

Guide on Engaging and Accessible Presentations

Accessibility, Engagement, Simplicity, Consistency

Accessibility

Be open to diversity in your audience and any accessibility issues.

- **Be aware** that some of your audience might not be able to:
 - see, hear, move, speak, or
 - understand information presented in some ways well or at all.
- **Speak clearly** into the microphone and **avoid speaking too fast**, so participants and provided interpreters can better understand you and keep up.
- **Describe key images**, such as charts, graphics, and photos, out loud.
- **Avoid or explain jargon, acronyms, and idioms/expressions** that may not be common knowledge (especially if English is not their first language).
- **Utilize multiple communication methods** for different learning styles: some people can better understand verbal information. Other people can better understand pictures and diagrams. And others better understand text.
- **Make text and important visuals big enough** to be seen even from the back of the room (18 pt font or larger).
- **Use sufficient contrast between colors** (“luminance contrast”).
 - This includes contrast between text and background colors, and between colors in graphs. There are guidelines for web pages that you can use to help determine sufficient contrast —even though the medium is different. See [Understanding contrast guidance](#) and [contrast evaluation tools](#).

Engagement

Be engaging with your audience to help them internalize the content.

- If the content is complex, **provide more relatable, realistic examples** for your audience.
- **Engagement activities** (breakout group discussions, brainstorming, Q&A) should happen at least twice throughout an hour long presentation to keep attendees engaged, and should be done to assist in the learning of the attendee and move the presentation forward.

Please watch this presentation by Ashley Bright given to AZ Impact for Good Members on April 26, 2022 on engaging presentation tips, "[Always At Your Best.](#)" <https://youtu.be/b4MuUq91cBc>

Simplicity

Your slides are not your speaker notes. Increase audience engagement by using your presentation to depict an idea graphically or providing a digestible overview.

- **Eliminate text-heavy slides** - limit your slides to five lines of text, 6-8 words per line, using phrases to outline your points. If you need notes, add them to the notes field
- **For bullet points, use the 6 x 6 Rule.** One thought per line with no more than 6 words per line and no more than 6 lines per slide
- **Leave the special effects behind** – slide transitions and sound effects tend to distract the audience and rarely enhance the message you're trying to communicate.
- **Keep the design clean and uncluttered.** Leave empty space around the text and graphical images.
- **Use one or two large images** rather than several small images.
- Use only enough text when using charts or graphical images to **explain the chart or graph and clearly label the image.**
- **Try to use the same style graphical image** throughout the presentation (e.g., cartoon, photographs)

Consistency

The more consistent your slides, the clearer your message becomes.

- **Select a single sans-serif font** such as Arial or Calibri and use it in varying sizes, colors, and styles (bold, italic, underline, etc) for impact. To test readability, stand six feet from the monitor to ensure text is large enough.
 - Simple fonts with consistent thickness are often easier to read from a distance.
- **Put repeating elements** (like headers and page numbers) in the same location on each slide of a multi-slide presentation (the [Slide Master function](#) in PowerPoint).

Inclusivity

In order to foster meaningful connections between people, it is important to ensure that the language we use is welcoming and inclusive.

- **Avoid terms like "you guys" or "ladies and gentlemen" when addressing the audience,** and instead use gender neutral terms like everyone, staff members, folks, volunteers, visitors or members.
 - Examples like man vs. the moon, are adaptable to humankind vs. the moon.