Tips for Power Point Presentations

1. Use Key Phrases About Your Topic
Seasoned presenters use key phrases and include only essential information. Choose only the top three or four points about your topic and make them consistently throughout the delivery. Simplify and limit the number of words on each screen. Try not to use more than three bullets per slide. The surrounding space will make it easier to read.

2. Slide Layout is Important
Make your slides easy to follow. Put the title at the top of the slide where your audience expects to find it. Phrases should read left to right and top to bottom. Keep important information near the top of the slide. Often the bottom portions of slides cannot be seen from the back rows because heads are in the way.

3. Limit Punctuation and Avoid All Capital Letters
Punctuation can needlessly clutter the slide and the use of all caps makes statements more difficult to read and is like SHOUTING at your audience.

4. Avoid Fancy Fonts
Choose a font that is simple and easy to read such as Arial, Times New Roman or Verdana. Avoid script type fonts as they are hard to read on screen. Use, at most, two different fonts – perhaps one for headings and another for content. Keep all fonts large enough (at least 24 pt and preferably 30 pt) so that people at the back of the room will be able to easily read what is on the screen.

5. Use Contrasting Colors For Text and Background
- Dark text on a light background is best, but avoid white backgrounds -- tone it down by using beige or another light color that will be easy on the eyes. Dark backgrounds are effective to show off company colors or if you just want to dazzle the crowd. In that case, be sure to make text a light color for easy reading.
- Patterned or textured backgrounds can reduce readability of text.
- Keep your color scheme consistent throughout your presentation.

6. Use Slide Designs Effectively
When using a design theme (PowerPoint 2007) or design template (earlier versions of PowerPoint), choose one that is appropriate for the audience. A clean, straightforward layout is best if you are presenting to business clientele. Select one that is full of color and contains a variety of shapes if your presentation is aimed at young children.

7. Limit the Number Of Slides
Keeping the number of slides to a minimum ensures that the presentation will not become too long and drawn out. It also avoids the problem of continually changing slides during the presentation that can be a distraction to your audience. On average, one slide per minute is about right.

8. Use Photos, Charts and Graphs
Combining photos, charts and graphs and even embedding digitized videos with text, will add variety and keep your audience interested in the presentation. Avoid having text only slides.

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