

Avoiding the Pitfalls of Bad Slides

POWERPOINT SLIDES

Slide structure – Good

- Use 1-2 slides per minute of your presentation
- Point form
 - Not complete sentences
- Include 4-5 points per slide
- Avoid wordiness
 - Use key words
 - Phrases only

Slide Structure - Bad

This page contains too many words for a presentation slide. It is not written in point form, making it difficult both for your audience to read and for you to present each point. Although there are exactly the same number of points on this slide as the previous slide, it looks much more complicated. In short, your audience will spend too much time trying to read this paragraph instead of listening to you.

Slide structure - Bad

Animation

- Should not be distracting
- Should not go overboard
- Be consistent

Animate only if it makes sense to animate!

Design Issues

- Clear & consistent look & feel
 - Uniform look for titles and content
- Clear headlines
 - Set direction for your presentation/meeting
- Open & close sections
 - by using clear transitions

Design Issues

- Make your slides visual, by using relevant images to your topic
- Use powerful images to demonstrate your point
- Practise design, not decoration
 - Aim for visually attractive slides

Design Issues

Visuals

- Should be big and bold
- May bleed off the edge
- May take an active role
- Trim back the details

Fonts - Good

- Use at least an 24-point font
- Use different size fonts for main points and secondary points
 - This font is 24-point, the main point font is 32-point, and the title font is 40-point
- Use a standard fonts like

Arial

Calibri

Myriad Pro

Fonts - Good

- One typeface
 - Medium weight
- Sans Serif
- Don't embellish
 - Avoid extremes
- Size for the room
 - Space on screen

Colour

- Use a colour of font that contrasts sharply with the background
 - e.g. blue font on white background
- Use colour to reinforce the logic of your structure
 - e.g. light blue title and dark blue text
- Use colour to emphasize a point
 - But only use this occasionally

Colour

- Color is powerful
- Evokes emotion: we feel it
 - Use it sparingly
- Use it:
 - Consistently e.g. all headlines the same
 - To differentiate one element from another
 - For emphasis

Background - Good

- Use backgrounds that are attractive but simple
- Use the same background consistently throughout
- Light room
 - Light background
- Dark room
 - Dark background

Graphs and tables - Good

- Use graphs & charts
 - Data in graphs is easier to comprehend & retain than raw data
 - Trends are easier to visualize in graph form or charts
- Always title your graphs
 - Get rid of the noise, the extras

Spelling and grammar

- Proof read your slides for:
 - Spelling mistakes
 - The use of repeated words
 - Grammatical errors
- If it is a big or important presentation, please have someone else check your presentation!

Conclusion

- Use an effective and strong closing
 - Your audience is likely to remember your last words
- Use a conclusion slide to:
 - Summarize the main points of your presentation
 - Suggest future avenues of research
 - Books for reference: Resonate and Slide:ology by Nancy Duarte of Duarte Design

Questions?

- End your presentation with a simple question slide to:
 - Invite your audience to ask questions
 - Provide a visual aid during question period
 - Avoid ending a presentation abruptly