PowerPoint Presentations: The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly

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February 2, 2010
Format

- Your talk should be organized in a top-down manner
  - Introduction
  - Methods and Details
  - Results
  - Conclusions and Future Directions
  - Critique if needed
Introduction

- Background information
- The Big Picture: what, and why we should care about this research.
- Include a statement of the problem being solved (what)
Details

• Methods and Materials Used in Research
• Details needed to explain
• Give the bare essentials about the subjects, study site, and protocol.
• But, don’t be so brief that we can’t figure out what was done
• If some facet of the research was peripheral, leave it out.
Results

- What did you find?
- Did the tests come out the way they expected?
- This section will be supported by graphics of the data and statistics (graphs, tables, figures etc...)
Discussion and Conclusions

• Conclusions

• What is the central message of your Discussion

• Critique of Work
  – possibly compare to related work by other authors

• Future Directions
Questions

• You can prepare a few backup slides that may help to better answer questions
• Be able to respond in a timely manner
• Try to prepare for any question that you may be asked
Presentation Style

Colors

- Experiment with color combinations
- Make sure they work well on the screen
- Often there is a difference between how something looks on your computer and how it looks on the screen
- Test your presentation ahead of time if you can
Color blindness
Is this distracting?
Does this make you angry?
Font Format

- Use it sparingly
- Font size should be 28-32 (sometimes 24)
- Commonly there should be no more than 6 points per slide
- Font format – Easy to read fonts (Arial is most common)
How big should I be?

• Can you read me now? – 48
• Can your read me now? – 36
• Can you read me now? – 28
• Can you read me now? – 24
• Can you read me now? - 20
Test Your Font Size

• If sitting at your computer – you should be able to read the text from 10 feet away

• Print out the slide and place it on the floor – Can you read the slide from a standing position?
Effective use of your slides

- Use your slides as a
- Don’t read word for word (BORING) – the audience knows how to read
- If you must read something from your slide – show excitement
Unity

• Keep unity from slide to slide (this doesn’t mean be boring)
• Same colors
• Same bullets
• Same font, etc…
• Slides of different formats are distracting
Fancy Presentations

• Are they worth it?
• If it takes a long time to upload, etc… don’t do it.
• Often times, fancy animations can be distracting
• Should be short and to the point
• Minimize or avoid animated texts
Text Animation

- Appear
- Blinds
- Diamond
- Fly In
- If you choose to use animation, be consistent
- Only use to show a point
Visual Images

- Graphs, Tables, and Figures should be large enough for the audience to examine.
- If you have to apologize for too much information, don’t do it.
- Scans can often be blurry.
- You can recreate your tables, etc…
Picture Size

- Pictures should be large enough for everyone to see
- Try to minimize the picture size – if the size is 20MB your presentation will have trouble loading
Internet Information

• If you download pictures from the internet
  – give your source with the picture
  – Small font size

• Your review information should come from review articles, not Wikipedia!
How long is your presentation?

- Your goal is to hit exactly 12 minutes!
- First practice the talk without timing yourself
- When you are comfortable with it – time it.
- Use the “Rehearse timings” option in PowerPoint to practice
Mac vs. PC

• Test your presentation on both
• Conversion from Mac to PC and vice versa can be tricky
  – Missing photos
  – Text indents may change
  – Bullets may change, etc…
• This classroom has a PC!
Topic choice

• Choose a topic that you are excited about

• The goal is to make your excitement shine through in your presentation!
Resources

The information presented here was taken from the following resources:

- [http://cte.umdnj.edu/career_development/career_presentations.cfm](http://cte.umdnj.edu/career_development/career_presentations.cfm)
- Creating an Effective PowerPoint Presentation, by Thomas Saylor