

Pointers to Improve Your Slide Presentation

Below are 20 or so pointers to think about while you're developing a presentation or slide deck for your project.

The Basics

This is the core of a great presentation. Make sure your hitting these before worrying about additional pointers.

- Use the 7-part narrative structure. 10 to 15 slides max.
- Craft the first sentence you'll say for each slide. These openings create the transitions and flow of your presentation.
- Use a story. Describe it with visual language.
- Use visuals for many slides. Keep them simple and large.
- Make no more than three to four points per slide. Keep text short and direct. Narrate the detail.
- Put notes of what you want to say in the presenter notes, not as points on the slide.

Use Pictures-- Real Pictures

Pictures are worth what, 1000 words? Not bad.

- Use real images--images that show a real example or context.
- Use pictures from your own organization, especially your project's context. Take time to shoot pictures of the context of your project.
- When taking pictures of people, take them doing activities or engaging in the experience. (Don't shoot smiling portraits.)
- Take 3 different views: 1. Wide - whole environment 2. Mid - one to several people doing activity. 3. Detail - Hands doing an activity

Use Other Kinds of Visual Examples

In addition to pictures, look for a way to use other visuals that can provide great information or context.

- Consider your user journey, a solution map or other visual from your project -- highlight or make callout key points.
- Use a diagram from the media or literature to provide external evidence of the situation.
- Use short videos of people's real experience or interview clips. A lot can be communicated from a short, on-point video.
- Use analogies to help people understand either your problems context or the solution direction.
- User/stakeholder quotes set big on a slide work well to illustrate a point, too!

Advanced Pointers

Over-achiever are you? Here are a few pointers that can really boost the effectiveness of your presentation.

- Try something BOLD. Instead of typical title and bullet points, make one word, short phrase or number HUGE. Use it to make a strong point or change in tone of your presentation.
- Consider the pace or beat of your presentation. Look for ways to increase your intensity and create a quiet pause to let a point sink in.
- Practice making the presentation with just the first sentence you'll say for each slide and listen how it flows. It should make sense since you are using the 7-part narrative structure.

Critique Your Presentation

Here's how to review your presentation

- *What's the first impression of this slide? Does it relate to or support the first sentence you will say?*
- *Does your text, if any, communicate a simple point or provide short placeholders for your points?*
- *Does the image relate directly to your project or story? Is it real or canned? Metaphorical or a good example?*
- *Do your slides have a similar layout/arrangement or are they all over the place? Try to keep structure more consistent.*

Resources

- unsplash.com
- pixabay.com
- thenounproject.com
- *Google search – images tab > tools > usage rights > labeled for non-commercial reuse*