

Choosing The Right Colors For Your Next Presentation

based on the work of Margo Halverson,
Alliant Solutions

Color that will make your information stand up and be noticed, color that will shout out your message, color that will hit your audience over the head and grab their attention, whether they like it or not.

KEEP YOUR COLOR CHOICES SIMPLE

You're working on an important slide presentation. You've followed all the steps on your PowerPoint template. You've organized your information, created headlines and positioned your charts and graphs. All the elements seem to be in order, but the slides are lackluster. No, dull. Even you are bored with them. What will your audience think? You decide your slides need color, lots of bold, bright color - color that will make your information stand up and be noticed, color that will shout out your message, color that will hit your audience over the head and grab their attention, whether they like it or not. You add red, green, some blocks of blue. And, finally you add orange. You've always liked orange. By the time you're done, your slide presentation looks like a circus. Instead of enlivening your slides and emphasizing your message, you have ended up with a muddled mess.

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The solution is as simple as turning your head and looking out the window.

THE ERROR OF USING COLOR

Most people -- or at least those of us without an art background -- don't understand that the colors they choose are not as important as the relationships they create. Some colors work together; others fight against each other. Establishing sound relationship is key. Color is never viewed in isolation but is always judged within its environment. It is influenced by its neighboring colors. For example, place a bright yellow ball in a child's nursery, and it will fit right in. Place that same ball in a boardroom, and it will stick out like -- well, a bright yellow ball in a boardroom. So how are you supposed to know what colors work well together? How do you select colors that will get your message across with the appropriate tone and style? And how do you create these successful relationships? The solution is as simple as turning your head and looking out the window.

When you think of creating a color palette for your presentation, think of nature's palette. (OK, if you're working in a high-rise, you may have to use your imagination here instead of looking out your window.) Think of a summer coastal scene -- how the crisp blue-green of the ocean cedes to the rich stands of deep green fir trees that smack vivid against a cornflower-blue sky. Imagine a field in early winter -- the dull yellows and golds, the muted greens and the flat, somber sky. These colors all work together in harmony and look pleasing together. There is nothing showy or "shouting" about them -- and yet, they evoke a feeling and create a mood. There is a sense of balance and order. They work together. That should be your goal when making your color choices. Selecting color should never be arbitrary or merely subjective. "I like it" is not sufficient criteria for creating a palette; neither is "these are my favorite colors." You need a plan.

BEING INTENTIONAL IN CHOOSING COLOR

Where do you start? The first thing you need to decide is the feel you want for your presentation. Color has thermal qualities of warm and cool. Colors close to red-oranges are warm (think of "red hot"); colors close to blue-greens are cool (think of "icy blue"). Begin by selecting either a warm or cool hue. Choose only one or two vivid hues. Then, if you want to expand your palette and create visual variety, use a broader range of those colors. You do this through the use of tints and shades.

A tint is a hue mixed with white, and a shade is a hue mixed with black. For example, pink is a tint of red and brown is a shade of orange. By experimenting with tints and shades, you can create palettes that range from direct and playful to serious and somber. You can create a mood or feeling that will get your message across in the appropriate tone. Plus, you open up the color options before you, rather than painting yourself into a corner of clashing colors. The best rule to follow when selecting color is "Keep it simple." With color choice, more is not better. It is the color relationships you create that will make or break your presentation. Remember, choose only one or two vivid hues and use their tints and shades to broaden your palette. This will keep your slides clear and attractive. Follow these simple rules, and your presentation will be a color success.

Simple Tips For Effective Handouts

based on the work of Marjorie Brody,
Brody Communications

When the presentation or training session ends, does the learning also have to end? Absolutely not. Yet often, that can and does happen – even when we know that the most powerful professional learning inspires continued learning.

It is critical that presenters use materials that spur participants to take them home AND to continue the learning. The right materials not only help participants remember the speaker and his or her message, but more importantly, they aid the participants in continuing their learning. Studies show that people typically remember only 10% of what they hear during the average presentation. An effective handout can significantly increase this.

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WHAT TYPES OF MATERIALS SHOULD BE USED?

A. HANDOUTS (OR WORKBOOKS)

Using handouts that allow the audience members to take notes during the presentation is a great way for them to capture key ideas. When participants take notes in their own words, the notes are more meaningful. Handouts need to be visually interesting, but also have lots of white space for note taking.

There are five steps to follow for improving your handouts:

1. The handout should reflect the goal -- customize handouts to reflect what you are trying to accomplish.
2. Avoid an information glut -- avoid the temptation to overload audience members with information simply because it is possible. As with the presentation itself, the handout should not include any "data dumps." Delete any material that does not directly support the message.
3. Use graphics whenever possible -- any time you can put a graphic in a handout versus text, do it. People will study a chart or diagram to learn information but may skip a detailed explanation of the same data.
4. Don't be afraid of white space -- wide margins and lots of room for taking notes is advisable. A good guideline to follow is to fill no more than 2/3 of the page with words or graphics.
5. Make sure the handout looks good -- the appearance of your handout is vital. When people pick up the paper, the handout should feel good (paper quality) and look good (printing or copying quality). A handout cannot salvage a horrible presentation, but a well- designed and well-planned handout can make the difference between a good presentation and a great one.

B. LAMINATED BOOK MARKS OR WALLET CARDS (ALSO FOR USE IN DAY TIMERS)

Book marks or cards can have key ideas from the program and will serve as a "gentle" and handy reminder for participants. Be sure to include your name, phone number and other contact information on the card.

C. SMALL GIFTS OR TRINKETS THAT ARE SOMEHOW A REMINDER OF THE TOPIC.

Giving away a ruler, for example, can remind one of personal growth. A packet of seeds can be used to convey the thought of seeds for success. A small candle can remind participants of their own star power so they will let their light shine. Be careful, however, you don't want to go overboard with this sort of reminder. Any small gifts that you distribute should have your contact information listed -- name, phone numbers, address, email, etc.

Books, booklets, audio and videotapes, and software packages are excellent learning tools. Learning tools can be a reminder of the information shared during the presentation -- especially if you authored them!

E. NEWSLETTERS, REMINDER LETTERS AND MORE TIP SHEETS.

Consider preparing and distributing immediately following the presentation or later via mail or email, a newsletter, reminder memo, or a tip sheet. You may ask participants to create their own tip sheets and reminder memos to take home with them -- or, better still, mail them to participants three to four weeks following the presentation!

How to Convince the Audience You Really Do Know What You Are Talking About

There are a few people out there who really enjoy getting out in front of large crowds. They feel comfortable looking out over a sea of bobbing heads, visualizing an agreeing nod from everyone. They begin to speak and there is no crackling in their voice. They have the power to communicate orally and they take command. Sound like you? If not, don't worry. Most of us mortals have a hard time speaking to groups of friends, let alone an audience of unknown quantity. Preparation has proven to be the best remedy for this fear of speaking.

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Tips for Preparing Oral Presentations

PLANNING

1. **Focus:** When you plan your presentation, concentrate on what's really important. What is the exact problem? What are the major solutions?
2. **Simplify:** Support your main idea with just a few examples, highlighting at most three points.
3. **Organize:** You may choose to structure your presentation from the following outline.
 - State the main issue
 - Develop your viewpoint with specifics
 - End with a clear summary
 - Handle any questions
 - Make a last statement or request
4. **Dramatize:** Don't just tell it, show it. Find a vivid, memorable way to get your point across. Use visual aids:
 - Graphs
 - Handouts
 - Charts
 - Media
5. **Humanize:** People are more important than things.

VISUAL AIDS

Visual aids augment your spoken message in different ways. Pictures, drawings, and photographs have the potential to make an audience feel the way you do. Verbal material, including cutaways, models, diagrams, and copies of statistics help your audience think the way you do. *See the document: Simple Tips For Effective Handouts*

PREPARE FOR QUESTIONS

Anticipate questions and be prepared to respond to them – not just with more information but with real and relevant examples. As you repeat a presentation and as you become more familiar with different audiences, this should become easier for you to do.

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

Do your homework ahead of time and know your audience – their needs and their expectations. Tailor your presentation – content, style, and presentation method to respond to audience needs and expectations. A presentation for school administrators may look, sound, and feel very different from a presentation on basically the same content but delivered to classroom teachers. Again, anticipate different questions from these two groups as well. Be prepared to share stories and examples that will resonate with your different audiences.

Conducting a Mid-Session Evaluation

Never assume that everything is going well. Verify your assumptions by conducting a mid-session evaluation. Three possible ways to do this:

REALITY CHECK

Ask the group to respond (orally, in writing, by placing dots on a chart...) to simple questions:

- Has the session been helpful to you so far?
- Is the session moving too slowly?
- Is the trainer moving too quickly?
- Is anything unclear?

FLIP CHART FEEDBACK

Capture feedback by using a series of charts or pages from a chart. Provide participants with Post-It Notes and ask them to respond during a five minute window prior to a scheduled break by completing sentences such as:

- I wish you would stop...
- I hope you continue...
- I don't understand...
- During the second half of this session, please...

OBSERVATION

Be attuned to the audience. Watch body language and monitor participation level. If you sense the session is missing the intended mark, quickly steer things back on course.

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Winning the Audience Over Right From the Start

based on the work of Patti Hathaway, *The Change Agent*

How do you "grab" the audience from the start of the presentation? Is there a sure-fire way to relax your nerves and connect with the audience at the same time? How do you ensure that the audience is tuned in and turned on to what you are sharing? Openings are the toughest part of a presentation for most presenters. The research tells us that a presenter has only about 30 seconds to make a good first impression. Think about typical openings you have heard presenters give: jokes, thanks for inviting me, I'm glad to be here, housekeeping items, name dropping, etc. Most of us don't tune in at all until the presenter starts the "real" content, do we? Yet, many presenters start talking immediately after the applause ends to cover up their own anxiety and to project confidence. Consider this... Open by nonverbally noticing and receiving your audience for at least five seconds. Why? Because speaking is an act in which you give and receive. Most presenters tend to give, give, give or push, push, push more information at you. Take a deep breath and center yourself. Allow room for give and take.

OPEN WITH A PERSONAL STORY THAT REFLECTS YOUR HUMANNESS

The opening line is the most critical line which should connect the presenter to the audience. Opening with silence followed by a sentence that grabs the audience's attention compels people to listen immediately. Tell your story only to individuals, keeping soft eye contact with each participant for 5 - 10 seconds, before moving on. Avoid sweeping eye contact with the entire audience, yet look at no one in particular. Individual eye contact lessens the fear factor with larger audiences. You are merely having a conversation with individuals who happen to be in a group. Speak in short sentences and pause frequently to really connect with individuals. Use humor based on your own experiences and limitations as a human being. In this era of political correctness, jokes can get you in trouble. Personal stories endear you.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Think about your presentations. What is your message? Tell your organization's OWN stories and anecdotes to coincide with your main points or content. Consider the following and how you might adapt them to your subject matter. Incorporate your answers into your presentation in order to build more meaning, great rapport, and genuine connection with the audience.

- Who was the most influential _____ in your life?
- What's the most poignant real life story you've heard about your organization?
- What was a significant benefit you personally received from _____?
- Name two _____ from your organization who have impacted _____ for the better?
- What is your organization's basic philosophy and mission?
- What are the top three concerns people share with the changes in _____?

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Twelve Tips for Training Transfer

How do you turn participants into learning magnets who simply cannot wait until the next training opportunity? Pay attention to the common complaints of participants (not enough time; waste of time; too much information) and learn!

1. The trainer makes the difference. Typically participants relate more favorably to trainers who have experience in their area. Additionally, participants appreciate trainers who respond to the issues and situations highlighted in the training. Finally, participants want the training linked to real life experiences.
2. Present training as part of a consistent message from the organization. Instruction needs to build – one session upon the other with content from previous sessions reinforced in the current session. Training should reference previous sessions, reinforce content, and draw parallels.
3. Management should learn alongside staff. When management and staff learn together, the likelihood that ideas will be implemented is greatly increased.
4. Provide training in chunks. Schedule training over time with information presented in chunks – small amounts of content with well-defined objectives.
5. Train skills and information that are immediately applicable on the job. Remember the “use it or lost it” mantra. Set up situations where participants engage in immediate practice.
6. The training should set a positive, productive tone and the later application of learning.
7. During the training session, practice active learning principles. Incorporate activities into the session to allow participants to actively engage with the content and with each other.
8. Provide reference materials and job aids for review after the session. Participants welcome ideas, tips, rules, and other materials that facilitate the learning and make application easier.
9. Discuss how to address real life scenarios and barriers. Equip participants to apply the learning in their real world situations.
10. Engage participants in tasks that require actions. Provide easy ways for participants to take notes. Make action planning ongoing and encourage people to highlight, circle, underline, or engage in any activities that will facilitate their being able to apply the learning later.
11. Honor a variety of learning styles. Plan a range of activities that will appeal to participants’ varied learning styles.
12. Assign or have participants self select a training partner. Encourage networking and accountability for application as well as provide ongoing learning support.

Adding Humor to Your Presentation

Humor can turn awkward situations into enjoyable experiences. Laughter eases the tension of a difficult situation.

START ON A FUNNY FOOT

Establish the atmosphere right from the start. Every session should start off on a high to set the stage for the rest of the session. Be positive and add appropriate humor to:

- Relieve nervousness participants may feel
- Establish the environment for the remainder of the session
- Get participants' attention
- Model that although the session is serious, there is a place for fun

DEFUSE UNEXPECTED SITUATIONS

Use humor to defuse unexpected situations. Humor can turn awkward situations into enjoyable experiences. Laughter eases the tension of a difficult situation.

GET PARTICIPANTS IN ON THE ACT

Incorporate games, ice breakers, end energizers that will get participants in on the act.

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Are Your Sessions Geared to the Needs of the Participants



REMEMBER:

The key to tailoring sessions to participants' needs lies in knowing and understanding those needs including the learning styles of the participants.

THINK:

Explain the concepts in words (*auditory learners*), show it on overheads or through other graphics (*visual learners*), and practice it with games, role plays, or other activities (*kinesthetic learners*).

VISUAL LEARNERS

- Pictures or Illustrations that represent key points
- Graphic illustrations that diagram what is being communicated
- Tables or Charts to present a sequential picture
- Videotapes or clips to clarify concepts
- Mind Maps to illustrate relationships
- Flash Cards to stimulate recall of key phrases
- Color coding or Highlighting to reinforce concepts

AUDITORY LEARNERS

- Storytelling to illustrate key points
- Small group discussions to deepen understanding
- Audiotapes to facilitate retention
- Mnemonics to aid retention and recall

KINESTHETIC LEARNERS

- Role playing to reinforce learning
- Practice to provide opportunities for hands-on learning
- Site visits to provide opportunities for demonstrations
- Games to reinforce the content presented

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Creating a Lesson Plan for Training

Use this worksheet to plan each 15-minute training segment.

Use lesson plans to structure your training logistically.

For a long session, organize groups of 15-minute plans into modules or two-hour time blocks.

SESSION TITLE:

PURPOSE OF THE SESSION:

MATERIALS:

Trainer

Participants

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES:

CONTENT OUTLINE

I.

A.

B.

II.

A.

B.

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Icebreakers! The How, When & Why of Using!

Icebreakers should be quick, interactive activities presented a few minutes at the start of the session to create energy within the group.

ICEBREAKERS SERVE THREE KEY PURPOSES FOR A PRESENTER:

First, icebreakers can be effective tools used to introduce participants to each other. Learning is a social activity that often puts the learner in an exposed position. Sometimes talking about personal issues is hard enough—talking about them in front of a group of total strangers is even harder. Icebreakers allow participants to find out a little about one another and to do so in a fun way and, therefore, make the experience and the learning a little less stressful. Icebreakers also encourage participants to bond and engage in collaboration.

Secondly, icebreakers energize the group. Icebreakers should be quick, interactive activities presented a few minutes at the start of the session to create energy within the group. They move participants from a passive, apprehensive state of mind into a positive, active one. The hardest part of many training sessions is overcoming the participants' initial inertia. Icebreakers get the group moving, thus allowing the presenter to engage them throughout the session. Icebreakers can also provide some direction for the session. Many icebreakers can be used to help participants focus upon and verbalize their goals for the session. A good facilitator will pay attention to the statements and try to steer the learning points around the participants' stated outcomes.

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Potential Issues When Using Icebreakers

As you would expect no one icebreaker is effective (or appropriate) for every setting and every participant. Some of the factors to be considered when selecting an icebreaker include:

PARTICIPANT NEEDS

The presenter should gauge the needs of the participants. Some icebreakers will work better with specific types of training events. Choose icebreakers that naturally or readily segue into the training to follow. When covering sensitive subjects such as assertiveness or stress management, it might not be appropriate to start with a wild, active icebreaker. Also keep in mind the likely audience response to the icebreaker. There are a number of factors which impact the effectiveness and appropriateness of an icebreaker such as participant age, attitude, dress, etc.

GROUP SIZE

Large groups need more energetic icebreakers and, typically, more space. If you are asking the participants to speak out in front of a lot of people, asking them to disclose large amounts of personal detail is stressful, time consuming, and not very interesting for the other participants. Conversely asking three people to do an active, energetic ice-breaker is potentially embarrassing and inappropriate.

PHYSICAL LIMITATIONS OF GROUP

There are some excellent energizers and icebreakers that involve a certain amount of movement such as making human pyramids, human caterpillars, races across the tops of chairs, etc. Not everyone is capable of doing such activities, so it is important to make sure that you gauge the ability of the group beforehand.

VENUE

If you are running an ice-breaker in a lecture theatre, getting people to move about or stand in a circle could be difficult and potentially dangerous.

OWN CONGRUENCE

Ice-Breakers and energizers are all about getting the learners into a posture and attitude conducive to learning. It is therefore essential that the facilitator's body language and communication skills are positive and encouraging.

11 Tips for Using Flip Charts More Effectively

based on the work of Lenny Laskowski,
Alliant Solutions, Inc.

While everyone seems to be interested in creating high-tech computer generated presentations, the flip chart still continues to be the most effective presentation media of all and is one that should not be overlooked. Too often the false assumption is made that investing a lot of money in high tech visual aids & equipment will "make" the presentation. The best visuals have been and still are the simplest. Give thought to the purpose for using visuals. The purpose of using visual aids should be to enhance the presentation, not upstage it. Since most presentations are delivered before small groups of less than 50 participants, the flip chart is the perfect size.

ADVANTAGES OF USING FLIP CHARTS

1. Flip charts do not need electricity - You don't need to worry if the bulb will burn out or worry that you forgot the extension chord.
2. Flip charts are economical - They do not require you to use any special films or printers to produce them.
3. Color can be added very easily - An inexpensive box of flip chart markers allows you all the creativity you want.
4. Flip charts support spontaneity - Any last minute changes can be easily made.

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In today's world of high tech computers, fancy software and sophisticated infomercials, many presenters today feel they have to create a presentation which shows off their ability to use computers and their latest clip art library. Although the software available today does allow everyone the ability to create colorful slides and overheads, too often we find that the visuals become the presentation and the focus is taken away from the speaker. The visual aids should not be the presentation.

TIPS FOR USING FLIP CHARTS

1. The best flip chart stands have clamps at the top and will hold most types of flip chart pads. Most allow you to hang your flip charts while some stands will only allow you to prop them up. Don't wait until the last minute to find this out.
2. Make sure the flip charts you use will fit the flip chart stand you will be using. Some have different spaced holes at the top.
3. Flip chart pads are usually sold in packages of two and come either plain or come with grid lines on them. Using the pad with grid lines makes your job easier for drawing straight lines and keeps your text aligned. Also, make sure the pad has perforations at the top to allow easier removal of sheets.
4. When preparing your charts, it is best to first design your charts on scrap paper before drawing them on the actual flip chart pad.
5. Lightly write your text in pencil first then trace using the actual flip chart markers. This will allow you to make any adjustments with text spacing and any figures you will be drawing. DO NOT use all block letters (UPPER CASE). Using upper and lower case letters eases readability. Follow the 7 x 7 rule. Have no more than 7 words on each line and no more than 7 lines to a sheet. The 6 x 6 rule is even better!
6. Use flip chart markers and not regular magic markers. Flip chart markers will not "bleed" through the paper. Also, they do not have as strong a smell as regular markers.
7. Avoid using the colors yellow, pink, or orange. These are extremely difficult for the audience to see. Avoid using too many colors. Ideally, use one dark color and one accent color.
8. You can write "lightly in pencil" any notes you need next to key points. The audience won't be able to see them. You may also make note of what is on the next sheet. Knowing this will allow you to properly introduce your next sheet.
9. If you make any mistakes, use "white out" to correct small errors. For larger areas, cover the mistake with a double layer of flip chart paper and correct the error.
10. Have a blank sheet of paper between each of your text sheets. This will prevent "peek through" of the written material from the next page.
11. Properly store and transport your flip charts in a case or the cardboard box that they come in. This will protect your flip charts and keep them fresh and ready to use each time. Take great care of your flip charts and you will be able to use them repeatedly. You may even wish to have some charts covered with clear, non-glare contact paper.

Making "prepared" flip charts can take a considerable amount of time. Make sure you start preparing your charts early enough so you can review them and make any changes or corrections before hand. It takes practice to learn how to print neatly. If you do not have neat, legible printing, consider using stencils or having someone write for you. A poorly prepared flip chart can be very distracting. *NOTE: Technology is available to increase 8 x10 documents to poster size. Consider creating your charts as WORD documents using your computer, printing, and enlarging to poster size.*

Presentation Planning Sheet

1. What is the title of your presentation? Consider: What message do you want/need to deliver?
2. What are your overall goals?
To inform ____ To persuade ____ To entertain ____ Other ____
3. Who is the audience?
4. Following the presentation, the main thing the audience should know is:
5. Following the presentation, the audience should feel the emotion(s) of:
6. Following the presentation, the audience should be prepared to take the following action(s):

MY ASSESSMENT OF THE AUDIENCE IS:

7. The audience will consist of the following people:
8. The number of people in the audience should be approximately ____ people
9. The audience needs/wants the information because:
10. The audience has the following special needs or concerns:
11. The audience's knowledge of the topic is:
high ____ low ____
mixed ____ unknown ____

SO I WILL:

- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.

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MY ASSESSMENT OF THE AUDIENCE IS:

SO I WILL:

12. The audience's willingness to accept the ideas I present is:

high ____ low ____
mixed ____ unknown ____

13. One thing I know about the audience that may help me identify with them is:

14. The audience's opinion of me as a speaker is:

high ____ low ____
mixed ____ unknown ____
doesn't matter ____

15. One thing about me that may affect the audience is:

16. An example of a style, approach or supporting argument that will not appeal to this audience is:

17. An example of a style, approach or supporting argument that will appeal to this audience is:

18. The principle decision maker in the audience will be:

- The decision maker is concerned about:
- The decision maker wants to know:

19. I want to accept questions from the audience:

anytime ____ after sections ____
at the end ____ orally ____
written ____

12.

13.

14.

15.

16.

17.

18.

19.

PowerPoint Made Perfect

RULE 1: Content is the most important part of your presentation.

THE QUALITY OF THE RESEARCH IS CRITICAL.

The topic should be thoroughly researched, with a number of different sources. Make sure visual images are appropriate to the point(s) you wish to make, and be sure that you know the specifics on each image.

ORGANIZATION AND TRANSITION MAKE OR BREAK A PRESENTATION.

There should be a logical flow from beginning to end, like in written work. Avoid jumping from one point to another, and be careful about adding information that is not directly related to the main theme. Creating an outline before you begin creating actual slides can be helpful.

RULE 2: The visuals either enhance or detract from your presentation.

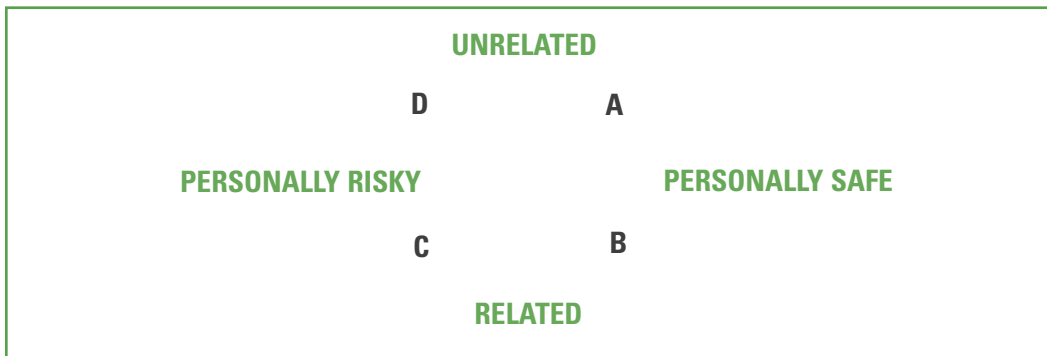
1. The "joy of six" is a helpful rule of thumb. Use a maximum of six points per slide and six words per point.
2. Use text sparingly. Depending on the color and font size you select, text may be difficult to read. In addition, if your audience is concentrating on written text, they are most likely not giving you their complete attention. **THINK BULLETS!**
3. Select colors with care. Experiment with color combinations, but make sure they work well on a screen. Often there is a difference between how something looks on your computer screen and how it appears when projected onto a screen or wall. Make every effort to preview your presentation ahead of time.
4. Use one design style for the entire presentation. Using one, or several, of the master slides provided in PowerPoint can help ensure this is not a problem.
5. Font size is important--use the "floor test" for readability. Print out a slide containing text, and place the page on the floor. Can you read the slide from a standing position? If yes, then your audience can likely read it from their seats. If no, then the font size needs to be increased. Preview your presentation in the room you will be using or one that is similar. Be sure to check the view from the rear of the room.
6. Minimize or avoid animated texts, sounds, and fancy transitions. These can be effective in certain situations, but most often distract your audience from the main points you are trying to make.
7. Avoid switching between programs (such as calling up a Web page). This takes extra time and can make it difficult for your audience to remain focused on your presentation.
8. Consider whether you want people to take notes during your presentation? If yes, then leave them sufficient time to do so. It is also helpful to print a notes page so that notes may be recorded alongside the related slide.
9. Check your timing. Use three slides per minute as a maximum.
10. Visual images can be great, but they need to be carefully selected and be appropriate to the point(s) being made. **DO NOT** use images just for the sake of using an image. Check the size of images to make sure they are neither too small nor too large and certainly that they are not distorted.

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Team Builders



QUADRANT	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES	EXAMPLE
A	safe	safe	
B	not a time waster	doesn't cut below surface	
C	perceived as work of team	asks people to disclose	
D	builds a strong bond	uncomfortable and challenging	

- FACTORS FOR DETERMINING TYPE OF TEAM BUILDER**
1. How well do team members know each other?
 2. Have team members had opportunities to work together before?
 3. How comfortable are team members with each other?
 4. Are some members new to the team?
 5. How sensitive or significant is the team's work?
 6. How long will the team work together?



Preparing a Poster Exhibit

When, Why & How to Use Posters

Poster exhibits are a popular way to present information about research projects, the results achieved to date, conclusions, and future plans. One of the things that make posters popular is the high level of conversation and personal interaction that authors and viewers can share. Also, posters are permanent and can be displayed without the author being present. People who experience stage fright find posters to be a comfortable compromise. With the constant flow of words and images surrounding us, exhibits offer a unique opportunity; a chance to create models of the real world, using objects from both our past and our present. They counter-balance our word-centered education and provide a sense of the meaning behind those words. A poster exhibit is an effective way to present a message, providing the opportunity to use large photos and illustrations and to use large type in the text and labels. Exhibits can be simple poster sessions displayed on backdrops or elaborate trade show type exhibits covering many square feet. They can include artifacts, computers, and videos. They can be designed to involve the audience in a three-dimensional multimedia experience. The typical poster exhibit is an opportunity to visually display research and to illustrate investigations and findings. Projects are generally placed around the perimeter of the display area, and guests come and go as their schedules permit. Exhibitors stand by their work and are prepared to discuss their research with guests from all diverse backgrounds.

Tips for Preparing a Poster Exhibit

MATERIALS

- heavy cover stock or 3/8" foam board as backdrop material
- an "x-acto" knife or similar sharp cutting tool
- spray adhesive
- 1/2"-1" wide strips of backing hook velcro tape for fastening

GUIDELINES

A good poster will do three things:

1. Draw attention to itself
2. Present information concisely, yet clearly and completely
3. Encourage questions and interchange with the author

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SUGGESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Use color liberally in titles, text, graphs, and photos
- Mount the individual pages and photo plates on colored poster board panels that complement other colors in the poster but do not compete with them for attention
- Number the panels and arrange them to read left to right rather than down and up
- Use the same title/author format as for the one-page abstract that you submit
- Write a one-paragraph abstract to follow the title/author information
- Write a one-half to one-page introduction, use at least a 14 point font
- Choose graphs and photographs rather than tables or text whenever possible
- Write a one-sentence legend for each graph, photograph, or table
- Limit text to less than 15 lines per page
- Avoid abbreviations, acronyms, and jargon
- Use upper and lower case type in 14 point font size (all upper case is hard to read)

CONTENT

1. Identify your audience
2. Identify types or categories of information (What is it you need to tell?)
Conceptual; Background science; Procedures; Results; Conclusions; Other
3. Break information down into chunks or bite-sized pieces
4. Rank the importance of the chunks (you may not be able to fit it all)
5. Sequence the chunks (What does the audience need to know first, second, third,....?)
6. What graphics will support your data without distracting or causing confusion?
7. Introduction/Abstract/Technical Summary (Explain the objectives or hypothesis. What is your purpose?)
8. Experiment/Research (What did you do, how did you do it, and what materials did you use? What tasks did you perform? What science does the audience need to be told in order to follow the narrative of your experiment or research?)
9. Conclusion (What happened? State your results and put them into context. Are the results surprising or controversial? What future directions of inquiry do they suggest? Are the results important? Do they have implications or are they useful to anyone? Has humanity benefited? Have you benefited?)

APPEARANCE

1. Posters are graphic presentations. Each sheet should convey an idea or chunk of information, like a paragraph. Stick to one subject per sheet.
2. Bullets, like those on this page (numeric and non-numeric) help the viewer digest information. Limit to 5-7 bullet points per sheet. Keep each bullet to just a few sentences focused on one point.
3. Graphics look good, but be certain they are directly related to the text and fully explained. Captions help.
4. Layout: Avoid perfect symmetry when laying out. Top left is the strongest position. White space is CRITICAL (no crowding). Consider how the viewer will have to move eye/head/body to follow your poster. Where do you want the viewer to end up?
5. Effective displays are as visual as possible. Use colored or textured paper and mats, different lettering styles, photographs, and graphs where appropriate. Design the presentation for the viewer with a general technical background. Although it is not necessary to be too "artsy", the effectiveness of your presentation will be enhanced by mounting the sheets on colored construction paper and/or using other techniques to improve the graphic impact. Simplicity, ease of reading, etc., are more important than artistic flair. Certain color combinations, for instance, may look beautiful, but be almost impossible to read - especially in the absence of optimum lighting.

6. Illustrative material will have to be read by viewers from a distance of 3' or more, so lettering on illustrations should be at least 3/8" high.
7. There should be a logical sequence (introduction, development and conclusion) to your display.

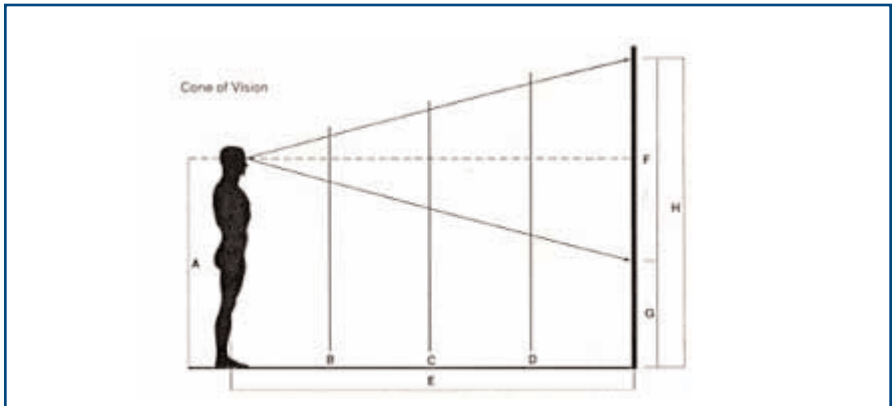
PARAMETERS

As you begin to design your exhibit, keep the following in mind:

1. Size of display panels (table display panels available for the Forum will be 36"H x 23"W with 9"H x 23"W header panels) You may request up to 6 connected display panels.
2. Cone of Vision (see diagram below)
3. Size of print (as a rule of thumb, minimum height of letters should be 1" for 35 feet of viewing distance: see table below for typical type sizes)

DIMENSIONS

- A. 5 feet 3 inches
- B. 2 feet 6 inches
- C. 5 feet 0 inches
- D. 7 feet 6 inches
- E. 10 feet 0 inches
- F. 5 feet 3 inches
- G. 2 feet 7 1/2 inches
- H. 7 feet 10 1/2 inches



TYPICAL TYPE SIZES FOR EXHIBITS

- Logo headers: 5 1/2 inches (reverse type is very effective on headers)
- First headline - main panel: 120 point
- Second headline or large bullet items: 72 point
- Smaller bullet items: 48-60 point
- Text blocks: 30-36 point
- Captions: 18-24 point

CONSTRUCTION

1. Graphically lay out your design on paper showing where all pieces will go.
2. Prepare you display pieces
 - Use a computer or engage someone with calligraphy skills and tools
 - Be neat
3. Glue display pieces on the backboards (foam board or heavy poster board) using Rubber Cement as opposed to white glue which can "bleed"
4. Trim the backboards carefully (clean cuts with the x-acto blade)
5. Fasten two short strips of velcro to the backs of the backboard

Eight Ways of Learning Anything

Respecting the Eight Intelligences During Training

The theory of multiple intelligences has strong implications for adult learning and development. If a presenter is having difficulty reaching a student in the more traditional linguistic or logical ways of instruction, the theory of multiple intelligences suggests several other ways in which the material might be presented to facilitate effective learning. Whether you are a kindergarten teacher, a graduate school instructor, or a professional developer seeking ways to maximize teaching and learning, addressing the intelligences will be beneficial.

INTELLIGENCE	STRENGTHS	KEY QUESTION	STRATEGIES
Linguistic: Read and/or write about the subject and discuss it with others.	Writing Reading Memory Listening Vocabulary	How can the spoken and/or written word be most powerfully used during training?	<i>As you discover strategies respectful of each intelligence, note them in this column.</i>
Mathematical: Approach the subject logically to analyze for patterns; classifications of information.	Inquisitive Computation Seek logical explanations Find patterns Look for relationships	How can facts, figures, research and analysis be used during training?	
Spatial: Make sketches, drawings, and diagrams to visualize the information.	Clear visual images Read maps, diagrams Draw, build, design	How can color, illustrations, drawings or other visuals be used to enhance training?	
Musical: Create songs, chants, rhymes, music or poetry to illustrate points or to play as background music during learning or reflection.	Sing, hum, whistle, tap Sensitive to rhythm	How might music or rhyme be used as a memory hook during training?	
Kinesthetic: Enact the knowledge through movement or physical routine such as role play or construct a model of the information.	Excellent gross/fine motor skills Learn by touching	How can movement be best incorporated during training? Are there hands-on approaches that would prove effective?	
Interpersonal: Work in pairs, teams or small groups.	Seek and give counsel Lead and motivate others Skilled at understanding others	How can team or group activities be used during training?	
Intrapersonal: Connect it to a previous or personal experience.	Spend time alone Reflection Independent-minded	How can opportunities for reflection and processing be incorporated during training?	
Naturalist: Attentive to patterns and characteristics in the environment and sensitive to surroundings.	Attentive Find patterns Sensitive to climate	What climate do I need to create for maximized learning? How can I respect sensitivities and what ground rules will require everyone to respect sensitivities.	

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Breaking the Ice and Icing the Cake

HOW TO USE ICEBREAKERS EFFECTIVELY

Icebreakers can be simple yet effective. They can be as simple as:

- Asking people to turn and introduce themselves to the person next to them.
- Providing participants with a 'find someone who' questionnaire and setting a time limit for them to complete it.
- Distributing index cards and asking participants to record an expectation for the session or a question they wish to have answered.

Keep in mind what your purpose for the ice breaker is. Do you want to:

- Help participants get to know each other?
- Get people involved?
- Establish the credibility of the trainer?
- Energize people?
- Help the presenter become familiar with the participants?
- Create climate and set the context?
- Establish a brisk pace?

Choose your icebreaker according to your purpose. There are numerous resources for icebreakers. Consider the following:

THE NEW ENCYCLOPEDIA OF ICEBREAKERS

by Miriam McLaughlin and Sandra Peyser
ISBN: 0-7879-6873-0

The New Encyclopedia of Icebreakers -- the sequel to the best-selling *Encyclopedia of Icebreakers* -- gives you 150 innovative activities to energize your training sessions. The book is filled with a variety of activities that will move participants through the stages of group development: forming, storming, norming, performing, and adjourning. Use this new collection to help people get acquainted, build teams, address team or group issues, develop effective working relationships, and improve learning and retention of new information. The final chapter presents specific adjourning activities to help you bring closure to your training or group work, increase skills and knowledge transfer, and transition the participants back to the workplace.

ICEBREAKERS AND TEAM BUILDING EXERCISES

by Gregory P. Smith

More than 64 activities designed to Make your meetings more productive, motivating and exciting, foster creativity and innovation, build strong team building skills, enhance cohesiveness, recognize everyone's unique talent and abilities, improve communication, sharpen problem-solving skills and make your classes more fun!

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There's More to Closing Than Saying, "Good-bye"

Elements of an Effective Closing

The closing is just as, if not more so, than the opening. When planning a presentation, don't stop short of planning an effective closing. Consider what you want participants to 'take away' from the session and what final impressions and ideas you wish to leave with them.

ELEMENTS OF AN EFFECTIVE CLOSING

- A reminder of the learning objectives
- A summary of the main ideas and key points
- Encouragement for immediate application

CREATING AN EFFECTIVE CLOSING

- Use bridging statements
- Refer to the opening, to the agenda, or to points made during the session
- Summarize the main ideas
- Share a benefits statement
- Involve the participants
- Activate senses by using visuals, music or movement
- Make it memorable

THE NEVER EVERS OF CLOSINGS

- Never apologize
- Don't admit forgetting (You can do this earlier but not at the closing!)
- Don't change delivery style at the end
- Avoid rambling
- Do not stop cold
- Do not introduce new concepts
- Do not lose energy
- Do not make the closing seem unimportant

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The Many Faces of Follow-Up

Exploring Different Ways to Follow-Up Professional Learning

Follow-up has been a tenet of professional development for over 20 years since Joyce and Showers found that purposeful follow-up was a necessary component of professional development design. Most articles about follow-up accurately decry the lack of follow-up in school or district-based staff development planning.¹

One dictionary defines follow-up as "the act of repeating or adding to previous action so as to increase effectiveness." Many activities designated as follow-up are just events that provide additional information. This is insufficient. The purpose of follow-up should be to reinforce learning about the critical attributes of the new practice. This being the case, presenters and designers of professional development must have clarity regarding the desired outcomes of a presentation or professional learning experience and must be able to clearly delineate the expected changes in practice as well as specify the conceptual understandings that need to be acquired through the experience. For example, in cooperative learning, understanding the concept of positive interdependence is more important than learning 12 ways to group students. The focus, therefore, of the follow-up would target understanding the critical concept of positive interdependence along with implementation strategies.²

A second consideration when designing follow-up activities is the idea of conceptual redundancy. According to Cohen (1991), conceptual redundancy means offering individuals multiple opportunities to grapple with essential concepts through a variety of learning strategies. In other words, we need to do more than just repeat information; we need to approach the concept in a new manner. If initial training was conducted with a PowerPoint presentation, then subsequent follow-up sessions should use a different delivery mode.³ (See document entitled *Eight Ways of Learning Anything*.)

Follow-up can 'look' a lot of ways. As the presenter, one may not be in the position to provide the follow-up to a professional learning experience, but one can be ready to provide ideas and suggestions to the participants about how they can create their own personal follow-up experiences. Ideas to consider:

- Classroom visitation of a master teacher using the new practices along with debriefing
- Classroom demonstration lessons followed by a debriefing (consider asking other participants of the professional learning experience to observe the demonstration and provide feedback)
- Reading an article on the new strategy and discussing it with others who participated in the professional learning experience
- Co-planning and co-teaching lessons with a coach or knowledgeable peer

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- Planning with a study group or school team (grade or content area team) that focuses on implementing new practices
- Developing an Innovation Configuration with colleagues
- Videotaping a lesson and requesting collegial review and feedback
- Self-assessing new practices using a rubric
- Engaging in self-reflection (routinely and periodically reviewing notes made during reflection to determine change in practice and/or thinking)

Each activity addresses the same concepts but from different points of view and using different methods. This variety of activities allows educators, with different learning styles, to examine the same critical concepts about new classroom practices in different ways. Much like children, not all adults learn in the same way. Some require reading about a new practice while others learn best when they can see the new practices in action. Follow-up should provide a variety of approaches in order to maximize the number of people who understand and use new strategies.

The bottom line is that mere repetition does not increase conceptual understanding nor does it increase the likelihood that new classroom practices will result from the new learning. A variety of strategies and approaches must be used if follow-up is going to result in the desired change.

REFERENCES

1. Joyce, B. & Showers, B. (1983). *Power in staff development through research on training*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
2. Roy, P. (2005). A fresh look at follow-up. *Results*.