

The Short & The Sweet: Presentations for Conferences

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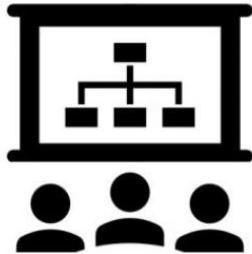


2019 Annoying PowerPoint Survey

PowerPoint presentations are the de facto method of communicating

78%

See 2 or more PowerPoint presentations each week



"We've forgotten how to communicate any other way."

Reading a "brain dump" report from the screen is not an effective presentation

Top annoyances

1. Reading the slides
2. Tiny text
3. Full sentences



"Too many words, too much data on a single slide, no clear take home message of a slide, no clear message of the presentation, lack of consideration for the audience."

Information overload continues to be a big issue

Top words:

*boring
long
much
information
many*



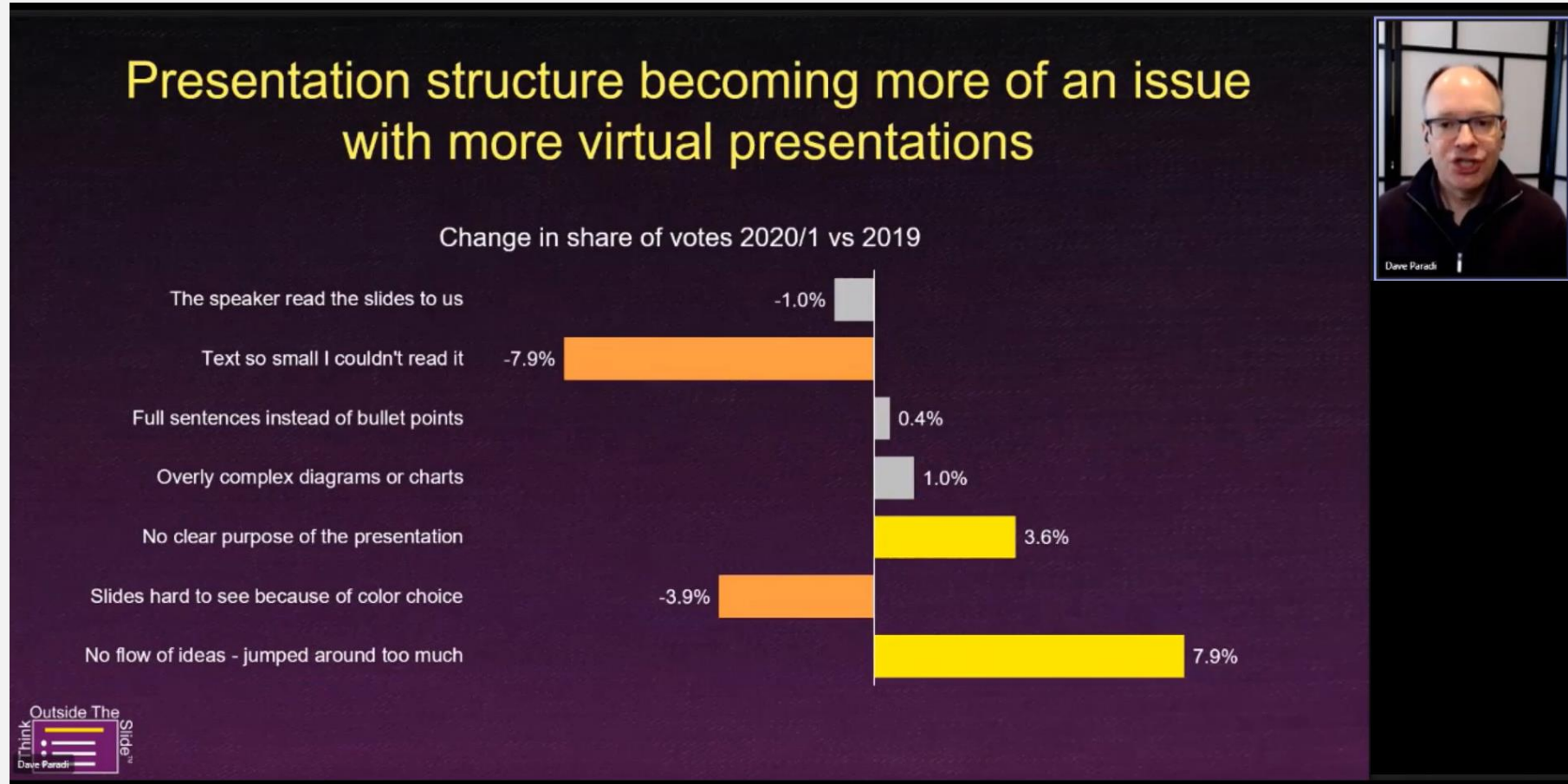
"Presentations look like a Word or Excel file instead of PowerPoint slides."



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236 respondents
Dave Paradi from [Think Outside The Slide](#)

2019 Annoying PowerPoint Survey



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Why should I care about presentation design?

Slides play a crucial role in **capturing** and **retaining** audience's attention

A thoughtful design can **amplify** message and **reinforce** key points



audience



presenter



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Why should I care about presentation design?

The slides are also a visual support to help the audience follow what you are saying. It is not here to replace you. You want them to listen to you, not read your slides. Because putting too much text into one slide can leave your audience overwhelmed by details and they will spend time reading what you have written on your slide, not listening to you speak. At that point, why present at a conference when you can just have them read your manuscript?



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Why should I care about presentation design?

Create a slides that **holds** their interest and **fully engages** them



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[The Shortening Human Attention Span](#)

Where do I start?



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Know your audience

Different styles work for different audiences

Ask yourself:

- Is it formal and addressing serious themes?
- Is there room to be lighthearted and punchy?
- Is the conference's logo and design scheme packed with color, or is it more subdued?

Gives you a sense of:



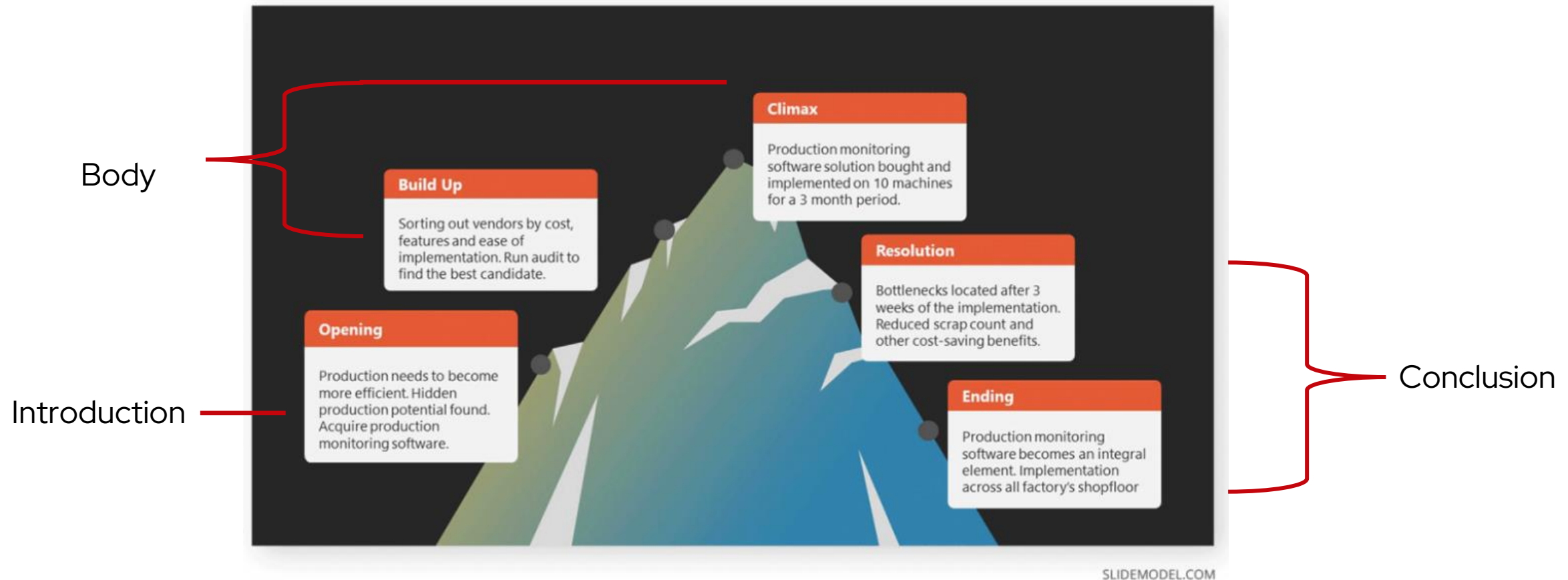
Audience style



Conference Style

The Power of Storytelling

The best presenters are also great storytellers



Organization

Introduction

Body

Conclusion

Goals:

- Peak audience interest
- Introduce yourself and your topic
- Identify your main theme or argument
- Lay out your outline (written or verbally)

"Today, I'll discuss the key elements of a successful conference presentation, including effective structure, engaging visuals, and impactful delivery."

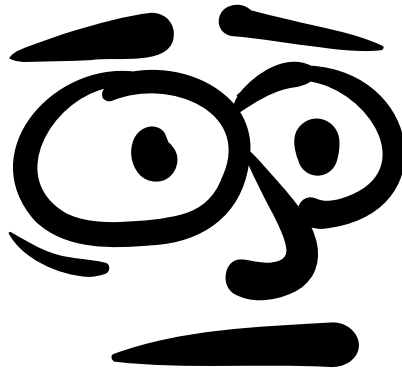
Make a **memorable first impression**

Create a Memorable First Impression

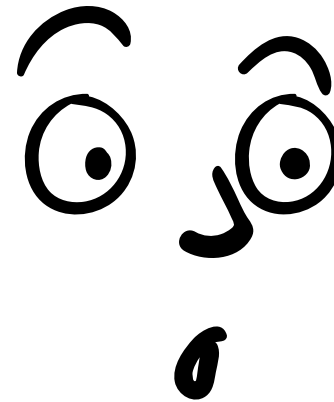
Appeal to and invoke audience emotions



Amusement



Fear



Surprise



Curiosity

How do we do that?

Create a Memorable First Impression

Open with:

1. Introduction
 - a. *Link-back memory formula*
 - b. *Test the stereotype formula*
2. Hook
 - a. *Provocative statement*
 - b. *Ask a rhetorical, thought-provoking question*
 - c. *Use a bold number, statistic*
3. Captivating Visual
4. Ask a "What if"
5. Use the word "Imagine"
6. Leverage the curiosity gap
7. State facts
8. Facts vs. Myths

Organization

Introduction

Body

Conclusion

Goal:

- Develop your main ideas/arguments using supporting ideas/evidence
- Don't make it too dense

Remember, the audience is listening, not reading!

Organization

Introduction

Body

Conclusion

Prioritize key information

- Identify your core message
 - What information you want your audience to take away
- Eliminate anything not supporting your core message
 - Anything not immediately relevant
 - Anything remotely redundant

Organization

Introduction

Body

Conclusion

Techniques to help the audience follow you:

- Number your ideas
 - *"There are three main factors...."*
- Arrange in logical order
 - Chronological, cause and effect, problem-solution
- Repeat important ideas using different words
- Use oral transitional statements
 - *"Secondly..., " "Another important point..., " "On the other hand..., " etc.*

Organization

Introduction

Body

Conclusion

Goals:

- Sum up main points
- Reinforce the central idea
- Signal a powerful ending



Obama out.

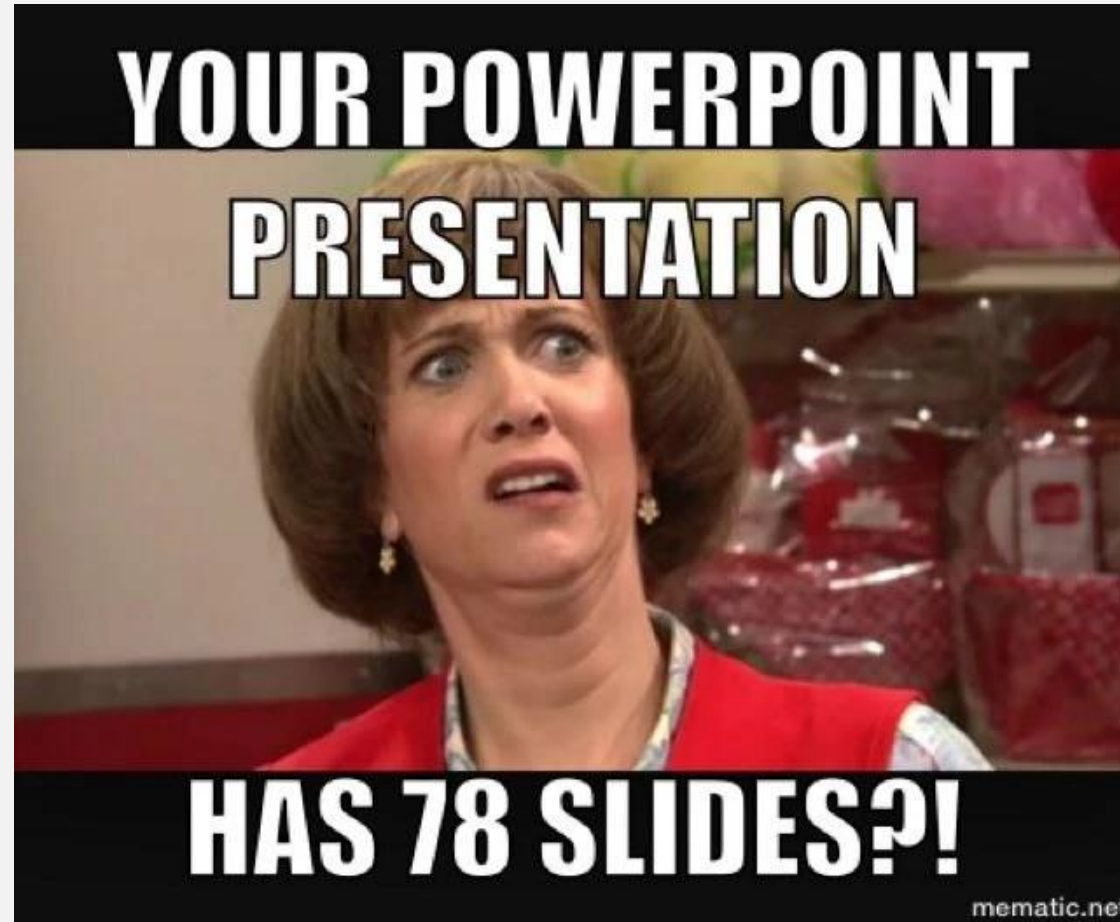
Create a Powerful Closing Slide

- Summarize your key points
- Offer a memorable takeaway
- Invite the audience to take action
- Use visuals that resonate and leave a lasting impression



Obama out.

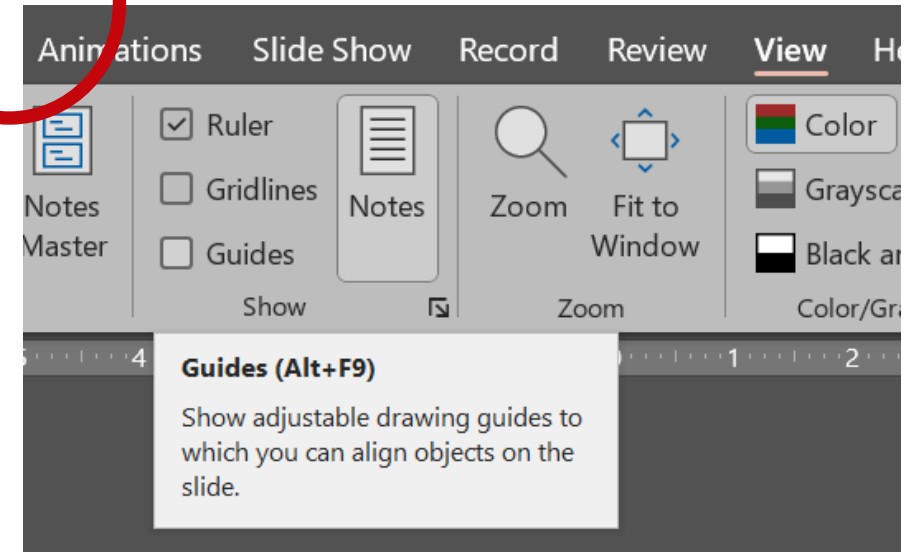
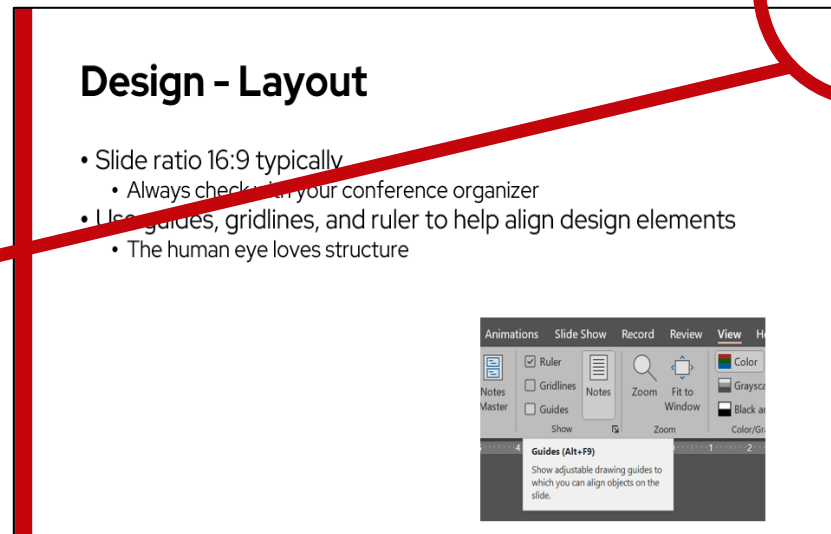
Now what?



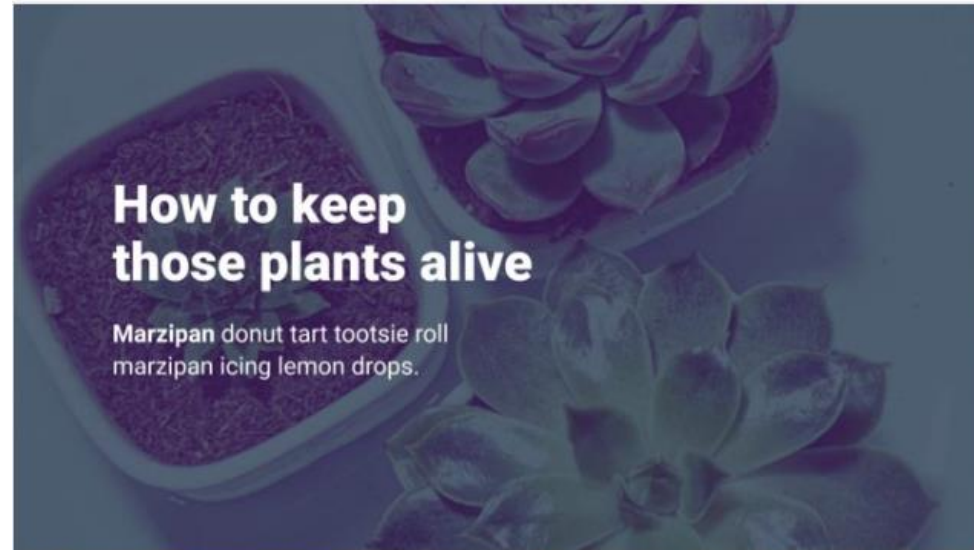
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Design - Layout

- Slide ratio 16:9 typically
 - Always check with your conference organizer
- Use guides, gridlines, and ruler to help align design elements
 - The human eye loves structure

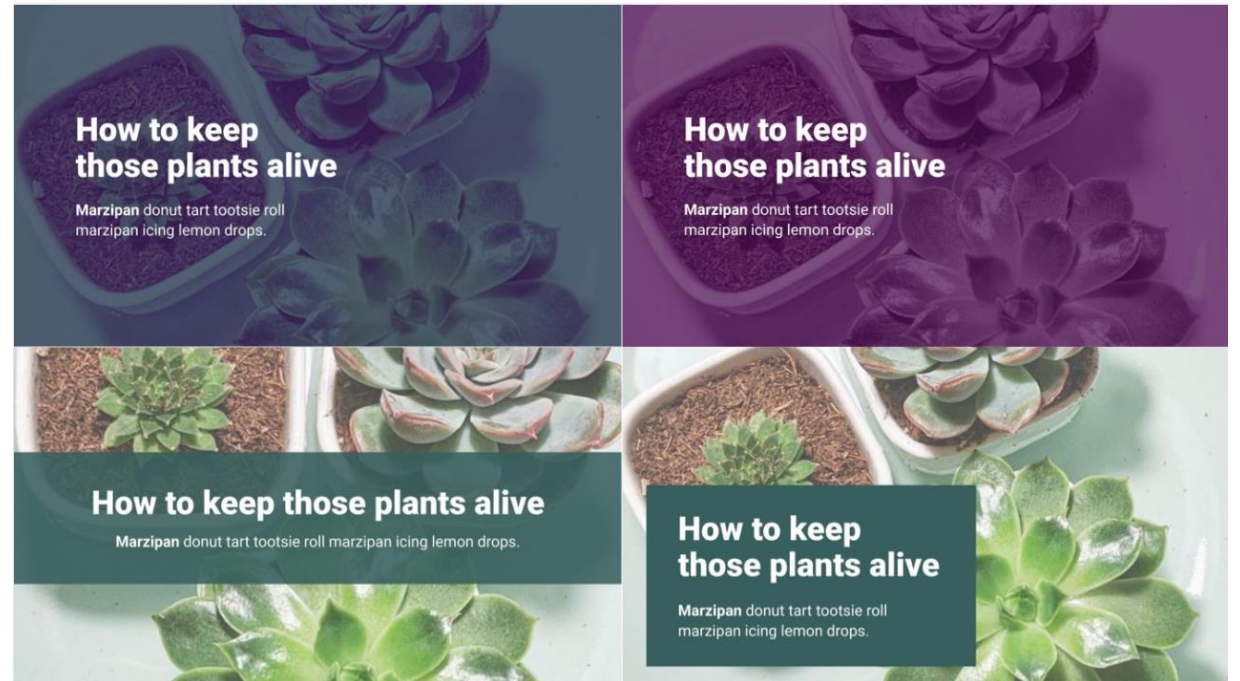


Design – Background



Design – Color scheme

Two contrasting colors: consistency
Do not put red on green (accessibility)
Think about color associations



Design – Show, don't tell

- 90% of all information transmitted to the human brain is visual
- Incorporate striking visuals into every slide
- Accompany stats and facts with a relevant illustration to reinforce the meaning.
- Keep text minimal



Smiley elephant seal. Peninsula Valdes, Chubut Province, Argentina. Provided By ©Gabriel Rojo, Handout Via Nikon Comedy Wildlife Awards

Design – One Theme Per Slide

- Balancing information is key
- Narrow each slides focus, make it count
- Slide will visually express the theme
- If the theme feels too big, try to break it into 2 elements

Design – Embrace Negative Space

Less is more

Design – Use Visual Hierarchy for Emphasis

Highlight key points with:

- Larger fonts
- Bold colors
- Strategic placement



Design – Embrace the Power of Images

There is a strong image for every topic



The Kangaroo Sanctuary

Design – Embrace the Power of Images

There is a strong image for every topic

- Always scale your image



this not that



- Choose high quality images
- Follow copyright laws

Design – Embrace the Power of Images

Ensure accessibility

Imagine some audience members may be visually impaired

- Describe the image
- Pick color-blind friendly options

And diversity

Select for a diversity in ethnicities, race, religion, body types, abilities, etc.



OCTOBER 16, 2024

Inclusive Images

KEY POINTS

Choosing what images to use when building your health communication material can be tricky. CDC recommends selecting images that show diverse representation and beauty standards, and positive health behaviors. Avoid selecting images that depict negative stereotypes.

Design – Concision

The paper said:

“While previous studies have shown a high prevalence of DV, with increased risks in cancer patients, there remains a dearth of understanding concerning the interplay within the context of chemotherapy, metastatic cancer, and trauma, highlighting the need for additional research to inform the development and implementation of more targeted social service programs. We aim to bridge this knowledge gap to understand how these specific health conditions might influence vulnerability to physical abuse, thereby addressing a significant gap in the existing literature.”

But the slide says:

“Chemotherapy, metastatic cancer, and trauma: What are the connections?”

Then just chat about the knowledge gap!

Design – Font Size Matters

Use a font hierarchy and ratio

- Built in PowerPoint templates

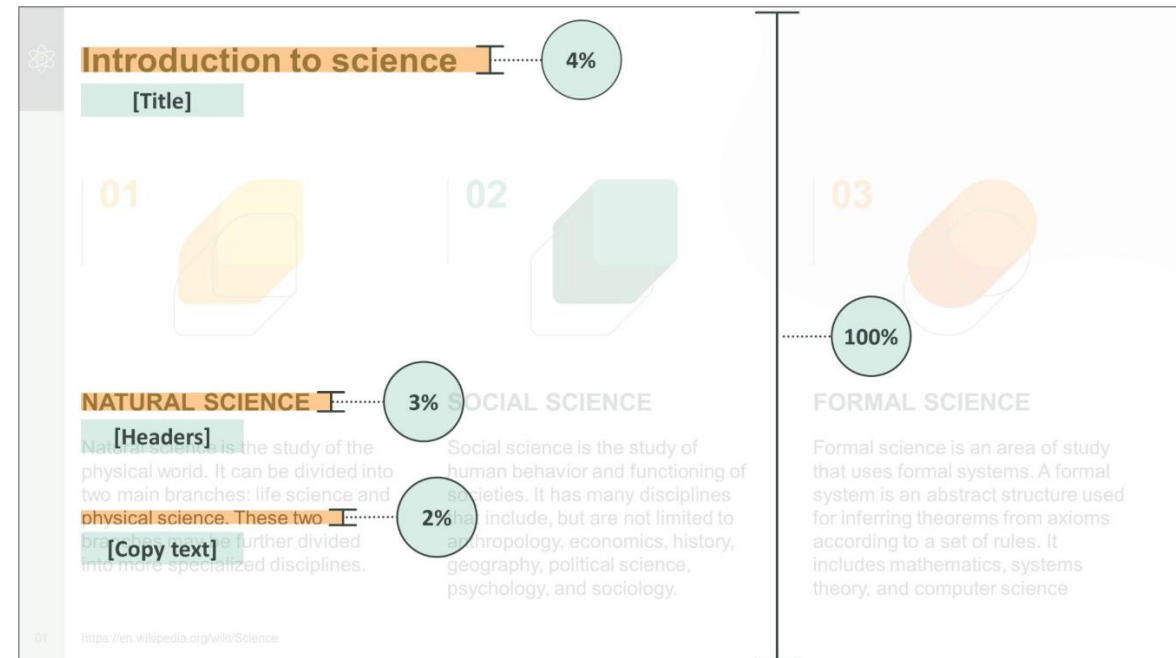
Title: 34-50px

Body: ~28px

Think about scale

- Big venues = bigger font

Tip: Consider the height of each line of text in proportion to the total height of the slide



Design – No moving fonts (Animation vs Effectiveness)

Moving fonts make words hard to read.

Some font effects can be useful, however.

(Keeps from cluttering or overwhelming.)

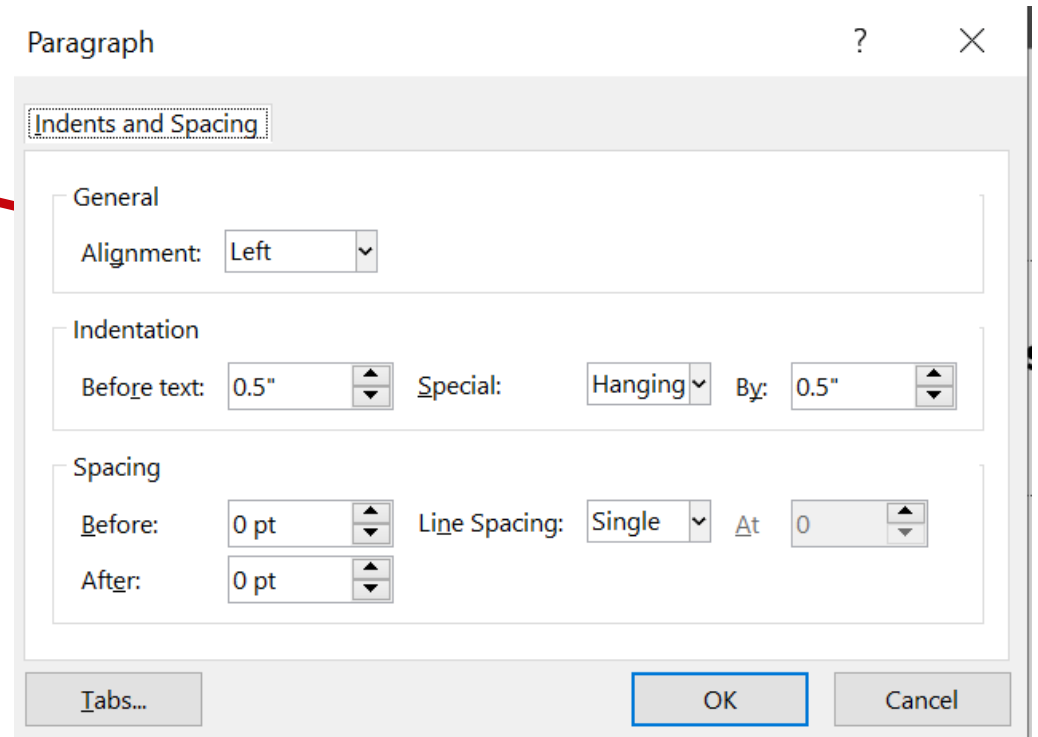
Do not overdo effects.

Design – Font Type Matters

- AVOID ALL CAPS
- **If everything is bold, nothing is emphasized anymore**
- Avoid thin fonts and *scrips*
- Only use left justification
- Use contrasting colors

Can you read this?

Can you read this?



Design – Bullet Points

How do you best present “bullet points”?

- Presents a hierarchy of information (most important first)
- Can play them one by one
- And gray them out for ease of reading (optional)
- Great for key takeaways
- Optionally called “Peace dots” (nonviolent language)

Design – Too many acronyms

“The **MCHS MTROC** authorized data usage. The **TQP-PUF DUA** adheres to the data protection guidelines of **HIPAA** and the **ACS-TQIP** Hospital Participation Agreement (**HPA**). Access to **TQP-PUF** data requires adherence to the **DUA** terms. The **MCHS IRB** evaluated our study and determined it was not human subjects research.”

Better:

- Our data set was developed by the American College of Surgeons
- Marshfield Clinic authorized our use of the data
- IRB evaluation found us exempt

Design – Too many graphs

One complex graph is okay: dig into content.

Two simple graphs are okay: compare

Three or more graphs per slide are too many.

Design – Videos

Just don't.



- Test audio before talk
- Audio will unlikely work if presenting remotely
 - Conference tools only route microphone
 - Zoom you must give permission to share computer audio
- Bandwidth may cause super poor video quality

Extra



Any Questions?

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Thank you



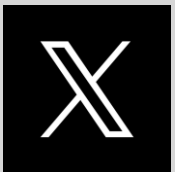
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