UConn 4-H Public Speaking 101
Effectively Using Electronic Media

Electronic presentation tools like Microsoft PowerPoint, Google Slides, Apple Keynote or Prezi, etc. can make your presentation come to life or seem boring and overwhelming.

Ask yourself if having visuals in the background will enhance or hinder your overall presentation. You want to use tools like PowerPoint or Slides only when a visual story WILL SUPPORT what you are saying.

Using electronic media in your presentation is not simply a matter of typing lots of facts and having cool graphics up on the screen. There's much more to it! The use of this type of tool is to boost your presentation and NOT BE your presentation.

You are the presenter. You should be the focus, not your slides. No amount of "razzle dazzle" can take the place of a weak presentation. If you are not prepared, all the cool graphics and interesting bullet points in the world will not be able to save you.

STICK TO THE PLAN

- **Organize your thoughts on paper** before putting anything on slides.
- **Create an outline**.
  - ★ Rank the key points of your presentation by importance.
  - ★ Outlining helps to clarify your ideas.
  - ★ Start with an introduction that will hook your audience. Then the main points you are covering. Finally, close with a summary of your key ideas.
- **Save the visual part** of the presentation for when you have all your information outlined.

WHAT SHOULD I PUT ON MY SLIDES?

- **Watch the overload!**
  - ★ Don't include all your information on your slides. Remember that less is more - if you overload your slides, the audience will end up just reading the slides instead of paying attention to you.
- **Use short, meaningful headlines** on each slide.
  - ★ The slides are there to support and expand upon what you are saying. You should remain the focus and not become overshadowed by the screen behind you.
- **Be brief.**
  - ★ No more than 6 bullet points to a slide. The audience shouldn't be reading whole paragraphs on your slides.
  - ★ Keep text to a minimum.
  - ★ Divide topics between multiple slides if necessary.

DOES THIS LOOK COOL TO YOU?

- **Remember the shiny rule.**
  - ★ Just because you have the ability to incorporate fancy transitions, flashy graphics, and cool sound effects to your presentation does not mean you should.
  - ★ Use special effects moderately. You want the audience to remember your message and not all the quirky effects.
- **Graphics and animation should be used sparingly.**
  - ★ Graphics can be an effective tool, but should be used to complement the concepts expressed in each slide. Too many pictures/graphics will detract from your overall message.
  - ★ Animations can be very distracting to the audience. They should only be used to make a specific point in support of your argument.
  - ★ Don't use animation as the first thing to appear on a slide.

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- ✋ **Use appropriate colors.**
  - ⭐ Color should be used consistently. What looks good on your monitor may not be as pleasing to the eye on a big screen.
  - ⭐ Don't use different colors on each slide. Pick a few pertinent colors and stick with them throughout the presentation.
  - ⭐ If you are pairing text with graphics use the colors in the graphic in your text also. This helps tie the slide together.
  - ⭐ Experiment to discover which text color on background colors work best. Once you have found a combination you like, stick with it.
  - ⭐ Avoid the use of bright background colors that strain your eyes.
  - ⭐ Consider using a background template to ensure consistency among all the slides in your presentation.
- ✋ **Fonts, Fonts, Fonts**
  - ⭐ Use fonts that are easy to read. Make them **BIG** and **CLEAR**!
  - ⭐ Make sure your fonts pleasantly contrast your background.
  - ⭐ Keep your fonts consistent throughout your presentation. Choose a few fonts and stick with them on all your slides.

THE DO'S AND SOME DON'TS

- ✋ **DO** use your creative freedom when choosing what to include on your slides, but be certain that everything logically relates back to your core message.
- ✋ **DON'T** let your slides become a distraction with too many graphics, animations or cluttering effects.
- ✋ **DO** make sure you and your slides are "Working Together." There should be a seamless connection between what you are saying and what your audience is seeing on the screen.
- ✋ **DON'T** use annoying/animated/busy backgrounds. Make sure your text is not too close in color to the background making it difficult to read.
- ✋ **DO** make it BIG! Can everything on your slides be clearly seen from the person sitting in the back of the room?
- ✋ **DON'T** use the edges of the slide. Some projectors crop slides. Using the edges may also be an indicator that you have too much on the slide. Remember that less is usually more!
- ✋ **DO** PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE! Practice it as you would a regular speech. Practice with AND without the presentation running in the background. You need to be prepared in the event of a technical issue that causes you to not have the slides to rely on.
- ✋ **DON'T** turn your back to the audience or read off your slides. The audience will not be able to hear you clearly and you lose eye contact with everyone. Stand away from the screen to ensure that you are not blocking the audience's view of your slides.
- ✋ **DO** ask someone else to look over your slides before your presentation. A fresh pair of eyes may find mistakes that you don't notice anymore from staring at your slides for so long. We all get tunnel vision sometimes.
- ✋ **DO** save your presentation frequently as you are working on it to ensure you don't lose everything if a technical glitch or power failure occurs.

FINAL PREPARATION CHECKLIST
- ☐ All slides are in logical order with opening and closing slides.
- ☐ There is consistency in titles, backgrounds, colors and transitions.
- ☐ Presentation has been checked for spelling and grammar errors.
- ☐ Content on slides is clearly readable to all audience members.
- ☐ All slide content supports the core message of the presentation.
- ☐ I have practiced my presentation several times with and without the slides.
- ☐ I am comfortable with the software and how to advance through my slides.
- ☐ I have practiced to ensure my presentation is within the time limit.

ELECTRONIC MEDIA RESOURCES

You have chosen your presentation topic and decided that you want to use some type of electronic media to enhance your message.

That's all you need, right?

Not quite!

Along with all the decisions on what fonts and colors to use to where to find the best pictures to have the greatest impact there are so many choices to make.

Here are some resources to help you make your electronic presentation stand above the rest.

Free Stock Images and Pictures
https://unsplash.com/

Free Stock Photos & Videos
https://www.pexels.com/

Free Text Fonts
https://www.1001freefonts.com/

Free Google Slides & PPT Templates
https://slidesgo.com/
https://slidesmania.com/

Free Presentation Music
https://freemusicarchive.org/curator/Creative_Commons/
https://www.free-stock-music.com/

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