



No.1: Preparation

Too many slides get in the way of your message. And each slide should take no more than a minute to get through. That's about 160 spoken words: Words which should come out of your mouth and NOT be on the slide itself. Keep the slide SIMPLE.

- ▣ Do you know what you want your audience to think, do or say differently once they've seen and heard your presentation?
- ▣ Do you know what your two or three top messages are? If not, cut the messages you have down to size and write them down.
- ▣ How long is your presentation? Can it be shorter? Always err on the side of brevity.
- ▣ Are your slides part of a larger presentation? Be aware of what the others are saying!
- ▣ All those questions have to be answered BEFORE you start building slides.
- ▣ You need to create a presentation that flows. Think of the six P's: preface, position, problem, possibility, proposal, and postscript. Or at least - tell your audience what you are going to tell them, tell them, and then tell them what they have been told!
- ▣ Do all the audience have a common level of understanding on the subject, or is it mixed? Be careful not to ignore or patronise sections of your audience!
- ▣ Order your presentation using your key messages (supported by the most relevant and powerful facts) and remember the old cliché, 'Less is More'.



No.2: Managing content.

Keep your slides simple and clean. Don't clutter them with loads of words or too many pictures or graphics. 'Less is More' might be a cliché, but it's also totally true!

- ❑ Think about the structure of your whole presentation and create its first heading – the message that you open with will be, most probably, the message most of your audience will remember once it's over.
- ❑ Think in headlines rather than detail. If you want to share detail then provide a handout. DON'T put the detail on the slides!
- ❑ What you need are crisp simple messages. Again, avoid putting the script on the slide at all costs!
- ❑ And, yes, a picture IS worth a thousand words... Only, try not to use the clip-art too much. Surprise people with images, don't bore them. If you can, be quirky when it comes to imagery. People remember images they didn't expect.
- ❑ If you want to use bullets then don't have more than five points per slide and no more than 6 words per bullet. Use headings on slides to set up the proposition. A summary line on each can be very useful in stating the actions needed.
- ❑ Always use the same verb tenses.
- ❑ Beware of complicated charts, especially those imported from Excel. Work out what is important to communicate and remake them into PowerPoint charts. A very simple graph with a big arrow pointing at the growth figure will be much more effective than lots of data that can't be read or easily understood.
- ❑ Humour can certainly be used, but remember not everyone laughs at what you do, so keep it clean and acceptable to everyone in your audience.
- ❑ Beware not to over-clutter your slides, your message must still be clear – you do not want to create confusion with too much text, images, graphs, or animations. Less is more!



No.3: Use your creativity.

Dark backgrounds drink ink. They also don't look so good when they're printed out. If you're going to hand out copies of your presentation, avoid too many dark colours. You'll save ink, time and money.

- ❑ How much flexibility do you have for creativity? Are you using a standard PowerPoint template, can you adapt an existing one or develop a new template for your presentation?
- ❑ What is the presentation about? For example, is it about people, customers or brands? If it is, then think about how you could introduce a relevant picture or graphics into the overall template design.
- ❑ Understand what the screen format (4:3) or (16:9 Widescreen) of the presentation will be and lay it out accordingly.
- ❑ A good PowerPoint template design will have two versions, one for the main heading slides where the design is more dominant and one for body slides that allow for plenty of working space.
- ❑ Next consider which typeface to use; it's important. A typeface reflects the tone and style of your message, and it also helps people to read what's on the slide, especially in a big room.
 - Choose one that reflects the personality of the brand or topic.
 - Make sure it is easy to read.
 - If this presentation is going to be forwarded to others to view or amend, make sure they have the font or it's embedded in the PPT template.
- ❑ Agree an overall colour scheme up front and don't use too many colours. Always go for strong contrast between copy colour and backgrounds; something that looks really subtle and nice on your PC screen may not work when it's projected, especially if there is a lot of ambient light in the room.
- ❑ Think about how this presentation will be used. If it is going to be printed don't go for a dark background, it will take too long to print!



No.4: Making it look professional

Don't waste time trying to make every slide look different. Audiences like consistency and simplicity. All your slides should look as if they belong together.

- ❑ Consistency throughout a PowerPoint presentation is VERY important for a professional-looking presentation.
- ❑ Fonts, background designs, formatting and animations should all remain consistent.
- ❑ Check your use of upper and lower-case type, font size and the positioning of headings or logos that appear on every slide.
- ❑ Creating a PowerPoint Template makes it easier to keep your slides consistent.
- ❑ **HOW TO CREATE A PPT TEMPLATE**
 - Set format to on-screen show (4:3) or (16:9)
 - View the master slide
 - The overall design of this slide will be used as the basis for all new slides created within your presentation, e.g. any background image inserted into this slide will appear on all new slides that are created.
 - Insert the background design you would like your presentation to have
 - Choose the fonts you would like to use and ensure that titles and body text are a suitable size
 - Change bullets, colours and add logos and graphics
- ❑ Remember that ANY ELEMENT placed into this master template will appear on your slides, so only elements that you would like on ALL slides should be placed here!
- ❑ You can create a master template for both body slides and title slides.
- ❑ Always use a NEW slide once you have made the template to ensure consistency.
- ❑ You are also able to add a general slide transition to your templates (that ensures all your slide transitions are the same, unless you choose to change specific ones).
- ❑ Animating certain objects or text within a presentation can add IMPACT. Builds and reveals are effective ways of keeping the audience from prematurely moving ahead of your presentation. However don't use too many on each chart because this will make the presentation harder to deliver on the day.



No.5: Importing images, videos and charts

The best video formats for PowerPoint are Windows Media Video (WMV) for PCs and Quicktime (MOV) for Macs.

IMAGES

- ❑ Images can be imported as images or backgrounds – we advise that images used as background designs are inserted as backgrounds (as this will reduce the file size). Images you wish to manipulate and move around should be inserted as actual images.
- ❑ PowerPoint presentations are always viewed at 72DPI. Agencies often supply images at artwork quality resolution of 300DPI. Reducing these images to 72DPI will not affect the quality on screen and will reduce problems with the opening, running and transferring of the file.
- ❑ Inserting a background image:
Right click on the slide you wish to insert your background image into. Select Format Background then select picture or texture fill.
Click on the FILE button and browse for your image – then insert it.
- ❑ Inserting an image:
Select Insert and then choose Picture from file.
Browse for the image you require & then insert it.
Images inserted in this way will be editable.

VIDEOS

- ❑ The best video formats for PowerPoint are Windows Media Video (WMV) for PCs and Quicktime (MOV) for Macs. An MPEG1 format will also run in PowerPoint, however these can often be small files that appear small on your screen and when enlarged may be poor quality.
- ❑ Inserting a video:
Select Insert and choose movie from File.
Browse for the video you require and then insert it.
- ❑ It is always advisable to run your entire video once it has been inserted into a PowerPoint presentation. Often a video will be inserted correctly, but when played back in PowerPoint problems can arise such as stopping before the end!



No.5: Importing images, videos and charts

The best video formats for PowerPoint are Windows Media Video (WMV) for PCs and Quicktime (MOV) for Macs.

- ❑ **IMPORTANT NOTE:** Videos are not like images once inserted into a presentation. They are not embedded and therefore the original video file will ALWAYS need to be saved inside the same folder as the presentation!

CHARTS

- ❑ Often graphs and charts are created in Excel before finding their way into a PowerPoint presentation. However, if a chart is imported as an image, then it will no longer be editable.



No.6:

How to create a presentation for somebody else

Before you start working hard on a presentation, create a structure and a 'storyboard' and choose a template, or at least mock one up, so that you can get the person who is going to deliver the presentation to agree it all. Then get to work.

- If you've been asked to create a presentation for someone else, you'll need to follow these simple tips.
 - First, organise the messages to be delivered into headings on individual slides as a form of storyboard.
 - Get the presenter to agree the structure BEFORE you do any major work. This will save you a lot of time if they disagree with your first thoughts.
 - Also choose your template design and the overall look you think works, and get that agreed, too.
- Once everyone's happy, you can get to work on the detail for the presentation.
- Do the organisers of the event need to see the PPT prior to the event? If so work your timing back to this date. Also, what screen format and version of PPT are they using?
- What aides does the presenter want? Will they have autocue or read the presentation from a script, index cards or a printout of the slides? If so, how many slides do they want per page?
- If the presentation has some video content, check that you have prepared the video files to the right format – especially if you are not running it from your laptop (WMVs file will not run on a Mac for example). Will there be a sound connection for the audio?
- If the presentation is being delivered on a memory stick, check that all video files and other linked files (eg. Excel charts) are in the same folder as the PPT. If the font is anything other than standard then it should be there too.
- Will printouts of the slides be handed out afterwards? If so, how many and in what format? Ensure all changes have been signed off before you start printing!



No.7: Making changes to an existing presentation

When you delete slides the numbers get out of kilter. So, the best thing to do is to start at the back and make your way to the front, deleting unwanted slides as you go. That means your slide numbers will all make sense when you start your presentation.

- ▣ If you are enhancing a presentation that somebody else has started, read the whole presentation first and evaluate where best you can make the maximum impact in the time available. Don't get bogged down on one slide.
- ▣ Check the file sizes of any imported slides or material (they only need to be 72DPI) – make sure all linked video and Excel files are now in the PPT folder.
- ▣ Think about how copy could be shortened. No more than 5 bullets per slide with 6 words per bullet. Otherwise split it into another slide.
- ▣ It can be a little tricky if you are following a list of changes and slides need to be deleted. Work through your changes from back to front – this will ensure that any slides you delete will not affect the remaining slide numbers!
- ▣ Alternatively, you could mark relevant slides with a box saying 'TO DELETE', then work through your changes and remove the marked slides at the end.
- ▣ When the changes are complete, run the presentation through in showmode, ideally on the laptop that will be used to present from, to make sure that all the animations and videos work.