The Communications Lab @ HGSE Presents...

PowerPoint Basics

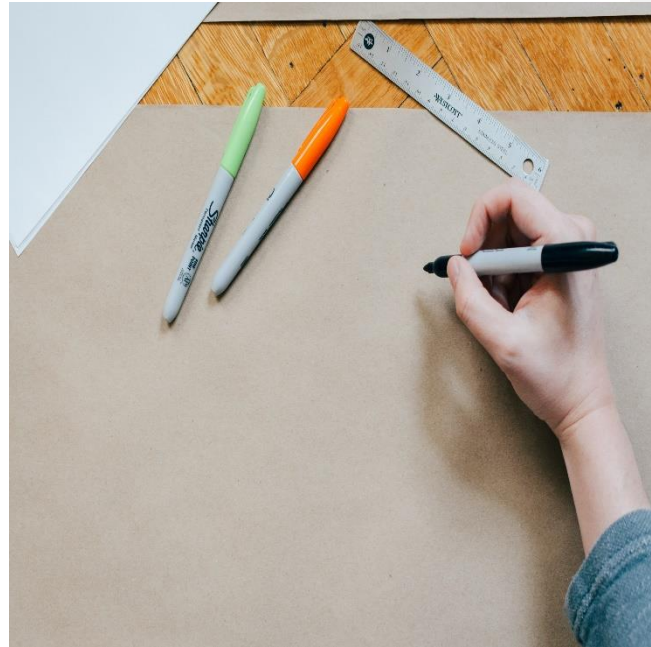## Preparing & Delivering Professional Presentations

WHAT WE DO

—

We are a HGSE resource created to help graduate students develop their presentation skills and to provide a space and opportunity for students to cultivate their oral and visual communication skills

1

Workshops

2

Webinars

3

Consultations

WHO WE ARE

Ning Zou

Associate Director for Student Academic Services & Learning Design and a research librarian. She oversees Gutman Library's Writing Services and the Communications Lab in addition to providing research consultations and leading the library's learning design projects

MG Prezioso

Doctoral candidate at Harvard University and HGSE. MG studies the intersection of psychology and literature. Specifically, she is interested in the process of children's narrative absorption, as well as how literature contributes to students' moral development and identity formation.

https://communicate.gse.harvard.edu/communicationslab

PRESENTATION BASICS

WORKSHOP AGENDA

01 PRESENTATION DO'S AND DON'T

02 INTRO TO STORYBOARDING

03 INTRO TO SLIDE BUILDING

04 PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE

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 # PRESENTATION DO'S AND DON'T

DO #1
"Structure Your Deck"

- **Scalable**

  o Opening

  o Arguments with supporting details

  o Closing

- **Deck Structures**

  o Problem -> Pathway -> Solution

  o Problem -> Solution -> Reasoning

PRESENTATION DO'S AND DON'T

DO #2
"Visualize Your Idea"

- **Embrace PowerPoints Strengths**
  - o Multimedia – pictures, videos, text
  - o "A picture is worth a 1,000 words"
- **Types of Visualizations**
  - o Pictures
  - o Diagrams / Frameworks
  - o Graphs
  - o Others

PRESENTATION DO'S AND DON'T

DO #3
"Be Consistent"

- **Color Scheme – Pick One & Stick With It**
  - o Use but a few matching colors
  - o Embrace color gradients
- **Deck Themes – Pick One & Stick With It**
  - o Power-User add-in
  - o SlideModel
  - o Envato Elements
- **Fonts**

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PRESENTATION DO'S AND DON'T

DO #4
"Solicit Feedback"

- **Deck Outline**
  - o Agree on outline before drafting slides on paper
  - o Importance of storyboarding

- **Slide Designs**
  - o Design first via rough sketches
  - o Highlight particularly troublesome slides OR particularly important

- **Presentation – Proofread & Practice!**

 # PRESENTATION DO'S AND DON'T

DO #5
"Use Backups"

- **Email**
- **Cloud**
  - o OneDrive
  - o Google Docs
- **USB / External Hard Drive**
- **Ctrl + S is your friend – Version Control**

DON'T #1
"Overload Slides"

- **Text**
  - All text slides are a quick and surefire way to lose your audience
  - Avoid long paragraphs and excessive bullet points

- **Graphs**

- **Key Points**
  1) Stick to 1 key point per slide
  2) Don't overwhelm the audience

 # PRESENTATION DO'S AND DON'T

DON'T #2
"Read Word-For-Word"

- **Word-for-Word Reading**

  - The audience can read faster than you can talk

  - Boring – great way to lose your audience's attention

  - May indicate a lack of preparation

- **If needed, create presentation notes for your eyes only**

PRESENTATION DO'S AND DON'T

DON'T #3
"Use ClipArt"

- **This often looks unprofessional**
  - Know your audience
- **Avoid copyright infringement – using Google searched images**
- **Freely Usable Image Repositories**
  - Unsplash
  - Burst
  - Pixabay
  - Others

PRESENTATION DO'S AND DON'T

DON'T #4
"Wing It"

- **Practice, Practice, Practice**
  - With others
  - By yourself
- **Use slides notes if this helps**
- **Be rehearsed and polished, but not overly so**
  - Sharp and professional
  - BUT don't be a robot

PRESENTATION DO'S AND DON'T

DON'T #5
"Use Filler Words"

- **Avoid "Ums", "Ohs", "Erms"**
  - This is tough!
  - Gets better with practice
- **Pauses are okay**
- **Find a speaking cadence you feel comfortable and project confidence**
- **Check-in with your audience**

SUMMARY PRESENTATION DO'S

Embrace these quick wins and you're well on your way to having professional slides that are client friendly and succinctly communicate key points while keeping the audience engaged

DO #1

Structure Your Deck

DO #2

Visualize Your Ideas

DO #3

Be Consistent

DO #4

Solicit Feedback

DO #5

Use Backups

PRESENTATION DO'S AND DON'T

SUMMARY PRESENTATION DONT'S

Avoid these common pitfalls and you're well on your way to having professional slides that are client friendly and succinctly communicate key points while keeping the audience engaged

DON'T #1
Overload Slides

DON'T #2
Read Word-for-Word

DON'T #3
Use ClipArt

DON'T #4
Wing-It

DON'T #5
Use Filler Words

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INTRO TO STORYBOARDING

STORYBOARDING WHAT IS IT?

- **A high-level outline of your deck**
  - o Captures key messages and overarching thought of your presentation

- **Contains supporting messages and details**

- **First and essential step of mapping your ideas to PowerPoint**

- **Pencil-Paper Draft**

  - o Key Message -> Supporting Message -> Supporting Details

INTRO TO STORYBOARDING

STORYBOARDING WHY DO IT?

- **Planning before doing**

  o Foundation of your deck

  o Need to know what you're going to do before you do it

- **Helps one craft a presentation that coherent with slides that tie together**

- **Clarify and sharpen language/content**

- **Thinking stage – quite possibly the most important step in designing and creating an effective and professional deck**

STORYBOARDING IN 3 STEPS

1

DRAFT AN OUTLINE

- Key Message
- Supporting Messages
- Supporting facts, details and anecdotes
- Build in deck logic and map out slide sections

2

DRAW SLIDES

- Transition your words from your outline into PowerPoint slides
- Draw them out – create rough sketches of what you what each slide to look like

3

TRANSITION TO POWERPOINT

- Transform your rough sketches from your "wire-frame" into real slides in PowerPoint
- Choose a deck template and stick with it
- Don't recreate the wheel - leverage prefab slides or old slides

STEP 1
Draft An Outline

Essential first step to having an organized, coherent, easy to follow and high impact presentation

- **Key Message 1**
  - Support Message 1
    - ✓ *Supporting Detail*
    - ✓ *Supporting Detail*
  - Support Message 2
    - ✓ *Supporting Detail*
    - ✓ *Supporting Detail*
- **Key Message 2**
  - Support Message 1
    - ✓ *Supporting Detail*
    - ✓ *Supporting Detail*
  - Support Message 2
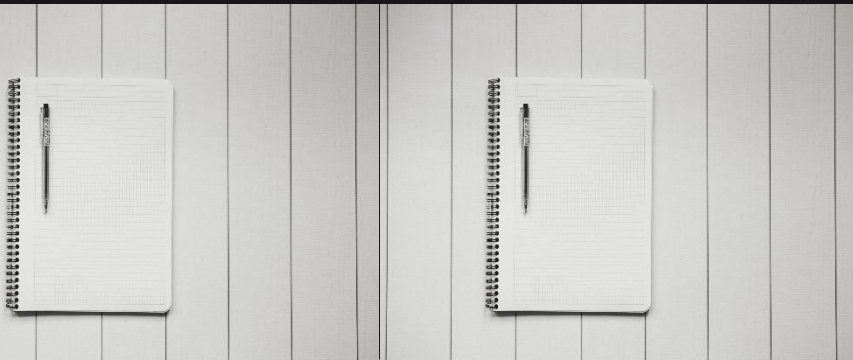   - ✓ *Supporting Detail*
    - ✓ *Supporting Detail*

A

Create An Outline

- **Key Message**
- What are you trying to say?
- One key point
- **Supporting Message**
- Directly tied to key message
- Subpoints
- **Supporting Details**
- Graphs, figures, data, etc.

B

Get Feedback

- "A stitch in time saves nine"
- From team members/colleagues
- Get sign-off on key ideas before moving to slide creation
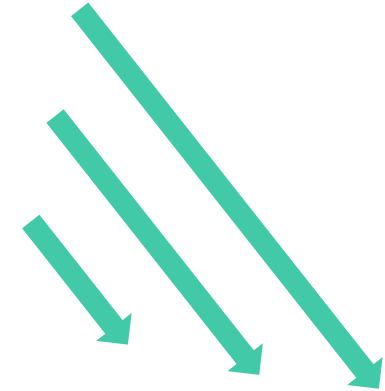
INTRO TO STORYBOARDING

STEP 2
Draw Slides

Convert your written outline to paper/pencil slide drafts. Drawing skills useful but absolutely not required.

- **Key Message 1**
  - Support Message 1
    - ✓ *Supporting Detail*
    - ✓ *Supporting Detail*
  - Support Message 2
    - ✓ *Supporting Detail*
    - ✓ *Supporting Detail*
- **Key Message 2**
  - Support Message 1
    - ✓ *Supporting Detail*
    - ✓ *Supporting Detail*
  - Support Message 2
    - ✓ *Supporting Detail*
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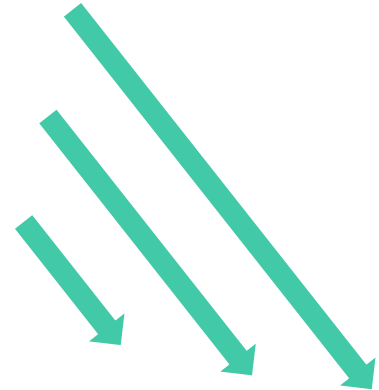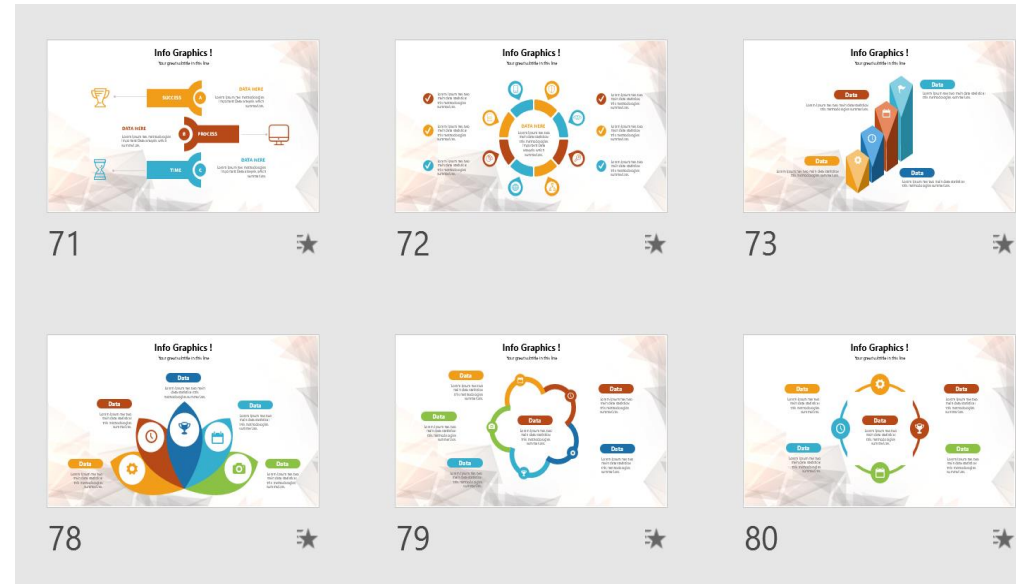
STEP 3
Transition to PowerPoint

This is the final step. Use your outline and drawn slides to guide your deck creation in PowerPoint. The hard thinking is done. Now the fun begins.

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Slide 101: Components

Example Template

1. Topic Sentence

3. SUPPORTING DETAILS

60

50   48

40

Title go Here

30   31

28.7   31

20   18.5   17   12

14

10

0

Category Axis

■ Value one
■ Value two

2. SUPPORTING MESSAGES

1   **Supporting Message A**
    Message here

2   **Supporting Message B**
    Message here

3   **Supporting Message C**
    Message here

1   **Topic Sentence**

2   **Supporting Arguments**

3   **Supporting Details**

What Makes A Good Topic Sentence?

027

1 **Concise**
- Should only be 1-2 sentences
- Be Specific

2 **Clear**
- One key message – highlight the main takeaway

3 **Insightful**
- Tells the reader something they didn't know or see

4 **Readable**
- Not wordy – untechnical, avoids data dumps

"During the 1980s, Australia became the world's largest producer of diamonds"	✓
"During the 1980s, Australia became the world's largest producer of diamonds and has the single largest mine in the world which produces 34 million carats a year. Their largest mining pipe is Argyle mine"	✗
"Diamonds in Australia"	✗

Source: Alley, M., Schreiber, M., Ramsdell, K., & Muffo, J. (2006). How the design of headlines in presentation slides affects audience retention. *Technical Communication*, 53(2), 225-234.

*PRESENTATION BASICS

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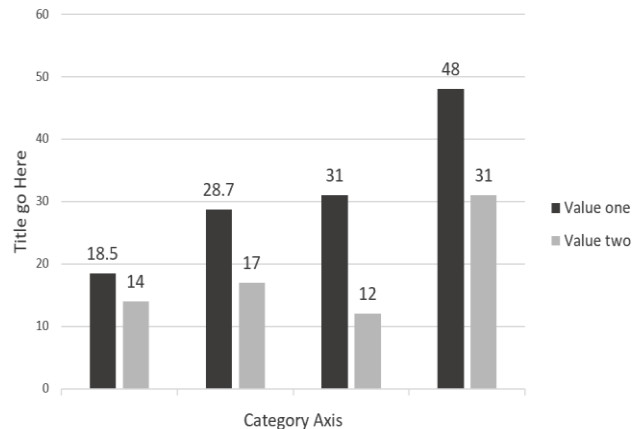**02** INTRO TO STORYBOARDING

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PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE

What Causes Color in Diamonds?

- Fancy colors are rare

- Colors come from impurities or defects

- **<u>Examples:</u>**

- Yellow: nitrogen

- Blue: boron

- Green: uranium (irradiation)

- Red/Pink: unknown

1

Create Your Slide Outline

- o Main Sentence

- o Supporting Messages

- o Supporting Details

2

Draw Your Slide

- o Transition your written outline to an actual slide

- o Remember slide structure!

3

Create Your Slide in PowerPoint

- o Final Step

- o Transfer your drawn slide to PowerPoint!

Source: Alley, M., Schreiber, M., Ramsdell, K., & Muffo, J. (2006). How the design of headlines in presentation slides affects audience retention. *Technical Communication*, 53(2), 225-234.

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In diamonds, rare colors come from impurities, defects and irradiation.

Colors & Impurities

1. **Yellow**: Nitrogen
2. **Blue**: Boron
3. **Green**: Uranium (irradiation)
4.
- **Red/Pink**: Unknown

Source: Alley, M., Schreiber, M., Ramsdell, K., & Muffo, J. (2006). How the design of headlines in presentation slides affects audience retention. *Technical Communication*, 53(2), 225-234.

THANK YOU

HGSE COMMUNICATIONS LAB

https://communicate.gse.harvard.edu/communicationslab