

USING A SLIDESHOW IN YOUR PRESENTATION

We know that using visual aids in our presentations can help our audience understand us and follow what we are saying. Slideshows using software such as PowerPoint or Keynote are probably the most popular kinds of visual aids these days.

This guide will give you some tips about how to use a slideshow effectively in your presentation.



Getting Started Tips

- Use a dark background and light letters **or** a light background and dark letters.
- Use a font size at least 24
- Use an Arial or Helvetica font. These are the easiest to read.
- Use a simple transition such as a wipe or dissolve.

Video Clip

Watch the video clip of a comedian giving a demonstration how NOT to use PowerPoint. What order does the comedian make the following points:

___ You should be careful about your choice of colors when using PowerPoint.

___ You shouldn't write too many words on a PowerPoint slide.

___ Your PowerPoint slides shouldn't have too many animations.

___ Always check your spelling.

___ You shouldn't add too many bullet points to one slide.

___ Your PowerPoint slides shouldn't have too much information.

You can see the video for this exercise at the following URL:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HLpjrHzgSRM>

Tip #1: Content before Form

Don't waste your time designing slides with graphics and fancy animations from the beginning of your project. Make very basic slides in the beginning. Make sure that all of the important information (content) is on the slides, then add graphics etc (form).

Tip #2: K.I.S.S.

Keep It Short and Simple. When making bullet lists, do not write every word that you will say during the presentations. Bullet items are supposed to be shorter than regular English sentences (similar to newspaper headlines).

Tip #3: Be consistent

Don't use too many different kinds of fonts, colors and transitions. Your slideshow should keep a similar style from beginning to end.

Tip #4: A picture = a thousand words

In English we often say "a picture is worth a thousand words". If it is possible to replace words with a photo or graphics, it is usually a good idea to do it. Don't overdo it though - a picture should always have a purpose.

Tip #5: Never read directly from your slides

Your slideshow is not a script. You should have your presentation well memorized and practiced so that you can give it without actually looking at the slides.

Exercises

Look at the following PowerPoint slides. The slides need to be improved. What is the problem with each one?