



Slides... the last sausage on the speakers barbecue?

As speakers we all know some of the key things we need to do to excel: Be professional, tell great stories, engage with our audience and give people plenty to 'take away'. But often I think we can leave something out — our slides...

I have seen three types of speakers - speakers who never use slides, speakers who use great slides and speakers who use dull ones. Can you remember a slide with eight bullet points in Times New Roman? Death by Powerpoint needs to die once and for all.



Big and bold

I understand that slide design isn't the main purpose of our talks however if we neglect our slides we have missed an opportunity to be even better than we are now.

Believe it or not people have commented on my slides after a presentation and often people remember me partly from the slides that I use. Slides like a good story can be memorable, it's part of our job to be memorable. Slides are another tool in our toolbox.



A slide I use for talking about body language

Take notice of billboards next time you pass them in the car. How many words do they have on them? What is their key element? What can we learn from them in our slide design?



A bit of fun to raise a titter



The coin brings a dull slide alive

Here are a few guidelines of how we can make our slides look even better and give you an even greater edge to your speaking.



Use real images from your life

We don't have to be a designer to have great slides but we do have to think like a designer, that's really easy - put the following steps into practice and watch your slides change for the better...



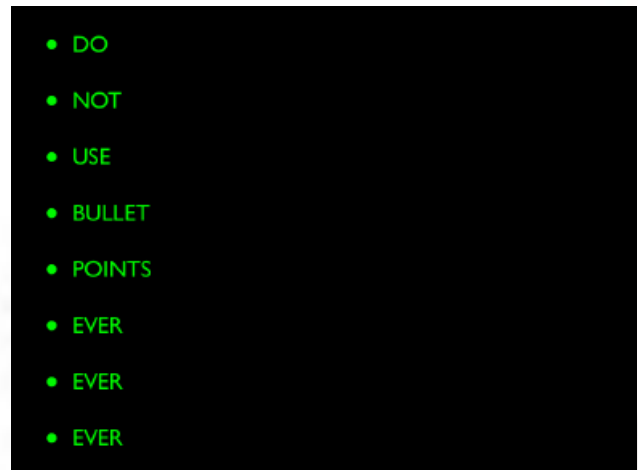
Add a "yeah I remember him" moment

- Slides are for the audience, not for the speaker.



See how the image is filling the screen?

- Bullets are for guns not slides



The golden rule!

- Keep them big bold and visual

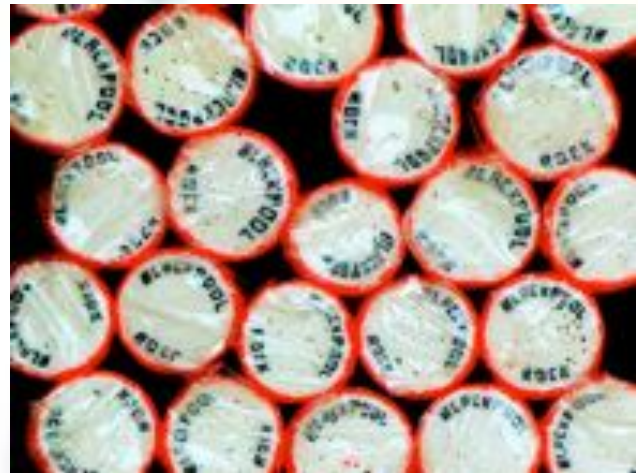


Simple colour use (on a plain background)



Voted the worlds worst slide! Keep it simple

- Grasp the rule of thirds - let a picture or text fill one or two thirds of the slide
- Don't ever use cheesy clipart or sounds
- Keep your transitions simple or switched off



Grab images on your phone and use them!

- Great images can be found or bought try - www.flickr.com/creativecommons or www.istockphoto.com or www.dreamstime.com.

As as Garr Reynolds (author of Presentation Zen) says don't be afraid of empty space on a slide

For some more help on slide design, visit my page - www.squidoo.com/goodslides, search Slideshare.net for good practice, you can even get professional help like the guys at www.eyefulpresentations.co.uk, or buy me a beer at the PSA convention!

www.cuttothechase.co.uk



Keep it simple

- Use some nice fonts (remember fonts don't travel well so remember to use your laptop if your presentation had fancy fonts) try www.dafont.com or www.myfonts.com