

Presentation Guidelines

Preparing Effective Classroom Presentations

James P.G. Sterbenz

Department of Electrical Engineering & Computer Science
Information Technology & Telecommunications Research Center
The University of Kansas



jpgs@eecs.ku.edu

<http://www.ittc.ku.edu/~jpgs/courses>

Presentation Guidelines

Abstract

This presentation is intended to assist students in preparing effective presentations for the courses of Prof. James Sterbenz.

Presentations

Purpose

- Presentation is a sequence of
 - {slides | foils [IBM] | vu-graphs [Bell Labs]}
- Purpose
 - reminder of what to say and when
 - visual assist for attendees, but *not a distraction*
 - permanent record of talk for presenter and attendees

Presentations

Structure

- Structure
 - title foil: title, name, affiliation, email, URL
 - abstract (for printing – may be as small as 12 point font)
 - outline (repeat at each high-level section)
 - content
 - summary
 - acknowledgements
 - any imported content
 - anyone who helped with presentation content
 - references (for printing – may be as small as 12 point font)
 - full citations as in a paper

Presentations

Page Style: Header and Footer

- Header and footer
 - name, title summary, page number, date, affiliation logo
 - should not take significant fraction of page area
- Title
- Text
- Background

Presentations

Page Style: Title Block

- Header and footer
- Title
 - meaningful summary of major point on foil
 - subtitle when groups of foils
- Text
- Background

Presentations

Style: Text₁

- Text
 - clear non-distracting font
 - e.g. Tahoma, Arial, **Comic**, Times
 - use symbols, italics, sub/superscript for math
 - use reasonable font size (e.g. 24pt / 20pt / 18pt)
 - disable PowerPoint autoformatting options
 - Tools → AutoCorrect Options... → AutoFormat As You Type
 - uncheck AutoFit boxes
 - the only useful options is “smart quotes”
 - manually decrease spacing only if *absolutely* necessary
 - use consistent style for *emphasis* and de-emphasis
 - your style may evolve over time; refine as necessary

Presentations

Style: Text₂

- Text
 - proofread
 - spell check your text
 - have a native-English speaking friend or colleague proofread
 - especially if your native language is not English
 - avoid fancy animations (e.g. fly-in)
 - bells-&-whistles sell product; don't make good presentations!
 - but appear or dissolve-in can be useful to not reveal next point
 - your style may evolve over time
 - refine as necessary

Presentations

Style: Diagrams and Plots

- Diagrams
 - use when beneficial to explain concept
 - use animation *only* when needed to clarify
 - manual animation steps can be easier to edit and print
 - with animation only for movement within a step
 - e.g. packet flow
- Plots and graphs
 - try to match foil style if generated by other programs
 - foreground/background
 - fonts

Presentations

Style: Background

- Background
 - wallpapers are very distracting: *avoid them*
 - some PowerPoint templates are *very* bad
 - e.g. ocean, clouds, cascade
 - use contrasting background/text
 - light on dark best for projection
 - cool background colors are soothing (green, cyan, blue, violet)
 - dark on light best for printing
 - use color judiciously to allow black/white printing
 - can be difficult to maintain both light/dark and dark/light
 - avoid gaudy combinations
 - e.g. blue/red, red/green, blue/orange

Presentations

Semantics

- 1 major idea / foil
 - meaningful titles
 - use structure with sub-titles when necessary
- Structure bullet items into *meaningful* hierarchy
 - fit most bullet items on a single line
 - they *summarise* your spoken points
 - if you must wrap...
 - ...use linebreak or remove bullet and set indent

Presentations

Presentation Style

- Rate
 - 1 foil / 2 min. average guideline for most presenters
 - plan ahead!
 - do dry run practice in front of mirror or colleague
- Talk “to” the foils
 - don’t *read* the bullet items
 - reminder to presenter of what to say
- Use pointer judiciously
 - don’t randomly wave about
 - laser pointers are cheap – get one

Online Presentations

Metadata

- Insert correct metadata (especially for author)
 - in PowerPoint: File → Properties
 - in PDF: Document → Security → Show Security Setting for This Document → Document Properties → Description
 - inherits some metadata from PowerPoint

Online Presentations

Portable Format

- Put online in a portable format
 - PDF or postscript
 - embed *all* fonts
 - consider restricting PDF editing: Document → Security → Show Security Setting for This Document → Document Properties → Security → Security Method → Password Security: Permissions: Restrict Editing (set password) Printing Allowed → High Resolution Changes Allowed → None

Online Presentations

Source Risks

- Online version should *never* be in MS-Office source
 - makes intentional cut-and-paste more difficult
 - unintentional reformatting can drastically change document
 - accidental editing
 - incompatible versions of PowerPoint
 - missing and incompatible fonts

End of Foils