

## Tips for PowerPoint Presentations

### Design

- Use a built-in PowerPoint template to keep it simple and consistent.
- Ensure consistency in the fonts and colors you use.
- Choose a theme before inputting your content to keep the information organized.
- Use simple backgrounds. If using an image, make sure that the image is clear and does not distract from the slide.
- Use text boxes and the same font color to keep text organized on your slide.
- Place corresponding pictures and text side by side, and include ample white space so that your audience is not overwhelmed.
- Use cool colors for the background and warm colors for the text.
- Bold important information in your slide so that it stands out.
- Try to use a few key colors that are neutral in tone when creating your slide.
- To promote visibility on a TV or projector, use dark backgrounds.

## Design Best Practices

For example:

- Use a PowerPoint template like the one here.
- Include ample white space between the text and images.
- **Bold important information** for the audience.



## Content

- Limit text and bullet points on your PowerPoint by only displaying main ideas.
- Avoid using full paragraphs on the slides, and instead use your presentation to elaborate on the written short phrases.
- Write the title for each slide based on the main takeaway from that slide.
- When determining the slide content, ask yourself, does the content support the learning outcome or goal? If not, remove it from the slide.



## Content Best Practices

For example:

- Focus on the main ideas.
- Use bullet points.
- Align each slide to the presentation's goal.

Avoid long blocks of text like the image on the left

## Presentation

- Avoid talking too quickly so your listener can understand you.
- Connect the material you are trying to convey to a quick interesting story so that it is memorable to your audience.
- Encourage questions from listeners by thanking participants for asking them.
- If someone challenges your response, provide your reasoning for why you stand by it.
- Don't write your entire presentation on your cue cards. Instead, write down bullet points for each key point you need to make on your cue cards.
- Practice your presentation in order to be familiar with the content that you are presenting.
- Try not to cross your arms or wring your hands, as this can make you appear intimidating or unwelcoming.

- Try using hand gestures to appear welcoming.
- Try stepping away from the podium and walking around the stage to appear confident.
- Make sure to maintain eye contact with your audience and smile.

## Accessibility

- Turn on the transcription features in your PowerPoint so that audiences with hearing impairments can understand the content.
- Ensure that all videos and audio include captions so that hearing-impaired students can follow along.
- Include alt-text for all visuals so that visually impaired students can use a screen reader to understand the images.
- Provide your PowerPoint presentation in a PDF format so that visually impaired audience members can use their screen reader to access the content.
- Use Microsoft's Accessibility Checker to ensure that your PowerPoint is accessible.



## Accessibility

- To promote accessibility:
  - Turn on transcription in PowerPoint.
  - Use captions for embedded videos.
  - Add alt-text to any images.

## References

Centre for Innovation in Teaching & Learning. (n.d.). *Designing more effective and accessible PowerPoint presentations*. Retrieved February 5, 2025, from <https://blog.citl.mun.ca/technologyresources/microsoft-powerpoint/designing-accessible-powerpoint-presentations/>

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Northern Illinois University. (n.d.). *Teaching with PowerPoint* [Webpage]. Retrieved February 5, 2025, from <https://www.niu.edu/citl/resources/guides/instructional-guide/teaching-with-powerpoint.shtml>