Effective Presentations

Source: Effective Presentations by Erin B. Lindsay
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- Graphs, Diagrams, and Tables
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- Colors
- Font Basics
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Preparation

- Plan your presentation carefully around the basic "take-home" message

- What is the purpose of your presentation?
  - Is the purpose to motivate?
  - Is the purpose to persuade?
  - Is the purpose to simply convey information?

- Know your audience

  - Who is your audience?
    - Are the members of your audience your peers?
    - Are they students?
    - Are they your superiors?

  - What is their level of expertise?
    - Are the members of your audience familiar with the topic?
    - Are they familiar with the jargon, but not the details?
    - Is this the first time they’ve even heard of this subject matter?

  - What does the audience expect to get out of your presentation?
    - Does the audience expect a general overview?
    - Does they expect to learn the intricate details of an elaborate subject matter?

- Practice your presentation

  - Practice often, both alone and in front of people.
  - Remember that you are teaching, not impressing people with your knowledge.
  - Watch the use of jargon or highly technical terms.

- Speak comfortably and clearly

  - Speak a bit more slowly than your normal pace.

- Talk to your audience, don’t read to them

  - You can best keep the audience interest by explaining the content using related wording to what is depicted.

- Enjoy your presentation

  - If you enjoy the presentation, your audience will enjoy it.
  - If your audience enjoys the presentation, they will better remember the message.
Effective Slides

- **Include only necessary information**
  - Chose your "bullet" points carefully.
    - With each "bullet" point ask yourself:
      - *Is this an important point?*
      - *Is this really something that needs to be highlighted?*

- **Slide contents should be self evident**
  - Your slides/overheads should highlight important points.
  - Do not duplicate your entire presentation.

- **Avoid "mega data" slides**
  - If you put too much on a slide, you will lose your audience.
  - Use numbers with only a few significant digits, round up if necessary.

- **Seven words per line, seven lines per slide**

Graphics

- **Present information graphically**
  - Is there a graphical way to present the information?
  - If presented graphically, the audience will be more likely to understand information in the short period of time that it is on the screen.

- **Clip art or scanned art can be useful in illustrating a point**
  - Do not use art for the sake of art.
  - Art should serve a direct purpose or function.

- **Graphic devises are helpful in separating elements or directing attention**
  - Borders, boxes, shadows, lines, arrows, symbols, and blank spaces are helpful in separating elements or directing attention.

- **Graphics need to be fairly big and bold to stand out and to be seen**
  - Thin lines and small graphics may be more distracting than helpful.