

# Preparing the Extreme Presentation

*FACULTY DEVELOPMENT – ACADEMIC AFFAIRS  
GEISINGER HEALTH SYSTEM*

"It usually takes me more than three weeks to prepare a good impromptu speech."

Mark Twain

## GENERAL

Quality presentations do not "just happen" they are prepared:

### **Purposes of a Presentation**

- motivating a group
- distilling information
- conveying a message
- communicating a vision
- guiding the audience to additional learning resources

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## PREPARATION

"The art of art, the glory of expression and the sunshine of the light of letters, is *SIMPLICITY*."

Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass*

- **Simple** organization
  - Introduction – tell them what you are going to tell them
  - Presentation – tell them
  - Conclusion – tell them what you told them
- **Clear** statement of purpose
  - Concentrate on 3-5 major points and explain them clearly at beginning of presentation
  - What do you want the learners to remember?
- State **why** these points are important
- **Reinforce** the main points with a **few** well-designed slides
- Provide a **well-organized** outline that requires annotation by the listener
- **Know** your audience (find out before you go or ask them)
  - What do they know regarding your topic?
  - What do they need and want to know? (needs assessment)
  - The same topic constitutes a different presentation for different audiences
- **Organize, prepare,** and then **cut.**
- **Style** affects student **ratings**; **content** affects **learning**

## **PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE**

- Focus on the ***opening and closing*** of the presentation
    - Script out the opening (first 60-90 seconds) and closing (2-3 sentences) of the presentations to help prevent getting "tongue tied" during these crucial times.
  - Practice ***smooth transitions*** from one slide to the next as well as effective pauses. Use transitional words or phrases (i.e., in addition, subsequently, moreover, etc). You should ***never*** be surprised by what slide appears next.
  - ***Eliminate redundancies*** - omit phrases such as "as I said before," or "I will cover this later."
  - During practices, ***simulate*** your presentations.
    - When practicing with slides
      - Never rehearse by facing the screen.
      - Pretend you're facing the audience and practice using a remote slide changer, pointer, anything you will be using during the presentation.
    - ***Speak*** the words for the entire presentation. Do not just practice mentally and think the transition to verbal will be easy during the presentation.
    - When possible, rehearse in front of a live audience. Peers make a great audience. They do not mind being critical.
  - ***Timing is Everything***
    - Practice to finish in ***less than*** the allotted time
    - ***Never cram*** 11 minutes worth of material into a 10-minute space by speaking faster.
    - ***Take out slides***, especially those where you have to explain a lot of bulleted points or when information is repetitive. If you are not sure if a slide contributes to the presentation, omit it.
    - ***Never add slides*** that are inconsistent with objectives just because you think it is a good point or nice slide.
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## **DELIVERY**

### ***Before you Start***

- Arrive early
- Introduce yourself to the moderator and/or panel discussants.
- Test all audio-visual equipment - make sure they work and that you know how to operate.
- Ask someone in the back of the room if they can hear you.
- Arrive with your slides in a carousel (hub and bottom metal pan locked in place so the slides don't fall out) - or diskette in hand.
- Are you neat and clean? Take one last look in the mirror.

### ***Beginning the Presentation***

- ***Never start with or use apologies***
  - ***waste*** the audience's valuable ***time***
  - get the presentation off on the wrong foot
  - For the well-prepared speaker, such problems should almost ***never happen.***
- Body language is important.
  - Don't lean against the podium.
  - Don't fidget nervously with the slide projector cord.
  - Remember, the microphone picks up extraneous noises.

### **Presenting**

- Use a conversational speaking tone
- Be yourself
- Look at your listeners

- Eye sweep and click
- Vary your pace and volume
- Use natural hand and body gestures
- Never read
  - Monotonous
  - Loses the dynamics of conversational speech.
- Move around the room. Avoid hiding behind a podium.
- Beware of low audience receptiveness - Use extra effort to engage the audience
  - early morning lecture (have plenty of coffee ready)
  - after lunch lecture (post-prandial stupor)
  - final lecture of the day (audience burn-out and skip-out)
- Clearly state the purpose and explain the relevance of the topic
  - Present clinical applications or relevant anecdote (i.e., "CHF is the leading cause for admissions in the elderly.")
  - Pose a dilemma.
  - Ask an intriguing question.
  - Summarize at regular intervals, repeating main points. Since the audience is paying attention only 25% of the time, repeat everything 4 times during a 1-hour presentation.
  - Encourage questions.

**Engagement:**

- As passive listeners, adults will wander after 15 to 20 minutes – at this time need to get them re-involved
  - Begin with a clinical case and questions that illustrate the 3-5 major points of the presentation.
  - Brainstorm
  - Demonstrate
  - Dark room/Good sleep - Be careful.
  - Talk to the audience not the screen
  - Use relevant and appropriate humor that meets the objectives.
    - Do not try to be funny just to be funny.
- ***Tell a Story:*** The human mind is receptive to information imparted through story telling.

"The shortest distance between two jokes makes a perfect speech."

Orlando Battista

**CLOSURE**

***Closing the Presentation***

- Never end a presentation with a feeble statement such as "Well, I guess that's all I have" or conclude with an "Any Questions?" final slide.
- Instead, script out and practice a strong, slightly emotional concluding statement that leaves the audience with a vivid mental image.
- End on time.

### Recommended Reading

Cordell WH.: *Preparing a presentation and developing speaking skills*. Society for Academic Medicine.  
www.saem.org.

Hoff R: *I Can See You Naked: A New Revised Edition of the National Bestseller on Making Fearless Presentations*.  
Andrews and McMeel: Kansas City, 1992.

Mackway-Jones K, Walker M. *The Pocket Guide to Teaching for Medical Instructors*. London: BMJ Books, 1998.

Schwenk TL, Whitman N. *Residents as Teachers: A Guide to Educational Practice*. Department of Family and  
Preventive Medicine, University of Utah School of Medicine, 1993.

Wilder C: *The Presentations Kit: 10 Steps for Selling Your Ideas*. Wiley: New York, 1994.

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Prepared by the Office of:

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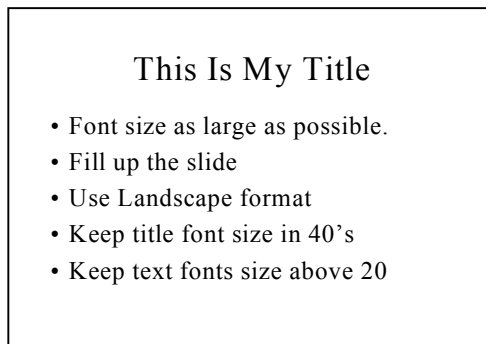
## INSTRUCTIONS – PRESENTATIONS WITH SLIDES

### FACULTY DEVELOPMENT – ACADEMIC AFFAIRS GEISINGER HEALTH SYSTEM

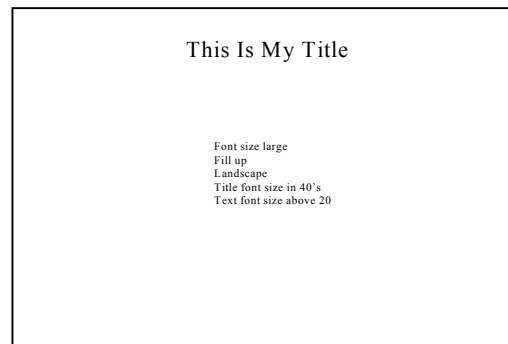
#### Legibility

- Keep slides uncluttered
  - No more than 35 words/slide
  - Avoid the projection of tables with more than 2-3 columns and rows
  - Limit the number of lines to 10 (count lines with words and blank lines between).
  - Use key words – do not put all words on a slide and read it.
- Letter size 1/15 the size of the screen
  - Keep title font size in the 40's
  - Keep text font size above 20
- Use a horizontal (landscape) format.
  - Slide Dimensions are a 1.5 to 1.0 ratio. Therefore the closer the outside rectangular dimension of your text or figures approximate this ratio, the more the content will fill the screen when projected, thus be more legible
- As a rule of thumb, if your slide is readable without magnification when held up to a light, it should be effective when projected.

#### Well Prepared Slide



#### Poorly Prepared Slide



#### Color

- Strong Visual contrast is a must.
  - 10% of the people have some degree of color blindness and have great difficulty distinguishing closely related colors, such as green from blue, or among subtle shades of a primary color, particularly against incompatible backgrounds.
  - Use white and yellow letters on dark blue or black background for large rooms
  - For white backgrounds, use black letters

- Contrast colors – avoid subtle differences such as shades of the same color - i.e., different shades of gray
- Preview in a large room with different levels of lighting
- Most graphic software programs have innumerable options for color and symbol shape.
  - What looks reasonable on your computer screen may be ineffective when projected as slides in a large room.
  - Use large and unique symbols or shading patterns to distinguish groups and conditions
  - Design your slides for the back row

### See/hear compatibility

- What is being said and what is on the screen should complement each other
- Use blank slides – do not leave one slide on screen for a prolonged period if not referring to it

### How many slides?

- Difficult to say, depending on the complexity of slide – but usually no more than 12-14 slides total in a 10 minute presentation, or 45 slides in a 30 minute presentation
- Practice and experience are the best guide
  - Remember that you are familiar with the layout of your slides.
  - The audience will need approximately twice as long as you to become visually oriented and able to understand key points.
  - Practice beforehand and allow time so you can make alterations to slides.

### Well Prepared Slide

This Is My Title

- Do not clutter
- Major points are summarized
- Use bullets
- Be brief and to the point
- Too much text is hard to read
- Remember the 6x6 rule

### Poorly Prepared Slide

Example of Poorly Designed Slide

This is entirely too much text to be placed on a slide. It has sentences and paragraphs rather than key phrases that highlights major points. It is difficult to read, especially when projected. The text is too small and too cramped. Audiences may loose interest. Make sure things are legible. Keep it simple. **Do not use too many fonts, types, styles and sizes.** This is entirely too much text to be placed on a slide. It has sentences and paragraphs rather than key phrases that highlights major points. It is difficult to read, especially when projected. The text is too small and too cramped. Audiences may loose interest. Make sure things are legible. Keep it simple. **Do not use too many fonts, types, styles and sizes.** This is entirely too much text to be placed on a slide. It has sentences and paragraphs rather than key phrases that highlights major points. It is difficult to read, especially when projected. The text is too small and too cramped. Audiences may loose interest. Make sure things are legible. Keep it simple. Do not use too many fonts, types, styles and sizes. **HARD TO READ!!!!**

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## HANDOUT PREPARATION

### *FACULTY DEVELOPMENT – ACADEMIC AFFAIRS GEISINGER HEALTH SYSTEM*

Handouts for participants are an essential part of a successful presentation or lecture.

Handouts provide participants:

- a permanent visual guide for following a lecture
- a format for note taking that allows attention to the speaker
- point clarification, an avenue for recall at a later time, and
- key references for pursuit of further knowledge.

In fact, a very common complaint or concern expressed by participants of CME programs is the lack of handouts or handouts of poor quality.

Probably the most common reason that speakers do not provide handouts is that handout preparation must be done well in advance of the conference for printing, particularly if to be included in a program syllabus. In addition, handouts are extra work beyond the time needed for preparation of the talk.

Regardless, the importance of an adequately prepared handout is essential for the success of a single lecture or a CME symposium. Poor quality or the lack of a handout must be included as part of speaker evaluations and a determinant of continued participation as faculty in Geisinger CME programs.



## TIPS FOR HANDOUTS PREPARATION

### Commonly Used Handouts

**Reprints of published articles** are commonly provided for inclusion in the program syllabus and have the advantage of minimal preparation. In spite of the convenience, the problems with reprinted articles include:

- lack of specificity to the topic being presented
- no format for participants to follow the presentation
- no efficient format for note taking.

If reprints are the only option, reprints should be selected that are often referenced during the presentation or serves as an adequate topic review or summary.

**Word for word text** promotes passive learning and a very long shelf life. Voluminous text lacks the quality of efficiency. Participants prefer referring to materials that are efficient to use, quick reference, and highlights important concepts.

**Outlines**, if well constructed are excellent options. Preparation, although needing to be completed in advance, is not necessarily labor intensive. An adequate outline provides the following:

- Learning objectives
  - Clearly established expectations of what the student will learn (educational objectives)
  - Clearly stated purpose
  - Explain the relevance of the topic
  - Few, well identified essential points (one or two)
- Provide a well organized outline that requires annotation by the listener
  - No word for word text
  - Reinforce the main points with a few well-designed highlights
  - Provide important concepts, tables and figures, and key references
  - Synthesize knowledge from many sources, do not reference everyone
- Summary
  - Introduction – tell them what you are going to tell them
  - Presentation – tell them
  - Conclusion – tell them what you told them

**Copies of slides**, when using Power Point, are easy options. The slides can be printed in a format that the listener can take notes near or beside the slide. When printing the slides, go to **File - Print** - check on **Black and White** at the bottom (to avoid printing all colors) - select **3 or 6 slides per page** under **Print What**. Three slides per page places lines beside each slide for notes. Six slides per page uses less paper and allows notes on or around the slides. Many listeners prefer to have a copy of the slides. It allows them to make notes consistent with the flow of the presentation specific to the real time topic being discussed.

**Slide outline**, another desirable option for a handout, can also be selected at the **Print What** option. Each new slide is a new major subheading printed in outline format. The presenter must be aware that only text typed as slide content will be printed in outline format. Text inserted, graphs, or scanned materials may not be printed and will be blank on the outline. Still, **Slide Outline** is a viable option when neither slides can be printed nor an outline produced.

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