

Top Tips No8

Pump-up your PowerPoint

One of the most damaging habits of PowerPoint users is to simply read the visual presentation to the audience. Not only is this redundant but it makes even the most visually appealing presentation boring. PowerPoint works best with spoken remarks that add to what's on the screen.

When presenting give the audience a chance to read and digest it, then follow up with remarks that broaden and amplify what's on the screen. Never talk on top of your slides.

PowerPoint's extensive functionality may be its own worst enemy. If you make your presentation too eye catching the audience will not hear what you are saying. Remember - your slides should support the spoken presentation - not dominate it.

Ideally, use no more than five words per line and five lines per slide.

The most effective presentations don't overwhelm viewers with numbers - leave them for handouts distributed at the end.

Let the screen go blank on occasion. Not only can that give your audience a visual break, it also focuses attention on you and jolts the audience's attention level up a notch.

Don't limit your presentation to what PowerPoint offers. Use outside images and graphics for variety and visual appeal, including video.

Ask your audience to hold questions until the end. Questions are an excellent indicator that people are engaged by your subject matter and presentation skills but always take the shine off the total presentation.

**Would you like to see how your PowerPoint could be improved?
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