

PowerPoint Tips

Fonts

- Select sans-serif fonts such as Arial or Helvetica. Avoid serif fonts (serif fonts – like the ones you are reading in this manual, have additional lines or tails at the tips of letters or symbols) such as Times New Roman or Palatino as they are sometimes more difficult to read. Note: use sans-serif fonts for material that is projected; use serif for hard copies.
- Do not use font size smaller than 24 point. Titles should be 40+.
- Use a single sans-serif font for most of the presentation. Use different colors, sizes & styles (bold, underline) for impact.
- Avoid italicized fonts as they are difficult to read quickly.
- Be consistent with font style throughout your presentation.
- For bullet points, use the 6 x 6 Rule. One thought per line with no more than 6 words per line & no more than 6 lines per slide
- Use dark text on light background or light text on dark background.
- Do not use all caps except for titles.

To test the font, stand back six feet from the monitor & see if you can read the slide.

Graphics & Design

- Keep the background consistent & subtle.
- Use only enough text when using charts or graphs to explain. Clearly label the graphic.
- Keep the design clean & uncluttered. Leave empty space around the text & graphics
- Use quality clipart & use it sparingly. The graphic should relate to & enhance the topic of the slide. Try to use the same style graphics throughout the presentation (e.g. cartoon, photographs)
- Limit the number of graphics on each slide.
- Check all graphics on a projection screen before the actual presentation.
- Avoid flashy graphics & noisy animation effects unless they relate directly to the slide.
- Limit the number of transitions used. It is often better to use only one so the audience knows what to expect.

Color

- Limit the number of colors on a single screen.
- Bright colors make small objects & thin lines stand out.
- Use no more than four colors on one chart.

General Presentation

- Check the spelling & grammar.
- Do not read the presentation.
- Give a brief overview at the start. Then present the information. Finally review important points.
- It is often more effective to have bulleted points appear one at a time so the audience listens to the presenter rather than reading the screen.
- Do not turn your back on the audience. Try to position the monitor so you can speak from it.

More tips for media use in medical education in the appendix.