

Presentation Guidelines

Saghir Bashir

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Great presentations raise your profile. Delivering engaging and rewarding presentations is all about preparation, preparation and preparation.

Read on to learn how.

Presentation Skills | Preparation | Preparation | Preparation

Prepare, Practice & Deliver.

- Prepare great content with aesthetic appeal.
- Make the content flow like an **interesting** story. It will be easy for you to explain and easier for the audience to follow.
- Read, revise, cut, cut and cut.
- Film yourself practising. Watch it (yes, it's hard). Keep what is good and improve the rest. Repeat until it's all good.
- Captivate your audience by delivering with contagious passion and heartfelt motivation.
- Being nervous is normal as you really want to give a great presentation. Over-confidence could be worse.

Audience Courtesy.

- Understand who your audience will be.
- Prepare your presentation to finish on time or a bit before.
- Select visual aids that have an impact and effect.
- Remember your audience can read so you don't need to.
- Speak clearly and loud enough for those at the back.
- Make it engaging and interesting.

Slides.

- Keep the number of slides to what can be digested by your audience (e.g. a slide per minute is usually way too much).
- Use white spacing generously so the contents can be seen by the audience at the back.
- Design your slides to communicate your messages and not to artificially impress or show off.
- Mix the contents of your slides between text, images, tables, graphs and perhaps a mix of these.

Design & Style.

- Use a consistent theme (i.e. layout, fonts and colours).
- Inconsistency distracts the audience from the contents.
- **Pro hint:** work with a graphic designer.

Colours.

- Use a contrasting colour scheme to make information stand out and distinguishable for those at the back.
- Make sure the background does not clash with the colour scheme or is not an annoying distraction.
- Red and green colour blindness is common so use friendlier alternatives.
- It is hard to see light (e.g. yellow) and fluorescent colours.

Fonts & Font Sizes.

- Use sans serif fonts (e.g. Arial) as they are easier to read.
- Use a minimum font size of 24 points.
- You could use 44/40 points for headings, 36/32 points for main bullet points and 28/24 points for sub-bullet points.
- The answer to “*Can you read this at the back?*” is “**No!**”. Use the right fonts and font sizes.
- These rules also apply to algebra, graphs and tables.

CAPITALS and Italics.

- Only use CAPITAL letters for EMPHASIS or acronyms as THEY ARE HARDER TO READ.
- Use **Italics** in “*quotes*” or to **highlight** (note that they can be hard to differentiate from normal text).
- Use capitals and italics consistently.

Bullet Points.

- Bullet points are easier to read than dense text.
- Keep bullet points to one line where possible.
- Minimise the number of bullet points per slide.
- Aim at a maximum of 8 lines of bullet point text in a slide.

Algebra.

- Avoid algebra and formulae if you can. They can be hard to follow and explain.
- Use words to explain the main concepts (e.g. ‘*Haemoglobin was modelled as a function of age and treatment*’).
- Alternatively use words and Greek letters together instead of Xs and Ys. For example,

$$\text{Haemoglobin} = \alpha + \beta \cdot \text{age} + \gamma \cdot \text{treatment}$$

Graphs.

- Do NOT use three-dimensional graphs (i.e. bar/pie charts)!
- Design your graphs carefully (without distortions) to communicate your message quickly and clearly.
- Include zero on the vertical axis. If this is not feasible consider using a different axis (e.g. log scale axis).
- Keep colour coding consistent across graphs.
- Use high quality graphs with lines thick enough to be seen from the back.
- Use white spacing to enhance the visual appeal.
- Ask yourself whether a table would be better?

Tables.

- Plan and structure tables carefully to communicate your message quickly and clearly.
- Keep it simple.
- Be consistent with format and layout (e.g. do not invert rows and columns).
- Make numbers friendlier to read by rounding consistently (e.g. 8,600 for 8,579).
- Only use horizontal lines and white spacing to enhance the visual appeal.
- Ask yourself whether a graph would be better?

Images.

- Select images that help you tell your story.
- Select high resolution images.
- Make sure you have the right to use them and credit the source.

Well done.

- Now that you're prepared go and give it your best!