

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.

**PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT**

PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

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