Avoiding the Pitfalls of Bad Slides

Professional PowerPoint Slides
Tips to be Covered

- Outlines
- Slide Structure
- Fonts
- Colour
- Background
- Graphs
- Spelling and Grammar
- Conclusions
- Questions
Outline

- Make your 1\textsuperscript{st} or 2\textsuperscript{nd} slide an outline of your presentation (such as the previous slide)
- Follow the order of your outline for the rest of the presentation
- Only place main points on the outline slide
  - Ex: Use the titles of each slide as main points
Slide Structure – Good

- Use 1-2 slides per minute of your presentation
- Write in point form, not complete sentences
- Include 2-4 points per slide
- Avoid wordiness: use key words and phrases only
This page contains too many words for a presentation slide. It is not written in point form, making it difficult both for your audience to read and for you to present each point. Although there are exactly the same number of points on this slide as the previous slide, it looks much more complicated. In short, your audience will spend too much time trying to read this paragraph instead of listening to you.
Slide Structure – Good

• Show the entire slide at one time:
  • Will help you keep your presentation focused
  • If you have several bullets on the slide, you won’t have to click the mouse for each bullet
Slide Structure - Bad

- Do not use distracting animation
- Do not go overboard with the animation
- Be consistent with the animation that you use
Fonts - Good

- Use at least a **20-point** font
- Use different size fonts for main points and secondary points
  - this font is 24-point, the main point font is 26-point, and the title font is 50-point
- Use a standard font like Times New Roman or Arial
Fonts - Bad

- If you use a small font, your audience won’t be able to read what you have written

- CAPITALIZE ONLY WHEN NECESSARY. IT’S DIFFICULT TO READ AND IT LOOKS LIKE YOU’RE YELLING

- Don’t use a complicated font
Colour - Good

- Use a colour of font that contrasts sharply with the background
  - Ex: blue font on white background

- Use colour to reinforce the logic of your structure
  - Ex: light blue title and dark blue text

- Use colour to emphasize a point
  - But only use this occasionally
Colour - Bad

- Using a font colour that does not contrast with the background colour is hard to read
- Using colour for decoration is distracting and annoying.
- Using a different colour for each point is unnecessary
  - Using a different colour for secondary points is also unnecessary
- Trying to be creative can also be bad
Background - Good

- Use backgrounds such as this one that are attractive but simple
- Use backgrounds which are light
- Use the same background consistently throughout your presentation
Background – Bad

- Avoid backgrounds that are distracting or difficult to read from
- Always be consistent with the background that you use
Graphs - Good

- Use **graphs** rather than just charts and words
  - Data in graphs is easier to comprehend & retain than is raw data
  - Trends are easier to visualize in graph form

- Always title your graphs
Graphs - Bad

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>January</th>
<th>February</th>
<th>March</th>
<th>April</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pepsi</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>27.4</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coca-Cola</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>31.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Graphs - Bad

- Minor gridlines are unnecessary
- Font is too small
- Colours are illogical
- Title is missing
- Shading is distracting
Graphs - Good

Items Sold in First Quarter of 2010

- Blue = Pepsi
- Red = Coke
Spelling and Grammar

- Proof your slides for:
  - spelling mistakes
  - the use of repeated words
  - grammatical errors you might have made

- Nuthin’ iz worse then reeedin a bnch of stuph that ain’t bean spellll chexed or ain’t been read by nowone

- NO chat lingo (2, 4, U, BTW, etc....)

- To use spell check in this program, go to ....Tools....Spelling
Images

- Try to avoid using clip art...it looks cheap
- Use pictures to convey your point
- Use one per slide
Conclusion

- Use an effective and strong closing
  - Your audience is likely to remember your last words

- Use a conclusion slide to:
  - Summarize the main points of your presentation
  - Suggest future avenues of research
Questions??

- End your presentation with a simple question slide to:
  - Invite your audience to ask questions
  - Provide a visual aid during question period
Thank you

Avoid ending a presentation abruptly
(do not say “That’s it”...say “Thank you”)