

Making an Effective PowerPoint Presentation

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PowerPoints have become the universal tool when it comes to giving presentations in the business setting. Most work [computers](#) come equipped with slideshow creation applications included with the [office software](#) your company uses. Such an application can add flavor and variety to your presentations, blending together visual elements with your speeches. However, it can be quite easy to get so caught up in your material that you don't follow the best techniques for presenting information. Below are some quick tips on what to avoid and what to do in order to have a successful presentation.

Avoid Transition Animations

A fun little feature included on most standard slideshow creation [software](#) is the ability to add animated transitions to both your slides and [text](#). You can make the next slide fly in from the right, have your text boomerang in and even get your images to fade in to the sound of applause. Even though you can add these effects to your presentation doesn't mean you should. They often prove to be quite distracting to your audience and tend to decrease from the professionalism of a presentation. Use these transitions conservatively if you choose to add them.

Use Images

Imagery adds greatly to the impact of your presentations. Rather than giving a presentation full of text, you can instead replace bulleted lists with a single image which will add context to your speech. Images distract less and speak volumes. However, you should use images of the real world rather than clip art or cartoons. These are more relatable to your audience and illustrate points quite well. The internet is full of [stock](#) photos that were professionally taken and can easily be used in a presentation.

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Go Light on Text Usage

When you present, you're trying to convey what is likely to be a fair amount of information to your audience. There are certainly points where you need to display some of that information via the presentation. But at the same time, this creates something of a conflict for your audience members. When you bring up a slide with lots of text to read, your audience is going to read that and likely won't hear much of what you say. Maintain the

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interest of your viewers by keeping each slide light on the text so that they focus more on what you're saying rather than what the presentation says.

Your Presentation is Not Your Notes

Presenters often make the mistake of reading what their PowerPoint presentation says, using each slide as their own set of notes. If everything you intend on saying is already present on your slideshow, it makes your role as presenter irrelevant. Most of your audience members would just as soon receive a copy of the presentation and avoid having to listen to the speech. You should certainly include points of your presentation on each slide, but don't give away your entire speech. Keep your own set of note cards so that you don't keep referring to the slideshow.

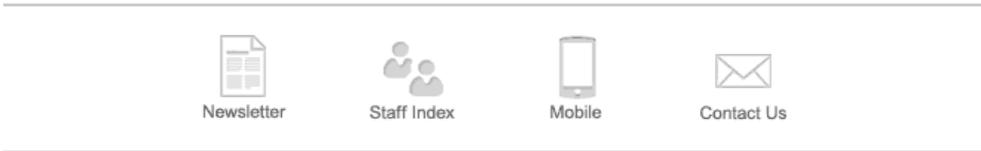
Presentations can be a powerful force in the professional world. Avoiding these common stumbling blocks will make your message more impactful and the words you impart more lasting. Rather than making your presentation like every other PowerPoint out there, you can set yourself apart.

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