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PowerPoint® It can make or break you!

PowerPoint® is probably the greatest tool a presenter has ever had at his or her disposal. It is a superbly designed program which can do almost anything. The danger and the risk is that it can make a presenter look brilliant, *or* it can make a presenter look appalling.

In recent studies it has been found that audience reaction to people using PowerPoint in presentations tends to be negative. (*The phenomenon of audiences applauding when a speaker announces that they will **not** be using PowerPoint is common!*) The studies show that audiences have judged the quality of most PowerPoint® presentations themselves to be poor.

There are 3 major turn offs to presenters who use PowerPoint.

Major Turn Off Number 1

- ◆ Presenters tend to use PowerPoint to be their script and read to the audience. (*Presenters have not learned that the “power” of PowerPoint is not in its ability to display text*)

Major Turn Off Number 2

- ◆ Presenters who leave PowerPoint running throughout the entire presentation rather than making a point and then speaking about it. There is frequently text on the screen that is not directly related to what is being said at that time – eg. They begin speaking about a new point when the screen is displaying the previous point (or vice versa). (*Presenters have not learned the power of the black screen!*)

Major Turn Off Number 3

- ◆ Presenters who cannot cope when the inevitable “technical hitch” occurs and fall into a heap when the technology does not work properly. (*Audiences see what the presenter is really made of when the technology fails! You must be able to present professionally when the technology doesn't co-operate*)

Contrary to the belief of people who are not good presenters, PowerPoint is not a life raft. It will *not* necessarily make a poor presenter look good in fact frequently, it makes them look worse.

A good presenter is a person who *can* present *without* PowerPoint – but uses it to maximum effect and impact in carefully chosen points in their presentation and skilful use of its capabilities.

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Walk Tall International - David Price CSP

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Tips for using PowerPoint®

1. Turn off all the “bells & whistles”. Remove all the sounds, and use the simplest of transitions only.
2. If you use transitions, make sure they are quick and screen based, paragraph based, or if necessary, and only if necessary, line based. Don't have any transitions which are *word by word*.
3. Maximum number of words per visual should be around 30 - 36
4. Use Arial typeface for headings, and for “body copy”.
5. Use Upper & Lower case throughout – it is much easier to read.
6. Minimum font size for body copy should be 18pt. If you have text that will not fit at 18pt, then you probably have too much text.
7. Headings are ideally 30pt – 36pt
8. Background should be consistent. Dark blue, or violet with white or yellow printing works really well, but a dark colour on a light background also works well. Make sure there are no more than three colours – no rainbows!
9. Do not use visuals such as graphs straight from a book or annual report – they usually have extra information which is not relevant to your presentation or point. Create a simple visual which shows the point you want to make, and only that point.
10. In visuals, the labels on graphs and illustrations needs to be minimum 14pt size.
11. Do not put on the visual what you can say. Use the visual to illustrate something you cannot say. Don't let your visuals simply be your script. Audiences hate having words on the screen “read” to them.
12. Insert a “black slide” between visuals so that the audience doesn't have to sit through an entire visual presentation. To an extent, the *less* your use PowerPoint, the more powerful your presentation will be.
13. Remember the golden secret – “less is more”.
14. The greatest use of PowerPoint is to insert things like “voice grabs” which you can record and add into your presentation, digital photos, or if you really want the audience to go *WOW!*, insert some digital video clips with sound! Eg.: Record the CEO saying what the new direction will be, then play that!
15. No matter what you do, make sure that *you are the presentation* – not PowerPoint®!

Walk Tall – David Julian Price CSP

Professional Speaker, Author, Facilitator

Presentation Skills Coach – Group or Individual

We work with individuals and groups who want to improve their presentation skills especially in work situations where their presentations need to be classy, professional, memorable and impressive!

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