

PPT PRESENTATIONS: DEVELOPMENT CHECKLIST

Use this checklist before and after drafting your presentation to see if you have followed all the recommended guidelines. It should help improve the quality and effectiveness of your presentation.

General

- Consider using a combination of presentation methods (only several PPT slides with simple visuals, with discussion and materials)
- Do not start by using an old presentation; bring relevant information from an old presentation into your new one (it will force you to organize your thoughts first and help with formatting)
- Think outside of the box; use quotes, fill in the blank, quizzes, short videos, exercises, question and answer sessions, etc. to keep the audience engaged and promote some interaction

Content

Organization/Structure

- Assess your audience first—current interests, level of knowledge, and work environment/habits
- Identify the objectives, desired outcomes, and any actions you want the audience to take
- Create an outline and determine the likely number of slides needed for each topic OR diagram your slides, labeling each with the main topic (a kind of visual mapping)
- Be sure you create (1) an opening that guides the audience through your presentation and the objectives or purpose; (2) a middle; and (3) an end that includes the key points or take away messages
- Determine if you have enough time to cover the topics (assume an average of 1 minute per slide)
- Organize the main slides/topics in a logical flow, using divider slides for transitioning into new topics
- Link your points in a memorable way (e.g., by using a numerical value, “5 pathways to...,” OR by using a phrase or term, “social vaccine”)

Clarity

- Introduce only 1 main idea or message per slide
- Stay under 8 lines of text and 6 bullets per slide (try!)
- Guide the audience by using divider slides and SHORT headings and subheadings
- Ensure that headings and subheadings are meaningful (emphasize the most important words)
- Use a parallel structure for headings and bullets on the same slide (e.g., either all nouns or all verbs; all full sentences or all phrases; all past or all present)
- Place dependent information in the same bullet
- Eliminate any unnecessary words and shorten text as much as possible BUT do not be cryptic
- Use punctuation consistently
- Use capitalization consistently
- Check the spelling (spell check)

Visuals

- Create a balance between content and visuals
- Be sure photos and other visuals are appropriate and relevant to the topics and countries/people represented by the audience
- Check that any data in the text and figures or tables match and relate to each other
- Title your figures or tables and label all elements
- Use a summary statement for your figures and tables, if complicated or not immediately understood
- Break up/simplify large, complex tables and figures or show them on a handout or wall instead
- Include sources for all figures and tables
- Include credits for all photos, illustrations, and other outsourced graphics (and check terms of use before using them)

Formatting

Font

- Keep the number of font types to 3 or fewer (2 is ideal: 1 for headings/accents and 1 for body)
- Use font size changes consistently and sparingly and do not go below 16 pt for body font (20–28 pt is best, depending on room size)
- Use font size, italics, or color for emphasis instead of underlining text, as it can be distracting (however, do not italicize multiple lines of text, as it will be difficult to read)

Color

- Use colors consistently and sparingly, including across figures and in backgrounds (keep in mind black and white printing, if relevant)
- Only use bright colors for small highlights (not paragraph font or full backgrounds)
- Do not use dark font on dark backgrounds or light on light
- Check your colors on a projector screen to ensure they appear as intended
- Print out your presentation to check that all text is visible and legible

Visuals

- Maintain white space between lines of text and between text and visuals
- Be sure photos and graphics are of high quality (in focus, high resolution, minimum of 300 dpi)
- Avoid using clip art in high-level, technical presentations
- Do not use a mix of clip art and photos
- Do not distort photos, figures, and tables by stretching or shrinking them to fit a space
- Add animation/transitions after finalizing your PPT
- Keep animation/transitions simple and to a minimum (so as to not add time or distract)