

Bracken Business Communications Clinic

STYLE

Making an Effective PowerPoint Presentation

Visual aids help your audience follow your presentation by emphasizing key points and concepts. Many workplaces (and the JJCBE) encourage the use of PowerPoint as a visual aid because it offers an effective platform for displaying text and images to a large or small audience. Use the following tips to create effective PowerPoint presentations. (These concepts apply to other digital visual media aid platforms, like Prezi, as well).

- Limit the amount of text on each slide.
 - Use the 6 X 6 rule—no more than six bullet points per slide and no more than six words per bullet point.
 - Each slide should include only one key point.
 - **Remember:** The audience cannot read and listen to you at the same time, so too much text is distracting.
- Use relevant images.
 - Limit images to one or two per slide, so as not to distract your audience.
 - **Remember:** Too many images will make your presentation slow to load, so use images wisely.
- Use contrast.
 - Use light text on a dark background or dark text on a light background to make your text stand out.
 - **Remember:** Our eyes are drawn to bright objects, so light text on a dark background will be easiest for your audience to see.
- Be consistent with transition and animation effects.
 - If you use effects to transition between slides, use the same one every time.
 - **Remember:** Too much movement on your slides will distract your audience from the point you are trying to make.
- Cite your sources.
 - Use in-text (parenthetical) citations on your slides when necessary.
 - Include a ‘References’ slide at the end of your presentation.
 - **Remember:** Plagiarism can occur in oral presentations and plagiarism damages your credibility as a speaker.
- Be prepared.
 - Practice your presentation. Use the space and technology where you will give your final presentation whenever possible.
 - Bring a hard copy of your slides to your presentation.

