

Effective Slide Deck Design

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Many presentations include a visual aid. Slide decks are the most common type of visual aid for in-class presentations. Creating an effective slide deck requires a lot more than just putting words on a screen or relying on pre-set templates.


Audiences generally cannot concentrate on more than one thing at a time and may lose interest if they are overwhelmed with too much information or too many visuals, so **the key to good slide deck design is limiting yourself:**

- **Try to focus on one main idea per slide** and split complex ideas across multiple slides
- **Avoid writing full sentences.** Instead, include only short phrases and provide additional details aloud
- **Limit the number of elements on each slide.** Elements may include headlines, chunks of text, and images
- **Stick to 2-3 fonts** and use them consistently throughout the entire slide deck
- **Stick to 2-3 colors** and choose ones that contrast with each other and the background
- **Use minimal, consistent animations.** Too many animations can look unprofessional or distract your audience from your content
- **Use no more than 1 image per slide** unless you are directly comparing multiple images

Consider where you most want your audience to look on each slide, and use these **techniques for emphasizing what is most important:**

- **Larger Size** - The headline does not need to be larger than the body-text, especially if it is less important; if you want to emphasize both the title and the body-text, give the title its own slide
- **Brighter Colors** - Considerate use of colors is vital; the eye is naturally drawn to “warning” colors like red and orange. Whatever your color scheme is, use the most eye-catching color to define, outline, or highlight the key idea on each slide
- **Higher Contrast** - Simply changing the shade of text or an object can make it stand out

A good rule of thumb is that every text-slide should take about **1-minute** to present, so be aware of how long your presentation should be when deciding how many slides to include.

OVERCOMPLICATED SLIDE	SIMPLE BUT EFFECTIVE SLIDES
<p>LIMITING YOURSELF</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on one main idea per slide • Avoid writing full sentences • Limit the number of things on each slide • Stick to 2-3 fonts • Stick to 2-3 colors • Use minimal animations • Use no more than 1 image per slide  <p>Show Importance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larger Size • Brighter Colors • Higher Contrast 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One main idea per slide • 2-3 fonts & colors • Avoid full sentences • Minimal animations • Limited number of items on each slide

Your audience may be confused or distracted by a busy slide, while simplified slides keep their focus on you.

LARGER SIZE	LARGER SIZE
<p>The headline does not need to be larger than the body-text, especially if it's less important; if you want to emphasize both the title and the body-text, give the title its own slide</p>	<p>The headline does not need to be larger than the body-text, especially if it's less important; if you want to emphasize both the title and the body-text, give the title its own slide</p>

The eye is naturally drawn to larger text. Audiences will focus on the heading if it is in a larger size font than the body text.

COLORS	COLORS
<p>This is where considerate use of colors is vital, because the eye is naturally drawn to "warning" colors like red and orange; whatever your color scheme is, use the most eye-catching color to define, outline, or highlight the key idea on each slide</p>	<p>This is where considerate use of colors is vital, because the eye is naturally drawn to "warning" colors like red and orange; whatever your color scheme is, use the most eye-catching color to define, outline, or highlight the key idea on each slide</p>

The use of different colors can highlight the most important parts of the slide for the audience.

HIGHER CONTRAST	HIGHER CONTRAST
<p>Without having to use different colors, simply changing the shade of text or an object can make it stand out</p> 	<p>Without having to use different colors, simply changing the shade of text or an object can make it stand out</p> 

The use of shading subtly emphasizes certain items without changing the color scheme.

Works Consulted

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