



# EFFECTIVE PRESENTATIONS TRAINING

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Tips, tools and resources for making sure your presentations are effective, interesting and interactive.

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# Effective Presentations

As trainers, we need to make sure the information we present **STICKS** with the audience. Two approaches to make information in presentations stick are engaging the audience and effective PowerPoints. These are informed by your identified learning objectives and outcomes.

Training is:

“**Systematic** acquisition of knowledge, skills, or abilities that **result in improved performance** (outside the training environment).”

## Strategies to Increase **RETENTION** and **LEARNING**:

- 1) People remember most at the **beginning and the end** of the day.

**Tip:** Incorporate a memorable and meaningful opener to draw in your target audience.

- **NEED** to **KNOW** first.
- **NICE** to **KNOW** as time/schedule allows.

- 2) Studies show presentations that use **seeing, hearing and doing** result in better retention with participants.

**Tip:** Use Visual Hooks

**Examples:** Using props, flip charts, interesting photos, handouts

- 3) Adults learn better with specific design parameters:



**Every 90 minutes have a break**

**Every 20 minutes allow for learner retention**

**Every 10 minutes include some type of audience engagement**

# Objectives, Outcomes & Measurements

What are our objectives? Did we meet them? Here's where we note the actual objectives for our training, and how we did in reaching them.

## OBJECTIVES

Write your specific objectives based on what CHANGE you want to see. Have your objectives address this sentence: "As a result of this training, **participants** will be able to..."

## OUTCOMES

Your outcomes should describe how you will know if your objectives were met, and how they will be measured.

Here's an example from a Hydric Soils Indicator Session in 2010

**OBJECTIVE:** *Participants will be able to identify the common hydric soil indicators in the field.*

**OUTCOME:** *All of the applicants will be able to associate the diagnostic horizons with actual hydric soil indicators during the field training.*

**OBJECTIVE:** *Participants will be able to accurately determine soil color and textures in the field.*

**OUTCOME:** *Over 75 percent of the participants will be able to accurately determine soil color in the field and accurately identify organic vs. mineral textures.*

## When to measure?

Some results may be measured during the training. Other results will need some sort of follow-up to measure.

## EXAMPLES

- 90% of participants correctly identified the five types of wetland impacts. (training day quiz).
- 62% of participants described two scenarios where construction field visits are needed. (follow-up survey).
- 100% of participants felt more prepared to assist landowners interested in using the Ag Wetland Bank (evaluation survey after webinar)
- 89% of participants downloaded RUSLE II onto their computer. (email follow-up 1 week after training).
- 48% of participants calculated at least one RUSLE II equation and accurately recorded it in eLINK. (eLINK record review).

**Activity:** First, let's start with your objective. Stop and think about your session for a minute. You may have more than one objective. The time you have for your training should determine how many objectives you can realistically have and make the content stick.

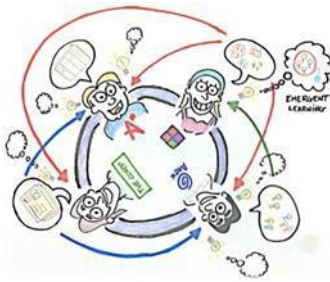
Now, now take a couple minutes and answer the following question:

As a result of this training, participants will be able to

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_.
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_.

Once you have your objectives, you then identify the training outcomes to determine the focus of your content.

# Engagement Activities



**ENGAGE PARTICIPANTS TO EXTRACT  
INFORMATION OUT OF THEM**

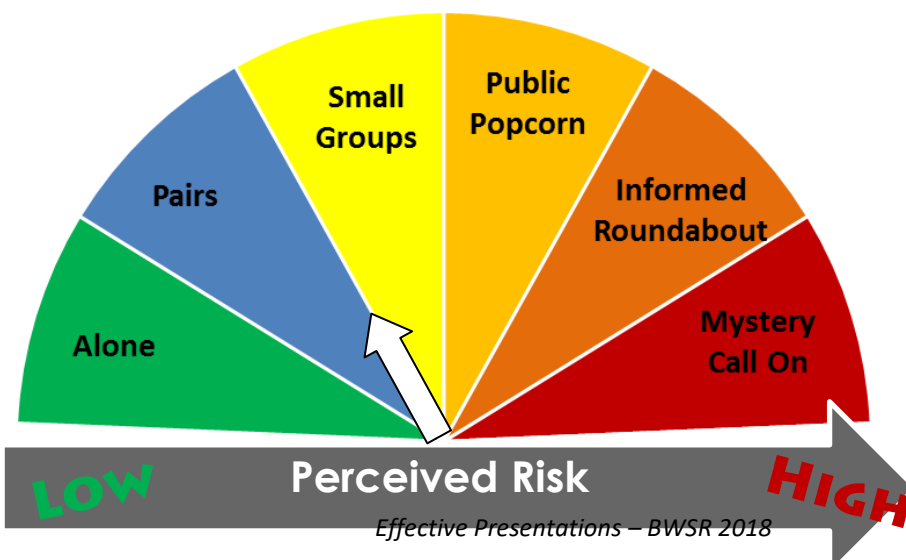


**RATHER THAN STUFFING INFORMATION  
INTO THEM**

For best retention and use, help participants be responsible for their own learning. Create and incorporate engagement activities using the Learner Safety Scale.

Alone	•handouts, document reviews, action plans
Pairs	•sorting activities, case studies, discussion
Small Group	•discussion, case study, hands on activity
Large Group	•games, "stand up if..", "raise your hand if...", call outs
Online	•chat questions, polling, fill in the blank

## Learner Safety Scale



### Set your audience up to succeed.

Activities requiring participants to work alone or in pairs carry the least amount of risk, and are therefore the most comfortable for participants. Random, or mystery call-on's single out participants and can make them uncomfortable. Try to avoid high risk activities unless there is a high degree of trust in the room, and participants are comfortable participating. Even then, use sparingly.

# Sticky Principles for Success

**MADE to STICK: SUCCESs Model** by Chip Heath and Dan Heath (2008) -- Link: [Made to Stick SUCCESs Model by Chip and Dan Heath \(2008\)](#)

Tip: The more principles you incorporate, the more likely the information will stick.



<p>Simplicity isn't about dumbing down, it's about prioritizing. (Southwest will be THE low-fare airline.) What's the core of your message? Can you communicate it with an analogy or high-concept pitch?</p>	<p>To get attention, violate a schema. (The Nordie who ironed a shirt...) To hold attention, use curiosity gaps. (What are Saturn's rings made of?) Before your message can stick, your audience has to want it.</p>	<p>To be concrete, use sensory language. (Think Aesop's fables.) Paint a mental picture. ("A man on the moon...") Remember the Velcro theory of memory—try to hook into multiple types of memory.</p>	<p>Ideas can get credibility from outside (authorities or anti-authorities) or from within, using human-scale statistics or vivid details. Let people "try before they buy." (Where's the Beef?)</p>	<p>People care about people, not numbers. (Remember Rokia.) Don't forget the WIIFY (What's In It For You). But identity appeals can often trump self-interest. ("Don't Mess With Texas" spoke to Bubba's identity.)</p>	<p>Stories drive action through simulation (what to do) and inspiration (the motivation to do it). Think Jared. Springboard stories (See Denning's World Bank tale) help people see how an existing problem might change.</p>
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# Developing your Session

**Step 1:** *Create an outline*

**Step 2:** *Create your internal agenda (applying learning retention ideas and sticky principles)*

**Step 3:** *Develop your visual aids (PPT, Flip Charts, etc.)*

## Step 1: Course Outline

Your first step when tasked with creating a presentation should be to create an outline.

*Here's where you map out a general outline of what you want the participant to learn, take from the training day. It can be used later to craft the agendas – but is a space to make sure the outline for the day/event matches up with your objectives.*

## Step 2: The internal Agenda

An internal agenda incorporates each of your major sections from your outline, and helps identify your core message for that section, and develop an engagement activity to increase learner retention.

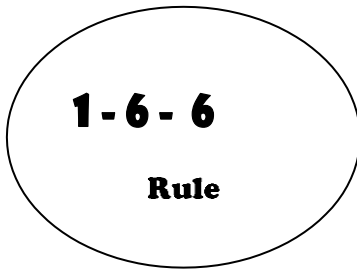
Internal Agenda –		
<b>Agenda Topic 1:</b>	<b>Who's leading:</b>	<b>Time Allotted:</b>

1 a: What is the most critical for participants to know/apply back on the job – core message:

1 b: How will I involve participants in this learning – retention call or engagement activity?

### Step 3: Visual Aids

#### Power Point Design Strategies:



1: Topic per slide

6: Six Bullets per slide

6: Six words per bullet

What else should we consider about this rule?

A presentation following the 1-6-6 rule can still be boring and ineffective. Use bulleted slides SPARENGLY, and consider images, activities and flip charts as alternatives.

### Deadly Sins of PowerPoint Presentations

*“PowerPoint has significantly degraded our ability to communicate effectively.” Ben West*

- Too much text on slides
- Using slides as a Crutch
- Spelling errors on slides
- Too much/distracting animation
- Technology errors (embedded links don’t work, projector doesn’t work etc.)
- Reading text on slides to the audience
- Small, or unreadable text
- Confusing, hard to read charts/graphics
- Unrelated and “bad” clip art
- Too many bullet points
- Too many words/bullet points

**Activity:** At BWSR Academy, we ask all participants to complete an action plan after each session. Now it’s your turn – fill out the Action plan information below.

One important thing I learned from the session:

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What I will DO or APPLY to my Academy Session:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

# Presentation Zen

## How to Design & Deliver Presentations Like a Pro

By Garr Reynolds  
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### Practical Implications for better PowerPoint Presentations

- Presentations must be both verbal & visual.
- Too much slide information overloads people's cognitive systems.
- Can your visuals be understood in 3 seconds? If not, redesign them to **support** your talk.
- Slide design & delivery must *help* people organize, integrate information.

### Organization & Preparation Tips

PowerPoint is not inherently a bad tool. In fact, if presenters just avoid a few of the most common PowerPoint pitfalls, their presentations will greatly improve. Below, many of the items discussed in the presentation are highlighted in brief.

**(1) Start with the end in mind.** Before you even open up PowerPoint, sit down and really think about the day of your presentation. What is the real purpose of your talk? What does the audience expect? In your opinion, what are the most important parts of your topic for the audience to take away from your, say, 50- minute presentation? Remember, even if you've been asked to share information, rarely is the mere transfer of information a satisfactory objective from the point of view of the audience. After all, the audience could always just read your book (or article, handout, etc.) if information transfer were the only purpose of the meeting, seminar, or formal presentation.

**(2) Plan in “analog mode.”** That is, rather than diving right into PowerPoint (or Keynote), the best presenters often scratch out their ideas and objectives with a pen and paper. Personally, I use a large whiteboard in my office to sketch out my ideas (when I was at Apple, I had one entire wall turned into a whiteboard!). The whiteboard works for me as I feel uninhibited and free to be creative. I can also step back (literally) from what I have sketched out and imagine how it might flow logically when PowerPoint is added later. Also, as I write down key points and assemble an outline and structure, I can draw quick ideas for visuals such as charts or photos that will later appear in the PowerPoint. Though you may be using digital technology when you deliver your presentation, the act of speaking and connecting to an audience — to persuade, sell, or inform — is very much analog.

**(3) Good presentations include stories.** The best presenters illustrate their points with the use of stories, most often personal ones. The easiest way to explain complicated ideas is through examples or by sharing a story that underscores the point. Stories are easy to remember for your audience. If you want your audience to remember your content, then find a way to make it relevant and memorable to them. You should try to come up with good, short, interesting stories or examples to support your major points.

**(4) It's all about our audience.** There are three components involved in a presentation: the audience, you, and the medium (in our case, PowerPoint). The goal is to create a kind of harmony among the three. But above all, the presentation is for the benefit of the audience. However, boring an audience with bullet point after bullet point is of little benefit to them. Which brings us to point number five, perhaps the most important of all.

**(5) Reduce the text on your slides to an absolute minimum.** The best slides may have no text at all. This may sound insane given the dependency of text slides today, but the best PowerPoint slides will be virtually



meaningless without the narration (that is you). Remember, the slides are supposed to support/supplement the narration of the speaker, not make the speaker superfluous. Yes, it is true that many people often say something like this: "Sorry I missed your presentation, Steve. I hear it was great. Can you just send me your PowerPoint slides?" Well, you could. But if they are good slides, they may be of little use without *you*.

**(6) Do not read the text word for word off the slide.** Audiences can read, so why do presenters insist on reading long lines of text from slides? Also, it is very difficult — if not impossible — to read a slide and listen to someone talk at the same time. So again, why all the text on slides these days? One reason may be that it is convenient for the speaker when organizing the presentation to write out his/her thoughts one bullet point at a time. But as Yale professor and visual communications specialist, Edward Tufte points out in a September Wired Magazine article "...convenience for the speaker can be punishing to both content and audience." Speakers also may be thinking that their wordy slides will make for better handouts, a common "handout" technique. However, the confining, horizontal orientation of a slide (one slide after another) makes for difficult writing and reading. Which brings us to the next point below.

**(7) Written documents (research papers, handouts, executive summaries, etc.) are for the expanded details.** Audiences will be much better served receiving a detailed, written handout as a takeaway from the presentation, rather than a mere copy of your PowerPoint slides. If you have a detailed handout or publication for the audience to be passed out after your talk, you need not feel compelled to fill your PowerPoint slides with a great deal of text.

**Remember:** (1) your slides should contain only a minimum of information; (2) your slide notes, which only you see, will contain far more data; and (3) your handout will have still far more data and detail.

## Slide (PowerPoint) Tips

**(1) Keep it simple.** PowerPoint was designed as a convenient way to display graphical information that would support the speaker and supplement the presentation. The slides themselves were never meant to be the "star of the show." People came to hear *you* and be moved or informed (or both) by you and *your message*. Don't let your message and your ability to tell a story get derailed by slides that are unnecessarily complicated, busy, or full of what Edward Tufte calls "chart junk." Nothing in your slide should be superfluous, ever. Your slides should have plenty of "white space" or "negative space." Do not feel compelled to fill empty areas on your slide with your logo or other unnecessary graphics or text boxes that do not contribute to better understanding. The less clutter you have on your slide, the more powerful your visual message will become.

**(2) Avoid using Microsoft templates.** Most of the templates included in PowerPoint have already been seen by your audience countless times (and besides, the templates are not all that great to begin with). You can make your own background templates which will be more tailored to your needs or you can purchase professional templates on-line (for example: [www.powerpointtemplatespro.com](http://www.powerpointtemplatespro.com)).

**(3) Avoid using PowerPoint Clip Art or other cartoonish line art.** Again, if it is included in the software, your audience has seen it a million times before. It may have been interesting in 1992, but today the inclusion of such clip art often undermines the professionalism of the presenter. There are exceptions, of course, and not all PowerPoint art is dreadful, but use carefully and judiciously.

**(4) Use high-quality graphics including photographs.** You can take your own high-quality photographs with your digital camera, purchase professional stock photography, or use the plethora of high-quality images available on line (be cautious of copyright issues, however). Never simply stretch a small, low resolution photo to make it fit your layout — doing so will degrade the resolution even further.

**(5) Use animations and slide transitions judiciously.** Animations, such as bullet points, should **not** be animated on every slide. Some animation is a good thing, but stick to the most subtle and professional (similar to what you might see on the evening TV news broadcast).

**(6) Synchronize your speaking with the builds and transitions.** In other words, show the next item (new slide or new build) at the same time you begin talking about it. This requires practice, but it takes only a short time to get the hang of it. Watch the evening news on TV and you'll notice that bullet points and graphics appear at the same time or just after the reporter speaks on the particular item.

**(7) Use video and audio when appropriate.** You can use video clips within PowerPoint without ever leaving the application or turning on a VCR. Using a video clip not only will illustrate your point better, it will also serve as a change of pace thereby increasing the interest of your audience. You can use audio clips (such as interviews) as well. Something to avoid, however, is cheesy sound effects that are included in PowerPoint (such as the sound of a horn or applause when transitioning slides). The use of superfluous sound effects attached to animations is a sure way to lose credibility with your audience.

**(8) Limit your ideas to one main idea per slide.** If you have a complicated slide with lots of different data, it may be better to break it up into 2-3 different slides (assuming no side-by-side comparisons are needed).

## Delivery Tips

**(1) Move away from the podium — connect with your audience.** If at all possible get closer to your audience by moving away from or in front of the podium.

**(2) Remember the “B” key.** If you press the “B” key while your PowerPoint slide is showing, the screen will go blank. This is useful if you need to digress or move off the topic presented on the slide. By having the slide blank, all the attention can now be placed back on you. When you are ready to move on, just press the “B” key again and the image reappears. (The “.” key does the same thing).

**(3) Use a remote-control device to advance your slides and builds.** A handheld remote will allow you to move away from the podium. This is an absolute must. (<http://www.keyspan.com/products/>).

**(4) Make good eye contact.** Try looking at individuals rather than scanning the group. Since you are using a computer, you never need to look at the screen behind you — just glance down at the computer screen briefly. One sure way to lose an audience is to turn your back on them.

**(5) Take it slowly.** When we are nervous we tend to talk too fast. Get a videotape of one of your presentations to see how you did — you may be surprised at the pace of your talk.

**(6) Keep the lights on.** If you are speaking in a meeting room or a classroom, the temptation is to turn the lights off so that the slides look better. But go for a compromise between a bright screen image and ambient room lighting. Turning the lights off — besides inducing sleep — puts all the focus on the screen. The audience should be looking at you more than the screen.

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