

DesignLab

University of Wisconsin-Madison

Design Principles for Presentations

CONCEPTUAL: Planning your presentation

- What is your main idea/argument?
- What are your goals?
- Who is your audience?
- Determine the scope and tone of your presentation based on the main idea and audience

AESTHETIC: Making your slides

Design CRAP

CONTRAST



- Vary sizes, colors, line density, to create visual hierarchies.
- To make sure that text is easily readable, use contrast in color (light on dark or dark on light).
- For example, mix a san-serif header with a serif body text font. (Note: avoid using more than 2 fonts in a presentation).

REPETITION



- Repeat visual elements such as color, shapes, textures, borders, and fonts to unify the infographic.
- For example, use a color from an image or icon within an image as a header color or border color. (Note: avoid using too many colors. Less is more.)

ALIGNMENT



- Place every element on the page with intention (alignment) to create visual connections.
- Beware, PowerPoint has limited alignment tools (especially in older versions). Be sure to use the rulers to help with alignment.

PROXIMITY



- Placing elements close together creates a relationship between the elements. Try to create visual units using proximity.
- For example, a caption to an image should be located very close to that image.

Follow us on social media!

@JWDDesignLab   

<http://designlab.wisc.edu>

HOURS:

Monday	1-5pm
Tuesday	11am-5pm
Wednesday	1-7pm
Thursday	1-5pm
Friday	11am-3pm

TECHNICAL: Clarity in execution & Tools used competently

- Use software you know - PowerPoint, Keynote, Google Slides, Canva
- Design wisely - Don't use templates from PowerPoint! Use Canva or make your own templates
- Use animations and bullets sparingly
- Find reusable and high-quality images (Creative Commons Zero license is your friend)

Visualization:

- Show, Don't Tell - Use images rather than text where possible, which helps create emphasis
- Find images, graphs, diagrams, and other designs to tell a visually pleasing story
- Data - use numbers and images/icons to help illustrate the data
 - Create your own charts/data where possible
- Quotes - Put block quotes on the screen to emphasize the important information
- Citations - Be sure to include them on the relevant slide

Ethos:

- Convey professionalism as a general principle
 - Brand yourself - build a color and font kit that you can use across handouts, slides, and even your own personal website, CV/resume, and portfolio
- Typos matter - be sure to check for both grammar and spelling
- Plan for Disaster
 - Save early, save often - and back up your files online (Box, Dropbox, Google Drive)
 - Bring the right adapters for your computer
 - Know the layout of the room: podium or open stage? Walking room?
 - Bring a PDF backup - in case the fonts are not on the presenter computer!
- Rehearse! Rehearse! Rehearse!

GET HELP: DesignLab is here for you!




Make an Appointment or Drop-In

- We have 15-minute, 30-minute, and 60-minute appointments to help with your presentation(s)
- We can help at any part of your presentation creation process, from brainstorming the first concepts to polishing the nearly finished project

Online Resources

- Go to our Resources page to find Design Tools and Free Resources (such as image galleries, font galleries, etc.)
- Go to Resources > Presentations and Posters to get examples, recommended software programs, and links to software help

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