

**“I know you can't read this, but...”:  
Principles of Effective Presentations for  
Surgery Education**

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Vanderbilt University  
Nashville, TN  
**ARCS**  
**2009 Surgical Education Week**  
Salt Lake City



**PowerPoint “Pointers”**





## What About Font Style, Backgrounds, and Color?



### Font Tips

Font is the term for style for type face. A type font is either serif or sans serif.

Serif means stroke or line in German and refers to the little extras at the edge of letters.

Sans serif (without a stroke) is better for projection, in general.

All of this print is 32 point regular (not bold).



## Choose san serif font

- Improving PowerPoint Readability--Arial
- Improving PowerPoint Readability—Times New Roman
- **Improving PowerPoint Readability—Arial Black**
- Improving PowerPoint Readability--Baskerville
- **Improving PowerPoint Readability--Arial Rounded**



## Use 20 pt or larger font

- Improving PowerPoint Readability--Arial
- Improving PowerPoint Readability—Times New Roman
- **Improving PowerPoint Readability—Arial Black**
- Improving PowerPoint Readability--Baskerville
- **Improving PowerPoint Readability--Arial Rounded**

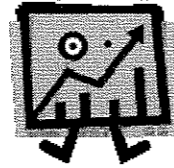
### 18 font

- Improving PowerPoint Readability--Arial
- Improving PowerPoint Readability—Times New Roman
- **Improving PowerPoint Readability—Arial Black**
- Improving PowerPoint Readability--Baskerville
- **Improving PowerPoint Readability--Arial Rounded**

### 16 font

- Improving PowerPoint Readability--Arial
- Improving PowerPoint Readability—Times New Roman
- **Improving PowerPoint Readability—Arial Black**
- Improving PowerPoint Readability--Baskerville
- **Improving PowerPoint Readability--Arial Rounded**

## Avoid excess animations



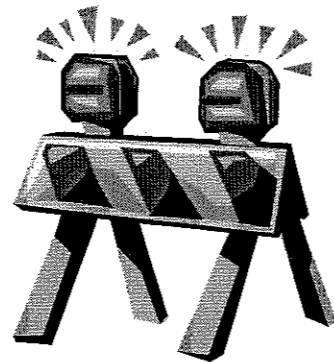
If on the screen too long, animations are VERY (Yes, I'm shouting) tedious, not to mention distracting – Aargh!!

**Do you have a headache yet?**



## Warning

Some templates can be dangerous to your presentation!!



Make your own template—  
learn to  
use the slide master

Found under “View” tab in Microsoft 2007  
and earlier versions



Click to edit Master title style

- Click to edit Master text styles
  - Second level
    - Third level
      - Fourth level
        - » Fifth level

**ARCS**

Designed by a surgery  
resident and now the  
“VU Surgery” template



Vanderbilt Surgery

## What's Wrong with Built-In Templates?

Many backgrounds are inappropriate for  
scientific or academic subject matter—in  
my opinion.

Many are just plain ugly—in my opinion.

Templates often distract, obscure, or  
compete.

Font color and size are not always easily  
readable when default settings are used—  
and why use a template if you are planning  
to override defaults???

Some color contrasts of type against  
background are painful.



Watch out for gradation and uneven backgrounds



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## Avoid using red on blue

Colorblind people cannot see red print on a blue background

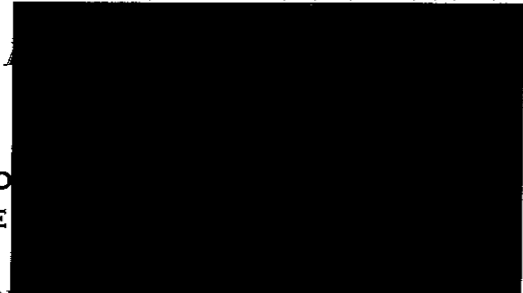


## Avoid using red on blue

Colorblind people cannot see red print on a blue background

## Avoid all capital letters and italics

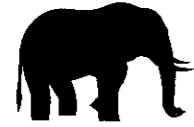
- IMPROVING POWERPOINT READABILITY—Algerian
- *IMPROVING POWERPOINT READABILITY—CASTELLAR*
- IMPROVING POWERPOINT READABILITY—COPPERPLATE
- *IMPROVING POWERPOINT READABILITY—Times New Roman*
- IMPROVING POWERPOINT READABILITY—Arial Rounded



## Don't overcrowd a slide

IMPROVING POWERPOINT READABILITY--  
*IMPROVING POWERPOINT READABILITY*  
IMPROVING POWERPOINT READABILITY  
*IMPROVING POWERPOINT READABILITY*  
IMPROVING POWERPOINT READABILITY





## Graphics

Invest in Photoshop or some other graphics software to handle your graphics—take a class if possible

Be aware of the resolution of your graphics—72 dpi (dots per inch) is all that most projections need. Note size of clipart which can vary wildly.

“Compress” is hidden in PowerPoint under Format—Picture. All pictures/graphics can be compressed simultaneously if necessary to reduce file size.

Giant files with many photos, x-rays, etc., cause storage and computer problems. Keep size and resolution to a minimum.

**Confession:** Many of my PowerPoint files are huge due to the nature of the material and I've crashed several programs—most survived but that's a time bandit

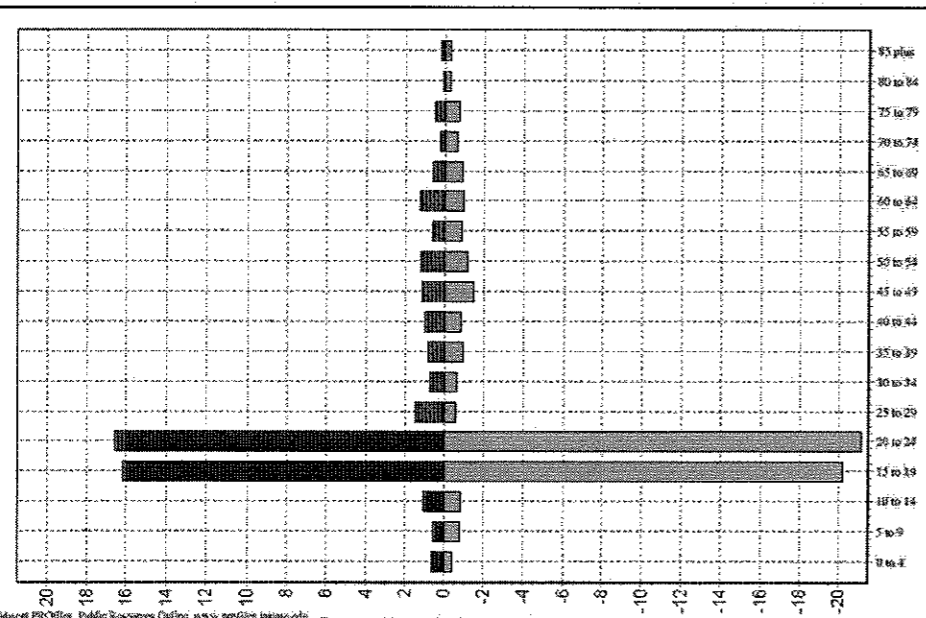
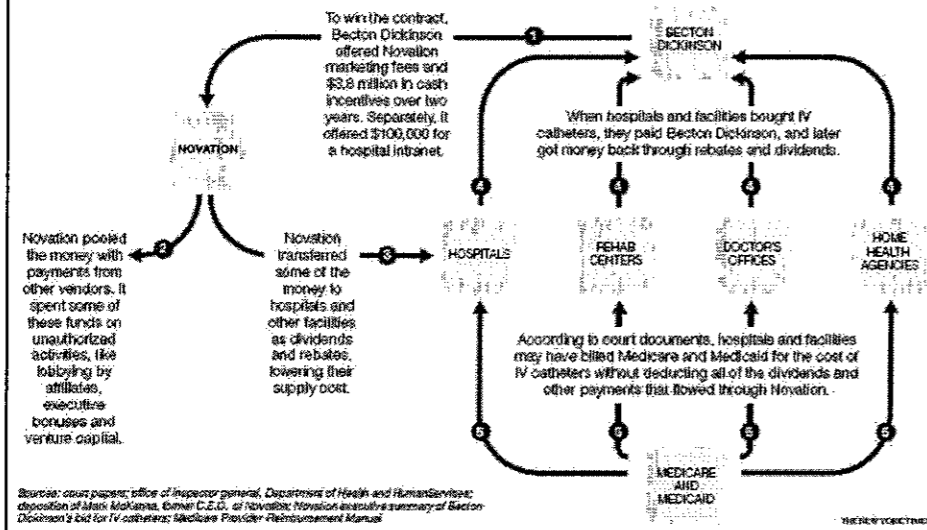


**Avoid graphics that are unreadable**



### Anatomy of a Whistle-Blower's Claim: The Money Trail

To get discounts on medical supplies, most hospitals use group purchasing organizations, like Novation, to negotiate deals for them. According to Cynthia Fitzgerald, a former employee of Novation and plaintiff in a whistle-blower lawsuit, improper sales practices between supply companies and Novation may be draining many millions of dollars from Medicare and Medicaid. Here is one example, drawn from papers filed in her suit, other litigation and government reports, showing a contract for IV catheters awarded to Becton Dickinson. Becton says Ms. Fitzgerald's claims are "without merit."



Midwest PRORes, Public Resources Online, [www.pror.es.iastate.edu](http://www.pror.es.iastate.edu)  
 Department of Economics, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa  
<http://oh.profiles.iastate.edu/census/population/city.asp?StateAbb=oh&CityFips=29246>

## Using Bullets

- One item under a main point does not warrant a bullet point



## Using Bullets

One item under a main point  
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## Use the spelling check and read critically



Did you know  
PowerPoint had  
this?

Read critically for homonyms such as  
roll & role, too & two & to, and any  
other typo that is not a misspelling



## Make a Poster with PP

- Go to File (or Design in 2007),
- Page Set-up,
- Slides sized for---Custom
- Set the dimensions
- Create
  - Use entire surface as canvas
  - Place a number of PP slides in the space



- Always view each slide in “Slide Show” view as you are developing your presentation
- Don’t view your presentation on a screen for the first time at the venue
- Project it first and find the bugs
- Avoid placing text too close to any edge



When using PowerPoint, ALWAYS try out your laptop connection or your disk or flash drive to make certain the file will appear for projection. Load to the desktop if allowed.

If you have video components, try them out as well. Resolution incompatibilities can cause the video portions to fail.



### Suggestions for Effective PowerPoint

- Make your own template—learn to use the slide master
- Choose sans serif font
- Use 20 pt or larger font
- Avoid ALL-CAPS, *italics*, and red-on-blue
- Don't overcrowd a slide
- Avoid graphics that are unreadable
- Watch out for gradation and uneven backgrounds
- Use the spelling check
- Always practice the presentation by projection



\* Always go ahead of time to the room to try out the file and avoid compatibility issues (unless the talk is submitted ahead of time)



# Speaking in Public



## Demosthenes' Principles of Public Speaking

**Demosthenes was a famous classical  
orator in Athens, Greece\*—384-322 BCE**

**Some scholars theorize that the first  
organized academic discipline was  
Rhetoric**

**Rhetoric, also known as the Art of  
Persuasion, is the parent of Public  
Speaking**



## **Demosthenes' Principles**

- **Know your audience**
- **Be prepared**
- **Be understandable**
- **Hold their attention**



**Demosthenes' Four Points are  
Universal—For Speeches, Lectures,  
and all Occasions, with or without  
Electronic Assistance**



## 1. Know your audience

- Who are you addressing? Take time to find out.
- Canned talks may be time-savers but must be tailored to suit the audience
- Are they all professionals? Will spouses or guests be present? Are ages mixed?
- Administrative personnel, residents, and surgeons are distinct audiences



## 2. Be prepared

- Know where you are presenting. Make a note of the host, occasion, institution, and use in the introduction—people love the personal touch (I “borrow” their logo & use on intro slide)
- Before you leave home, ask how much time you have and inquire about computer compatibility—Mac vs. PC, etc.
- Project your talk and practice it out loud at home. Projection will reveal color and layout problems as well as readability
- Fit the material to the time given—too much is as bad as too little—count on a late start



- Canned talks are great but must be adjusted to the occasion, time, and audience
- PowerPoint is very flexible—no excuses! If you have too much material, hide slides (Found under “Slide Show”) rather than race through and perhaps skip something vital and then be forced to rerun and hunt.
- Pay attention to your clothing



## Room & Equipment

- Always go ahead of time to the room where you will speak or give a presentation and make certain the system and the microphone are working.
- If you need a pointer, take your own or check on availability.
- Try out the projector (LCD or 35 mm)—do your slides and/or presentation work with their equipment? Loading everything ahead of time is recommended.



- The best view is found in front, not to the side—if you do your own set-up, project parallel to the long axis of the room if possible
- Learn how the microphone works: lavalier or stationary—Test the volume level--USE IT!
- Know how to adjust the lights

**Never assume the person who asks you to speak is computer-literate—ask about IT support if you have video, DVD, or a complex presentation**



## Copyright Issues

Give credit where due. When you “liberate” graphics or quote data, give their source.

Bibliographical research and reference is another lecture.



## Patient Information

Be careful to disguise patient information

If your talk will be uploaded on your institution's Web site, make certain that it will be password protected if you have copyrighted materials or patient information



## 3. Be Understandable

- If you "know your audience," you will adjust the content to be suitable
- Speak loudly enough to be heard—with or without the mike
- Look at the audience and not just at your notes—results from "Be prepared." When using PowerPoint, look at the monitor & not the screen—don't turn your back on your audience
- Try not to speak hurriedly—if you have too much material for the time allotted, you probably failed "Be prepared."
- Pronounce words clearly—practice makes perfect



## 4. Hold Their Attention

- Be certain you can be heard – remember to check your equipment and the room
- Vary your tone of voice—monotones are monotonous and soporific. Project interest and excitement in your own topic—it's contagious!
- Make eye contact—it's “engaging”
- Prepare material appropriate to your audience
- Humor can be effective but use it carefully—avoid the politically incorrect



## More Tips for Public Speaking



## Don't Apologize!!

For your presentation or unworthiness  
**If you were invited, someone  
thinks you're good and doesn't  
want to be proven wrong before  
you start!**

If you drop something

If you cough or clear your throat



## "Thank you"

**at the conclusion is not recommended**

Offer thanks in the beginning—if you feel that it  
is necessary

Strong talks should end with a strong concluding  
remark---then project a black or white slide  
and use body language to signify you are  
finished

The audience owes you thanks

A dramatic pause is effective—Then calling for  
questions is OK or look over to your host or sit  
down



## Speaking on the Phone

When you leave a voice message

- Speak slowly and clearly
- If you want to be called back, give the number slowly and carefully 2 times



## PowerPoint Review

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## **Presentation Review**

- **Know your audience**
- **Be prepared**
- **Be understandable**
- **Hold their attention**
- **Practice your presentations**



Questions & Other Issues

