BUSINESS

The Complete Guide to Making Great Presentations

Learn how to shape your idea into a strong presentation, with effective planning, writing, and visual design. Create a powerful presentation that moves your audience.

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envatotuts+

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Introduction

If you're in business, it's likely you'll be asked to give a face-to-face presentation.

Presentations are a vital part of doing business and are often used for:

- Sales presentations and fundraising
- Professional conferences and meetups
- Team meetings, training, and status reports

Even if you're not in business, the odds are great that eventually you'll be asked to share what you know publicly. Students, members of clubs or charitable organizations, and many others regularly make presentations.

Even though presentations are so common, many people hate giving them. Are you one of those people? Do you dislike even the idea of standing up in front of a room to present?

If you're worried about giving a presentation, it's understandable. Giving a poor presentation can be humiliating. Even worse, it can make a negative impact on how people think of you that's hard to overcome. But there's another way to look at presentations. →

Giving a presentation doesn't have to be a bad experience. A well-delivered presentation leaves a positive impression that will have a long-term positive impact on your business and your reputation.

Rather than dreading a presentation, look at it as a valuable opportunity to show others what you know. Giving a good presentation is not as hard as it seems. In this eBook, we provide you with the know-how and tools you need to create and successfully deliver an effective presentation.

Why Do So Many Presentations Fail?

There are many reasons why presentations fail. But the important thing to remember is that most presentation failures can be avoided.

Here is a list of six common causes of presentation failure:

1. **Not being prepared.** While an effective presentation should look natural, as though the speaker is putting no effort into it, in reality a good presentation takes work. If you want your presentation to be successful, be sure to do your homework. Planning and research can make the difference between a good presentation and a bad one.

2. **Poor delivery.** Not everyone is a natural speaker, but nearly everyone can improve their presentation skills. We'll explain how to effectively deliver your presentation in more detail later in this eBook. You'll learn how to overcome bad speaking habits quickly. We'll also discuss how to become a more confident speaker.

3. **Bad presentation design.** A disappointing presentation design can be just as distracting as a poor delivery. You don't want your audience so focused on poor visuals that they don't hear what you have to say. The style of your presentation and how well it's designed is important. It should have a polished, professional look that fits your message right. In this eBook you'll learn how to achieve that. →

4. **Not relating to your audience.** A huge mistake that many speakers make is not properly targeting their presentation to their audience. The only way to really be sure that your presentation is geared to your audience is to find out as much as you can about them beforehand. You can't engage your audience, or hold their attention, if you don't really know how you're going to speak to them persuasively.

5. **Poor content preparation.** Another way that presentations fall short is that the subject matter is not right for a presentation. The topic may be too broad to cover in the time that is allowed, or your audience may not have the background needed to understand the topic. Or you may not have done enough research to thoroughly understand your topic.

6. **Unrealistic expectations.** Having the right expectations is important. To start, you should have a goal. What do you expect to achieve with your presentation? If you don't know, your presentation is already in trouble. Another unrealistic expectation is thinking that your listeners will remember all, or nearly all, of the information you present.

Learn More

To learn more about common business presentation mistakes, review the *Envato Tuts+* tutorial, 10 Business Presentation Mistakes (And How to Avoid Them).

Now that we've discussed what might go wrong with your presentations, you're ready to take the steps to make sure those errors never happen. You're ready to learn how to make a great presentation.

Let's get started.

How to Make a Great Presentation

It's not difficult to make a great presentation. All it takes is some know-how, a bit of work, and proper planning.

In this eBook, discover the complete process to follow. You'll learn the simple steps to help you make sure that your presentations are as good as they can be.

Read through the next five detailed sections to learn how to:

1. **Write a powerful presentation.** A great presentation begins with proper research, developing a clear focus, and then writing powerful, engaging ideas. Learn how to write your presentation from start to end.

2. **Choose your presentation software.** The best presentation software for you depends on a few factors. We'll help you choose between PowerPoint and other popular alternatives.

3. **Design like a professional.** Designing a presentation can be intimidating, but it needn't be. Learn how to make strong layouts, good design choices, and quick ways to get pro results.

4. **Deliver with audience impact.** Making an impact on your audience, transferring your ideas into their minds, and moving them to action is the goal of every great presentation. Learn how to give a noteworthy talk with confidence.

5. **Stand out and be memorable.** To go beyond a basic presentation and really stand out requires a bit more effort. Discover creative tactics that can give your presentation more oomph.

Let's take a closer look at each part of what it takes to make a great presentation.

Also, refer to the quick reference checklist included in your download to help you put these steps into action: ***Making Great Presentations - Checklist****.*

Section 1: Plan and Write a Powerful Presentation

Remember: preparation is a key element to creating winning presentations.

It's important to take your time when planning your presentation. Lack of proper planning causes too many presentations to fail, but planning well helps position you for success.

In this first section, we go through the presentation writing process, covering all the important steps. Learn how to identify the purpose of your presentation, research your topic thoroughly, and choose your main focus. Then, discover how to create your outline, write a great opening and closing, and complete the rest of your presentation.

If you're in a hurry, you can find a quick overview of the presentation writing process in this *Envato Tuts+* tutorial, How to Write a Professional PowerPoint Presentation (Discover the Writing Process). Otherwise, let's look at each part of the presentation writing process individually:

Step 1. Identify Your Purpose

Start your planning by setting a goal for your presentation. Ask yourself, why am I giving this talk? Is the purpose of your presentation informative? Is it a sales presentation? Do you want to rally people to your cause? Your presentation won't meet its goal unless you know why you're giving it.

Once you know what your goal is, stay focused on information that fits that goal. If your goal is too broad, narrow it down or plan a series of related presentations.

For example, a broad goal of informing people of ways to improve their health is likely too much for a single presentation. But a narrower goal of informing people of the dangers of eating too much sugar is much more realistic.

Step 2. Do Your Research

For your presentation to be effective, you need to know what you're talking about and who you're talking to. Not knowing your topic or not understanding who your audience is can derail your presentation.

Always make sure your content is accurate and up to date. Double-check your facts. If you have a question about some of your information or feel it doesn't make sense, your listeners are likely to have the same question.

Also, research your audience closely. Find out what your audience is likely to know already and what will be new information for them. Be sure to use terms that they will understand. If you've been asked to give a presentation and you're not sure who your audience will be, find out. You can also refer to a demographic study if you have one available.

For example, a group of high school students likely has a different background than a group of neurosurgeons. A presentation written for one group is unlikely to work for another.

Step 3. Choose Your Main Focus and Supporting Points

Once you've gathered information, begin to organize it around the main idea that you want to present.

You won't have time to present every piece of information that you've researched. Narrow the material down to the information that is most important to your audience and to your goal. Focus on the main idea and build your presentation around it.

To start identifying your main idea and top supporting points, make a list of the information you've gathered and begin organizing it.

When deciding what information to include in your presentation, consider the advice that Chris Anderson offers in this TED Talk on the secret to great public speaking:

- Focus on one major idea and make it the through line for your talk. Build your points around this idea. →

- Give your listeners a reason to care by stoking their curiosity and interest.

- Build your idea out of concepts that your listeners already understand. Start where they are and use metaphors and stories that your audience can relate to.

- Make your idea worth sharing. Consider if it will inspire and motivate people to do something differently.

It helps to ask yourself a few questions, such as:

- Does my audience already know about this topic? If not, is it important for them to know this?

- How can I approach this topic in a way that will make it interesting? Why will this audience care?

- What stories, examples, or metaphors will help bring this idea to life?

- What will help drive this audience to share this idea or take action on it?

The length of your presentation will also determine how many points you can include. But remember, the longer your presentation, the more likely it is that you will lose your audience's attention before it is over.

Many experts recommend that the ideal presentation length for most listeners is 15 to 20 minutes. But of course, this varies depending on your audience. →

If your audience is deeply passionate about your topic or extremely interested, you may be able to go longer. On the other hand, a more casual audience may be expecting a shorter presentation.

Step 4. Create an Outline

Once you've determined what your main focus and points will be, it's time to create an outline of your presentation.

You create an outline for your presentation in the same way that you would create an outline for any document. Your presentation outline determines the order of the information you will present.

At its most basic, a short presentation outline could consist of:

1. Introduction
2. First point
3. Second point
4. Third point
5. Conclusion

While that basic outline may be enough for a short presentation, your outline will vary with your audience and subject matter.

A longer presentation outline could look something like this:

1. Introduction
2. First main point
3. Support for point
4. Break
5. Second main point
6. Support for point
7. Video
8. Third main point
9. Support for point
10. Questions and answers
11. Conclusion

Your own presentation outline will vary, depending on your situation. Once you've created a basic outline for your presentation, you are ready to begin the writing process.

Note: It's important to plan breaks in longer presentations so that you don't lose your audience's attention.

Step 5. Write the Start and Finish

Studies show that the opening of your presentation and the conclusion are the most important. So proper planning of these sections is vital if you want to have a great presentation.

The introduction is your chance to get your audience interested in what you have to say. It also sets the tone for your presentation. Also, during the opening it's a good idea to give the audience the structure of your presentation. For example, if there will be a break in the middle of the presentation, or if you'd like them to save all their questions until the end, tell them so in your opening.

The conclusion of your presentation gives you a chance to summarize everything you just said. It's your final chance to make an impression on your listeners. This last section is also a good time to appeal to your audience with a call to action.

A call to action tells your audience what to do with the information you just gave them. It's an important part of a presentation, especially a sales presentation. Yet many presentations omit this vital piece.

Study the *Envato Tuts+* tutorial, How to Start a Presentation Strong and End Powerfully. In the tutorial, we provide some practical tips for how to plan a powerful

presentation. It contains some excellent ideas for an effective opening, including the following ideas:

- Make a bold claim.
- Contradict expectations.
- Stimulate curiosity.
- Ask questions.
- Spin a surprising story.

More ideas to help you get your audience's attention in your opening include:

- Quote a well-known personality or a famous proverb.
- Tell a joke.
- Show a video.
- Refer to a current event.

The same tutorial recommends that you close your presentation with a call to action, a vision of the future, or a contrarian example. If your presentation is informative, a question and answer segment can be an effective way to conclude.

Step 6. Write the Rest of Your Slides

Now you've completed a presentation outline and worked on your introduction and conclusion. You are ready to write the details of the rest of your presentation. You don't need presentation software for this stage; we'll add that in the next step. For now, a good word processing tool will do.

Use the outline to expand on your presentation points. Start by writing out your presentation slides for the introduction, each main point, and the conclusion. If possible, cover your most compelling points in the first few slides. The further you get into your presentation, the more likely you are to lose your audience's attention.

Use concise wording to express your ideas and information. It may require several rounds of editing to cut out wordiness and reduce unnecessary information. Also, be careful not to put too much information on each individual slide. If a slide contains too much information, your audience won't grasp everything you are sharing. Divide slides with too much material into several slides.

Many presenters overestimate the attention span of their audience. They may design their presentation to last an hour without any breaks and expect their listeners to remember everything they say. Yet psychologists and other experts agree that the attention span of the average adult is going down. Even if you capture their interest at first, chances are that you won't hold it throughout the entire presentation.

Divide long presentations into smaller segments. Use planned pauses and transitions such as audience participation, videos, or other devices to help hold their attention throughout.

Note: If you use humor in your content, the way you use it could affect how your presentation is received. While humor can be a great way to lighten the mood and break up your material, it's important to remember that not everyone finds the same things funny. If you're not sure how a particular joke will be received, leave it out.

Now that you've planned, researched, and written out your presentation, you're ready to start working with presentation software to design all your slides.

Your Writing Takeaway

Planning and research are vital to the presentation writing process. Once you've done your research, start by creating an outline, and then write your presentation.

Section 2. Choose the Best Presentation Software

There are many presentation software alternatives available— each with its own unique features and capabilities.

When choosing the right software for your presentation, it helps to know as much about your presentation needs as possible. That's one reason we've had you research, plan, and write your presentation first.

There are lots of professional presentation software tools available, from the popular PowerPoint to Keynote, Google Slides, and more. Finding the right software for your needs can make a difference in your presentation success. When choosing your presentation tool, considerations include:

- Do you currently use presentation software? If so, what are you using?
- Are there software requirements imposed by a client or by the facility where you will be giving the presentation?
- What hardware do you use? Some presentation tools are only available for certain platforms or operating systems.
- What presentation tools have you used in the past?
- What is your budget for presentation software? Presentation software comes at all price ranges. There are even free and low-cost options available for the budget-minded presenter.
- Will you be working on the presentation with a team? Some presentation tools are designed for collaboration.

Here are some *Envato Tuts+* tutorials that compare some of the various presentation tools available:

- **PowerPoint vs. Keynote vs. Google Slides: What Is the Best Presentation Software?**
- **15+ Best Presentation Software Alternatives to PowerPoint**

Once you've decided on the presentation software, you'll need to learn how to use it. There are good resources on *Envato Tuts+* to help you learn some of the more popular presentation software tools, including:

- **How to Make & Give Great PowerPoint Presentations (In 5 Simple Steps)**
- **How to Use Google Slides (Quick Start Guide)**
- **How to Create a Basic Keynote Presentation**

Your Takeaway

The presentation software you should use depends on your presentation needs and your preferences. While PowerPoint is quite popular and quality presentation software to use, there are many excellent programs available.

After you select a presentation platform, you're ready to begin the next step of creating your presentation: design.

Section 3. Design Your Presentation Like a Pro

The design of your presentation is important. A good presentation design enhances and supports your presentation. A poor design distracts and detracts from the ideas you need to communicate.

Next, let's look at some professional design tips to help you design a powerful presentation.

Design Guidelines

There are some basic design elements that are important to any presentation. Those elements include:

- Layout
- Font choice
- Color
- Media
- Special effects

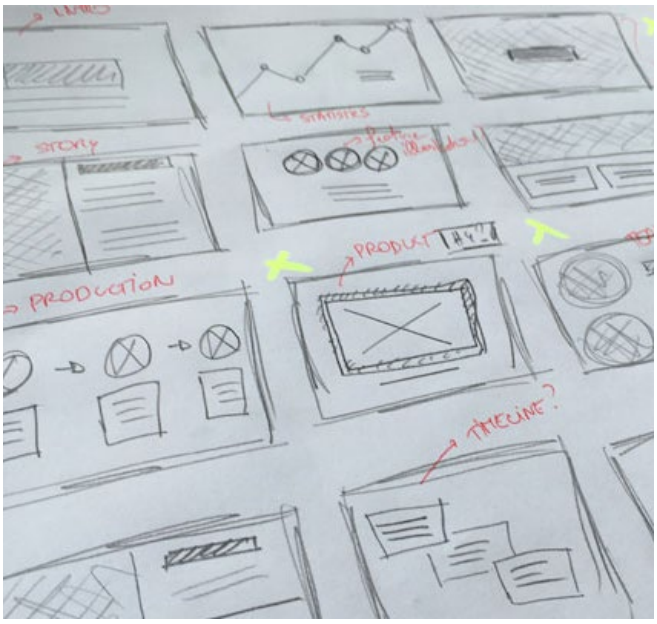
To create an effective presentation, it's important to have a good understanding of how to use these design elements. We'll look at each element individually:

Layout

Layout has to do with how each slide in your presentation is arranged. Your layout is closely related to your presentation content. You should have a good idea of the material that you intend to present before you start to lay out your presentation.

Look at what you've written and try to imagine what type of slide you would use to present each point. Many presenters draw thumbnails or create a storyboard at this point. (Don't confuse these thumbnails with the Thumbnail view available in many software presentation tools.) Thumbnails will give you an idea of the type of slides you need in your presentation.

You don't have to be an artist to create thumbnail sketches. A simple drawing will do. Here is what thumbnails for a basic presentation might look like:



Remember that each slide should be as simple as possible. Avoid putting too much material or too many images on a single slide. Also avoid putting too many images on a single slide or using an image that draws attention away from your content.

Now that you've got an idea of what types of slides you need, you are ready to make some more basic design choices.

Font Choice

When choosing a font for your presentation, it's important to consider both font type and font size. While some fonts may be fun for casual use, they aren't all a good fit for a professional presentation. Make sure to choose a font that is highly readable.

Font size is also important when creating a presentation. The most common error is using a font size that is too small for the audience to read easily.

Finally, be cautious about using too many different fonts in your presentation. Fonts should coordinate with each other and not clash and become distracting.

To learn more font basics, review the *Envato Tuts+* tutorial: A Beginner's Guide to Pairing Fonts.

Color Choice

Color plays a big part in any presentation. Choose the colors for your slide background, fonts, and accent text carefully.

The choice of color in your design is crucial. Colors send powerful visual messages. Using the wrong colors could give listeners the wrong perception of your brand or message.

Color also provides a chance for small businesses to brand their presentations. Ideally, the template you use for your presentations mirrors the color and design scheme that your business uses. It should fit in well with other business items such as your website, your stationery, and your business cards.

For a more detailed look at the role color plays in design, study the *Envato Tuts+* tutorial: A Comprehensive Introduction to Color in Design.

Media Choice

Most presentation software allows you to embed a short video or an audio message into the presentation. This option is a great way to provide some variety to your audience.

Don't rely on embedded media too heavily, though, as it can become distracting.

Special Effects

Special effects, such as transitions and animations, are great tools you can use to add extra interest to your presentation. But don't overuse special effects. Too many transitions or too many animations will distract from your main message.

For a basic tutorial on how to use special effects, refer to: 10 Simple PowerPoint Animation Tips and Tricks.

Use a Presentation Template

So you're not a designer—but you need to create and give a presentation. Are you doomed to make a bad impression?

Not at all. Using a professional presentation template is one way to ensure that you have a well-designed, coherent look to your presentation.

Templates are also an effective way to create a presentation quickly. Here are some of the advantages of using a template for your presentation:

- **Saves time.** Designing a good presentation takes time. With a presentation template, the slide design work is already done for you. In most cases, all you need to do is enter your information.
- **Unique Layouts.** Professional templates come with plenty of unique slide layouts, ready-made graphics, and stylish features that are designed to work together.
- **Proven.** Many downloadable templates come with reviews, so you can see how well they worked for others. Plus, they are often created by a design professional.
- **Saves money.** Using a template is cheaper than hiring a professional designer.
- **Customizable.** Most templates are easy to customize by changing the color scheme, adding your company's logo, or making other small changes.

Your company may have official templates available for your use. They may even require that you use their template for your presentations. Find out whether your company has a corporate template by asking your manager or your communications department.

If you decide to use a presentation template and your company does not provide one, you will find many professional presentation designs available at GraphicRiver. Or browse through these curated selections of the best:

- **15 Professional PowerPoint Templates: For Better Business Presentations**
- **17+ Cool Google Slides Themes (To Make Great Presentations)**
- **15+ Best Keynote Presentation Templates**

For guidance on how to apply templates to specific software presentation tools, refer to these *Envato Tuts+* tutorials:

- **For PowerPoint templates:** How to Create a PowerPoint Presentation From a PPT Template
- **For Google Slides templates:** How to Create a Presentation From a Google Slides Theme
- **For Keynote templates:** How to Customize a Keynote Presentation Template Design

A common presentation design mistake is not using a template at all. You don't want your presentation to have an inconsistent look, with design elements mismatched, clashing colors, and layouts that are confusing to your viewers. A premium presentation template solves these problems, giving you a number of unique layouts with stylish, professional designs to work with right away.

Hire a Designer

An alternative to using a design template for your presentation is to hire a professional designer. This is especially helpful if you need a custom solution or if your project has a more generous budget. Hiring a designer is also a good choice for businesses that will be using their own presentation templates over and over.

A professional designer can create a unique presentation theme that fits well with your branding. A good designer also has the experience and training to draw upon so that they present you the best possible design alternatives.

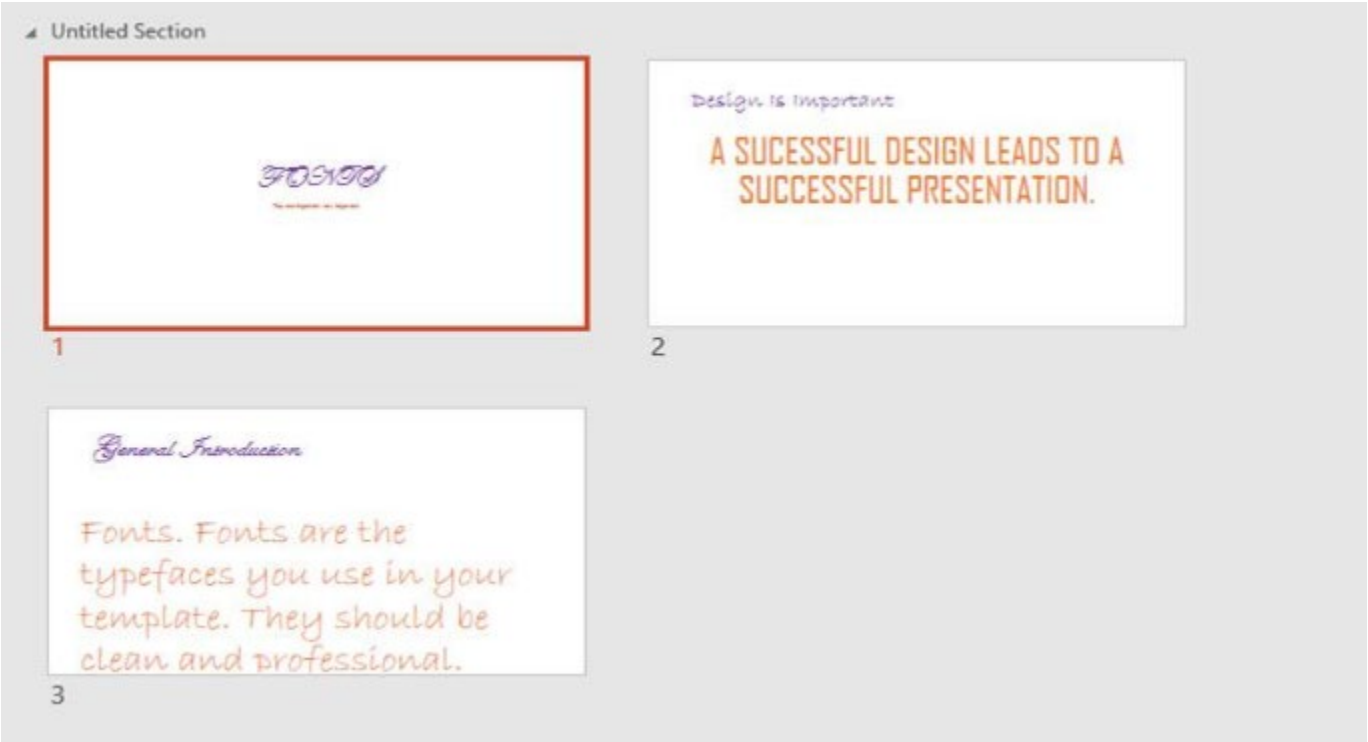
One way to find a good presentation designer is through Envato Studio, which has a professional category for presentation design.

Compare and Contrast

Are you still not convinced of the importance of design to a presentation?

It might be helpful to compare and contrast an ineffective design with an effective presentation design. Once you see both, the difference is clear.

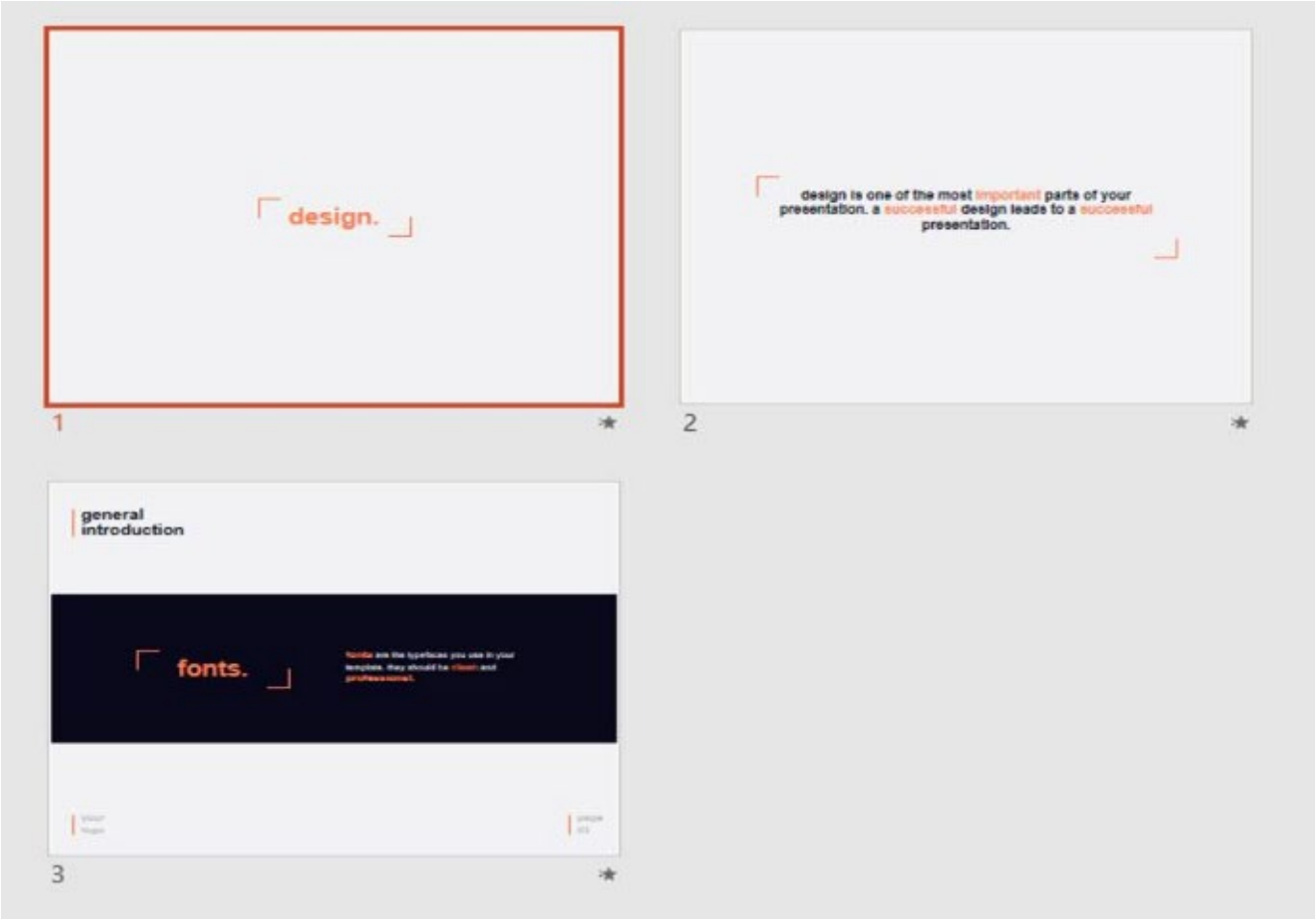
Here's a quick look at the start of a poorly designed presentation:



This example of a presentation design that's off to a bad start makes poor use of fonts and color. Some of the font styles chosen are extremely difficult to read, and the colors don't look good together.

Not only is this design distracting and unattractive, it's also unprofessional. It would make a negative impression on an audience.

Here is the start of a more professional PowerPoint based on a quality template design:



Notice the difference a professional design makes?

The theme is unified. The fonts are professional and readable. The colors look good together. The overall effect is a polished look that would leave a positive impression on the audience.

Note: The effective presentation is based on the Simplicity PowerPoint template available through GraphicRiver.

Hire a Designer

We've touched on some of the most important elements of design here. Remember, the appearance of your presentation influences your audience's perception of both you and the information you are presenting.

For more detailed information on how to design an effective presentation, study the following *Envato Tuts+* presentation tutorials:

- **How to Make Your PowerPoint Presentation Design Better**
- **10 Helpful Presentation Design Tips**

Your Design Takeaway

It's critical to remember that presentation design is important. A good design will contribute to your presentation's overall success.

Section 4. Deliver a Presentation With Audience Impact

There are two aspects of your presentation that affect your delivery:

1. The facility where you give your speech
2. You, the speaker

In this section, we discuss what to look for in a good presentation venue. We also cover what happens when you give your presentation, so you can be more confident going in. This will help you deliver a better presentation with more impact.

What to Look for in a Speaking Venue

Let's take a closer look at what you need from the facility where you'll make your presentation.

Double-check that the conference facility where you will be giving your presentation has the proper equipment on hand before the day of your presentation. At a minimum, you'll need:

- Adequate seating
- Cables for your equipment
- Computer with keyboard and mouse
- Electrical outlets
- Microphone and other sound equipment
- Remote
- Screen (or at least a blank wall)
- Video adapter
- Working projector

Remember, whatever the facility doesn't provide you'll have to bring yourself or arrange to get.

If you can, arrive early to check out the room and test the equipment. There's nothing worse than getting up to give a presentation only to find out that your equipment is faulty.

Also, check to make sure the room is a comfortable temperature. If it's too hot or too cold, adjust the thermostat to a more comfortable temperature before your audience arrives.

The seating arrangement is also important. While there may be enough chairs in the room, they may not all be facing the screen.

If lots of people have to sit with their backs to your presentation or crane their necks to see it, it can make you less effective as a speaker. Ask the facility to arrange the chairs so that everyone will be able to see your presentation comfortably.

How to Give a Great Presentation (The Talking Part)

For many, actually giving the presentation is the most frightening part of the whole experience. If you're someone who fears public speaking, practice and preparation can help you overcome that fear.

There are techniques you can use to improve your speaking ability. Here are a few tips to help your presentation go smoothly:

Know in advance what you're going to say. Have a script on hand, in case you freeze during the presentation—but don't actually read from the script unless you must. Practice your presentation enough so that you don't need to rely on your script. Don't try to "wing it." Presentations made without any preparation often fall short.

Be conscious of personal habits. Most speakers have distracting habits or tics they aren't even aware of. Even if you try to catch yourself, you may not be aware of the negative things you are doing while you speak.

One way to identify any potential problems is to have a trusted friend or family member listen to you practice. They may notice things about how you give your presentation that you don't even realize you're doing. Ask them to watch for problem areas like:

- Unnecessary interjections such as "um," "like," and "you know."
- Body language such as bad posture, pacing nervously, or awkward gestures.
- Speaking so softly that the audience can't tell what you're saying.
- Speaking so quickly that listeners can't follow your presentation.
- Mumbling, stuttering, or otherwise speaking indistinctly.

- Apologizing excessively, which projects a lack of confidence.
- Not making eye contact with anyone in the audience.
- Giving a monotone delivery of your speech.

As you practice, work to eliminate your problem areas. The more often you practice your speech, the more confident and comfortable you should become. When the time comes to give your presentation, your audience will pick up on your increased confidence and be more receptive to what you say.

Also, ask your friend or colleague to time your speech. This helps you find out whether you have enough material. Be careful to stay within your allotted time. Unless they are very interested in your topic, most audiences will become annoyed with a speaker who goes into overtime. Also, if your presentation runs over, you may throw off the other speakers, who will have to shorten their own presentations to fit the remaining time.

If a friend, family member, or colleague is unavailable to listen to you practice, use a webcam or your smartphone or other device to record your presentation. As you play it back, look for problem areas where you need to improve. You can also use your recording device to time your presentation right.

The day before your presentation, be sure to eat a good meal and get a good night's sleep. The morning of your presentation, don't skip breakfast. Select an outfit to wear that is both comfortable and professional. Plan your day so that you arrive at the location where the presentation will be held early—but not too early.

Giving presentations is one of those skills that improve with practice. The more often you give a presentation, the easier it will be for you. Organizations like Toastmasters International and professional meetups provide opportunities for you to practice and improve your speaking skills.

A Final Word About Self-Confidence

If you get nervous when you have to give a presentation, you're not the only one. Most speakers suffer from a degree of stage fright, also known as presentation anxiety. It's a particularly common problem for speakers who are new to giving presentations.

The downside about nerves is that your audience can sometimes tell when you are nervous or lack confidence. Nervous gestures and habits can distract them from your message.

Fortunately, for those of us with stage fright, there are methods to cope with a case of nerves. Practice and feeling prepared really does help improve your confidence. Here are some tips to follow if you find yourself suffering from presentation anxiety while you're speaking:

- Take a deep breath and collect your thoughts.
- If you have a friend in the audience, look directly at them for encouragement.
- If you make a mistake, don't stop. Pause if you must, but keep going.
- Focus on audience members, but don't stare at any one person.
- Imagine a successful outcome to your presentation.

Your audience is only human. Most people will understand if there are a few rough spots in your presentation. You're probably far more critical of your speaking ability than your audience. If you make minor mistakes in your presentation, they may not even notice.

For more tips on how to fight presentation anxiety, review the *Envato Tuts+* tutorial: How to Give a Good Presentation—Without Anxiety.

Learn More

To learn more about how to deliver a great presentation, study these *Envato Tuts+* tutorials:

- **How to Make a Persuasive PowerPoint Presentation**
- **How to Overcome Your Fear of Public Speaking**

Your Presentation Delivery Takeaway

To deliver a great presentation with impact, consider your facility and your speaking mannerisms. Both play an equal role in your success.

Section 5. Give Your Presentation Extra Oomph

Once you've mastered the presentation basics, you may want to add a little more to your speech. There are extra things that you can do to make your presentation's message more memorable.

In this section, we'll look at five extras that you can use to give your presentation some extra oomph.

For even more creative presentation ideas, take a look at this *Envato Tuts+* tutorial: 10 Creative Presentation Ideas: That Will Inspire Your Audience to Action.

Now, let's examine some presentation elements that will add some excitement and help your presentation leave a lasting impression on your audience:

1. Add a Human Element

People relate well to topics they can put a human face with. One way to really get your message across is to add a human element to your presentation.

There are several ways to incorporate a human element into your presentation. The first would be to tell a story. For example, if you're talking about the problem of hunger, you could incorporate an image of a →

hungry child into your slides. While the audience is looking at the child's face, tell their story.

For example, you could say something like this:

"This is Adisa. Like 75% of all children in this country, she doesn't get enough to eat. On a typical day, she doesn't get breakfast at home. If she goes to school, her school provides a simple lunch of a sandwich and a piece of fruit. If she doesn't go to school, she doesn't have lunch. For dinner, her family usually eats a cup of rice—if it is available. On rare occasions, they have a piece of chicken or fish."

Now, instead of a bunch of dry statistics about hunger that they are likely to forget, your audience is focused on the problem in a more personal way.

Another way to engage your audience would be to bring in an expert. In a presentation on hunger, for example, instead of showing a picture of a hungry child, you could bring in a medical specialist who would recount a few of their experiences treating hungry children in the region you're presenting on.

2. Involve the Audience

Another way to capture your audience's attention is to involve them in your presentation.

Audience involvement could be as simple as asking for a show of hands. Using the example of the presentation on hunger, you could ask a simple question like: "How many of you ate lunch today? Let me see a show of hands."

Or you could ask for a volunteer from the audience to help you illustrate a simple point using a visual representation. Continuing with the hunger illustration, here's an example of how you could use a volunteer to illustrate your main point.

Give your volunteer two clear glass bowls and a bag of marbles. In one bowl, have your volunteer place a marble in the bowl for every pound of food consumed by the average person in the country with the problem in a month.

In the other bowl, have your volunteer place a marble in the bowl for every pound of food consumed in a month by the average person in the U.S., the U.K., or Australia. At the end of the exercise, one bowl should be quite a bit fuller than the other.

3. Show a Compelling Image

Have you ever had an image you couldn't get out of your head?

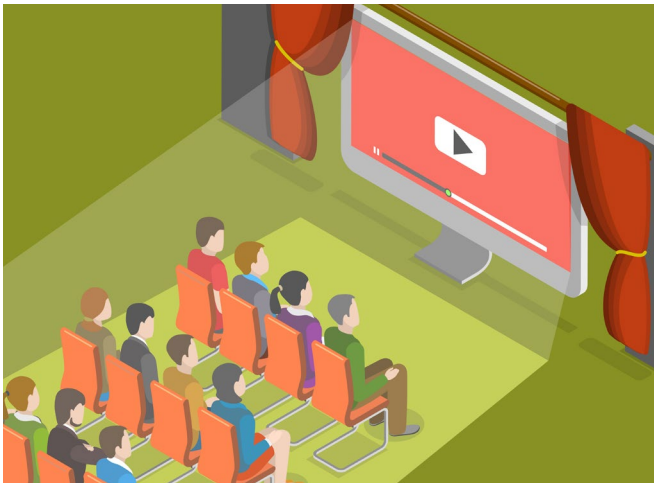
If you have, you understand the power of images. A unique and compelling image can be a remarkable addition to your presentation. The trick is, the image must be powerful and move your audience. Most ordinary snapshots won't do.

Images are powerful when they:

- Stir an emotion.
- Stimulate the imagination.
- Capture an important moment.

Consider the metaphor that the image represents and how it connects to the point you're aiming to make. The composition of your image is also important. Make sure that your image is sharp and that there is enough contrast so that the subject matter is clear. Avoid images with too much happening.

When choosing an image for your presentation, remember that not all images that you find online are free for use. Before adding an image to your presentation, make sure that you own the rights to present it. At Envato Elements, you can find royalty-free stock images from our community of photographers.



4. Add a Video or Animation

Today's audience is accustomed to media, so a short video or animation can be an effective addition to your presentation. Other special effects can also make an impact.

The general rule to keep in mind about videos and other special effects is this: more is less. A single, well-chosen video or other special effect will be more memorable than if you clutter your presentation with videos and other special effects on nearly every slide.

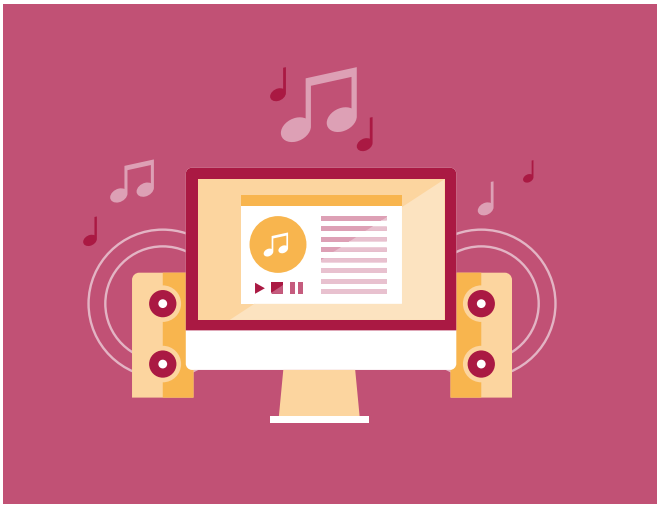
Take care not to distract your audience or disrupt the flow of your presentation. Also, when it comes to videos, be wary about letting your video take over your presentation. The video you choose should enhance your message, but not overpower your presentation.

5. Add Music

Last, but not least, you can add extra impact to your presentation by adding music. Music can be especially effective when used in the opening and closing of a presentation.

Like a video and other types of media, music can be overdone. Once again, less is more. Don't let your music overpower your speaking or let it play so loudly that the main speaker can't be heard.

Also, remember that most music is covered under copyright law. So you can't just incorporate your favorite hit songs into your presentation unless you have permission to do so. At Envato's AudioJungle, however, you can purchase affordable royalty-free music and audio tracks.



Your Takeaway

Creativity can be the extra element that helps your audience relate to your presentation. Elements such as storytelling, audience participation, powerful images, video and other special effects, or music can truly make your presentation memorable.

Conclusion

If you're asked to give a presentation, your first response might be, "Oh no." That's perfectly understandable. Public speaking can be scary.

But apply the information in this book to turn that "Oh no" into an "Oh yes." Armed with the right know-how and skills, you can be confident that your presentation will be well received. Instead of fearing presentations, you'll begin to see them as the opportunity they are.

For more quick tips on how to improve your presentations, review: 37 Effective PowerPoint Presentation Tips.

Also, to get even more from this eBook, refer to the quick reference checklist included in your download: **Making Great Presentations - Checklist**. Keep it handy while you develop your next presentation.

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