



Association of State Floodplain Managers, Inc.

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Tips & Guidelines for Effective PowerPoint Presentations

1. Remember you are the presentation, not PowerPoint. The PowerPoint should support the presenter and engage the audience-- not stand alone.
2. Define your target audience and objective before you start. Always double check that the format and layout of the presentation achieves your objective and speaks to your target audience.
3. **Font size:** use the 1" for every 10 feet of distance as a guide for font size when presenting. If you are projecting on a screen and the last row of seats is 30 feet from the screen, text should be a minimum of 3" high. If your venue seats further back, font size will need to be even larger. Avoid using fonts smaller than 30 point in a presentation.
4. **Text:** what looks good on the monitor doesn't always translate to the screen – it's always good to test a presentation "live" on screen first. High contrast colors for text are preferred – they are easier to read from a distance and from the screen. Avoid using yellow text; it is very hard to read since it doesn't project well on a screen. Choose fonts that are easily read. "Script" type fonts can be difficult to read from a distance or on screen.
5. Use graphics and photos to grab their attention – a picture does say a 1,000 words. Be sure to get permission and credit your source.
6. Think outside the bullet. Not every slide needs a title and bullets. Just because PowerPoint includes it in a master layout, doesn't mean you have to use them. Consider making the entire slide a graphic / photo with little to no text at all. How does this strike you as a viewer when compared to the traditional "canned" PowerPoint?
7. When using bullets, aim for slides using the 6x6 rule: 6 bullets or less per slide, 6 words or less per bullet.
8. Slides should introduce high points of your topic (a good guide is **6 slides per hour**, one slide can be discussed for 10 minutes each- this can vary if showing more photos than traditional text slides). Adults don't want to be read to, especially if you give them a copy of the presentation.
9. Apply animations sparingly. If every slide is animated, it may be distracting and take more time if the presenter isn't familiar with the timing of the presentation.
10. Consider color-blind individuals and use colors other than green or red when illustrating / accentuating differences on a slide.



Photo Courtesy of Dan Sherwood