. Your name should be in the first slide in the form “Presented by: John Doe”

19. Before you distribute your presentations, make sure that their B&W (black and white) printouts come out very well and the printouts are easily understandable.

20. Make sure to PUT SLIDE NUMBERS in your presentations (in MS Office 2005: View/Header-Footer, in MS Office 2007+: Insert/PageNumbers). This way, if someone from the audience has a question, s/he can directly tell the slide number and ask his/her question.

21. Prepare Exercise Handouts (Where Applicable).

22. Name Your Files Systematically. For example, you can use the letter H to denote Handouts, E to denote Excel files, next to the lecture number. Similarly, you can put the version of the file at the end of the file. For example, “How to Create Great Presentations – Checklist – v11.docx”

23. Definitely make a rehearsal of the presentation. This will take ~30 minutes of your time, and will make your actual presentation much more fluent and accessible.

24. If there are some files or applications that you are referring to during your presentation, then make sure that those files and applications are available on your computer’s Desktop. This way, if needed, you can show the files that you have mentioned, or make a demo of the application. Make sure to rehearse these beforehand. Do not assume that there will be an internet connection. If there is something that you need to show from the internet, make sure to save that file on your Desktop (not shortcut, but the whole html file), since you may not find internet connection during the presentation.

You can use **PortableApps.com** website to download portable versions of your favorite software, such as video player, sound player, etc.

25. Print your presentation 2 slides/page and bring copies for the audience, at least for your most significant audience, such as your supervisor, manager, etc.

* If possible, your printouts should be in color.

26. Prepare your laser pointer before the presentation and make sure you have spare batteries. Purchase a high quality laser pointer, since a bad one may leave you “laserless” at the middle of your presentation.

DURING THE PRESENTATION

27. When making you presentation, EVERY MEMBER of your project group should be present at the location of presentation.

28. When you begin the presentation, introduce yourself and your group members one by one, also mentioning your affiliations.

29. In the presentation it is typically expected that everyone presents his/her part.

30. When a member of the group is presenting, the other group members should not be looking around, and should not be moving much. They should listen to the presenter, with their whole body turned towards the presenter. Swinging arms or legs should especially be avoided, since these are very distracting for the audience.

31. During the presentation, do not tie your arms in front of you. Keep your arms open in hugging position, welcoming the audience.

32. Do not read the text in the slides as is. Rephrase them with newer words/sentences in a creative style. Also, do not read from your notes directly. It is best not to have any notes in your hand at all.

33. Wait 2-3 seconds before every slide and maybe even before every important item in a bulleted list. This was the audience will find the time to read the slides/bulleted items before you start explaining them.

34. Engage with the audience: Face the audience, never turn your back to the audience. If you must turn your back, do it brief. Establish eye contact with the eye contact, but without making anyone uncomfortable. Smile to the audience and spread positivity. Make your audience smile & laugh. Make everything simple to understand for them. Relate to their professions & interests when sharing anecdotes and examples.

35. Mind what you say. Replace “gonna” with “going to”. Replace “I’m” with “I am”. Avoid the filler sounds: “mmm”, “aaa”. “A filler word is an apparently meaningless word, phrase, or sound that marks a pause or hesitation in speech. Also known as a pause filler or hesitation form. Some of the common filler words in English are um, uh, er, ah, like, okay, right, and you know.” (Source: Wikipedia). Avoid these words. Practice and rehearse and you will do better with each rehearsal.

36. Never ever exceed the time limit of your presentation.

37. It is best if a question (from the audience) is answered by the group member who is most proficient on that topic.

38. When answering questions, do not answer with "NO". Use positive words.

39. When answering questions repeat the questions so that both you and that person can make sure that you understood the question right. Meanwhile, the people from the audience that did not hear the question well will have a second chance to hear and understand the question.

40. If there are too many questions from the same person and if it seems like there will be an argument, then just say the following and end the argument "That is a great question, and it will take us some time to answer it in good detail. So, let us talk after the presentation, and we would be more than happy to answer your question."