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# How to Make an Effective PowerPoint Presentation

## Introduction

This Guide will save you time and help you create an engaging and effective PowerPoint presentation.

You may be used to preparing a presentation by opening up PowerPoint and creating slides with bullet-points on them. Using this Guide you'll work out what you want to say *before* you design any PowerPoint slides.

## **Presentation Planner**

The Guide uses the following planner to create a presentation. The last page of the guide is a blank Presentation Planner for you to use to plan your presentation as you work through the guide.



## **Demo presentation**

As well as describing each step of the process, I've provided an example of each step so that you can see the planning process in action.

## More resources

This guide has just the information you need to plan your presentation, so that you can spend time planning rather than reading. For more explanation on each of the steps see the links to posts on my blog.



## Step 1: Craft your Key Message

There are two basic types of key message:

#### Informative key message

If you want to inform your audience, your key message will be the most important point you want your audience to remember.

## Persuasive key message

If you want to persuade your audience, your key message will be the action you want them to take.

Express this in one clear and succinct sentence. That's your key message. Everything else in your presentation will support that key message.

Here's the key message for the demo presentation:

Lend \$25 to a person on Kiva

Resources

How to craft a memorable key message in 10 minutes A simple and concrete key message Six ways to take charge of what your audience remembers

## Step 2: Identify your audience's questions

What are the top three questions your audience will have once you've stated your Key Message? The body of your presentation will answer these questions.

Imagine a dialogue with the people in your audience which starts with your key message:





These questions then form the structure of your presentation.



If you're not sure what your audience would want to know, ask someone who is representative of your audience.

Resources Answer your audience's questions - how AI Gore does it

## Step 3: Write assertions

An assertion is a complete sentence which expresses the answer to each question in a clear and succinct manner.

You might be tempted to write bullet-points. Writing a complete sentence forces you to think carefully about what you want to get across. It will stop you from waffling.



You may have more than one assertion in answer to each question. That's fine. And they don't have to be evenly distributed across the boxes.

## Step 4: Back-up each assertion

Each assertion should be backed up by evidence or an explanation. There are three main types of evidence:

## Example or story

These are the easiest form of evidence to come up with. An example allows your audience to see and understand what you're talking about. It makes it concrete. A story can evoke emotion and make your point memorable.



Yenku had both his hands cut off during the Sierra Leone civil war. He survived by begging on the streets. But with a loan through Kiva he was able to buy a few items to sell on the street. He gradually built up his business. He now has a thriving grocery stall. He can feed his family and send his children to school.

#### Resources

The power of anecdotal evidence Are our brains wired to enjoy stories?

## Statistics

Appropriate use of statistics will make your point more convincing.

Studies have shown that a poor person who starts a business can increase their income by an average of 95%.

#### **Resources**

How to multiply the power of a single anecdote

#### Endorsement

An endorsement from a person that your audience respects can be very powerful.

"If you look at <u>Kiva.org</u>, people with a very modest amount of money can make a huge positive impact all around the world." Bill Clinton

#### **Resources**

Using social proof in your presentation **Explanation** 

When you need to explain something complex or hard to grasp use an analogy or metaphor. The analogy or metaphor must be something that your audience can relate to.

Lending money through <u>Kiva.org</u> is like buying a book on <u>Amazon.com</u>. Search the listings of entrepreneurs for someone who you'd like to lend money to – just like you were searching for the right book. Then use your credit card, just as you would on Amazon.com, to lend the money.



Use a variety of these different types of evidence through your presentation. Some people in your audience will relate better to stories and anecdotes and others to statistics.



## Step 5: Set the Scene

Now that you've planned the body of your presentation, work out how you'll start.

Setting the scene should be short. Your audience is waiting for you to get to the point of your presentation. The function of setting the scene is two-fold:

- 1. Give them enough information to understand what's coming next.
- 2. Build their anticipation for what's coming next.

Imagine you were having a conversation with one person. Here's what they might want to know before you dive into the body of your presentation:



Your task is to answer these three questions at the beginning of your presentation. Here's what it would like for my Kiva presentation:



Today, I'm going to be talking about a website called Kiva. Kiva enables people like you and me to lend money to poor people in less-developed countries.

The reason I'm talking to you about it is this. Using Kiva you can directly make a difference in the life of a poor person.

I've been using Kiva for two years and I really believe in it as a way of helping people help themselves.

#### Resources

How to establish your credibility without bragging

#### Attention-getting

You don't **have** to grab attention at the beginning of your presentation. Research shows that that's when people are paying the most attention. However, it is effective to open with a story or interesting statistic. Then answer the three "setting the scene" questions.

Look through the evidence that you are using in the body of your presentation. You may find there's an anecdote or statistic that would work well for the opening of your presentation.

<u>More resources</u> The three levels of presentation opening The attention-getting myth Attention-getting - the evidence

## Step 6: Add signposting

Signposting lets your audience know where you're going in your presentation, where you're at and where you've been. It makes your presentation easy to follow for the audience and makes you look organised and prepared.

Here are the places where you can add signposting in your presentation:





## Flagging

A flag draws attention to what you're about to say next. Use a flag just before you state your Key Message.



Here are other examples of flags:



Avoid saying "My Key Message is this." That's because the phrase Key Message is a term of art. It's not conversational.

## **Preview**

In your presentation you're going to be transferring three boxes of information from your head into the heads of your audience. Prepare your audience for receiving that information by previewing your presentation.





## Opening and closing the boxes

Your audience will appreciate it if you let them know each time you open and close a box. In a written document they would have headings and paragraphs to let them know this. In a presentation, they're dependent on you to let them know that you're moving from one box to another.

#### Summary

Just as your audience will appreciate knowing where you're going, they also appreciate a recap of where you've been. A summary will help cement the points you've made.

## Step 7: Design PowerPoint slides

Now that you know what you want to say in your presentation, you can start designing PowerPoint slides to enhance what you're saying.

Most presenters create bullet-point slides for their presentations. The slides are notes for them, rather than a useful visual for the audience. Here are some articles from my blog on why you shouldn't use bullet-points:

New evidence that bullet-points don't work The problem with traditional PowerPoint slides Five ways bullet-point slides damage your brand

Here are four types of slides you can use in your presentation:

## **Assertion-Evidence slides**

These are the slides you'll use to support the body of your presentation. For each Assertion that you have, create a slide. Write the assertion at the top of the slide and then consider what visual evidence you could add to the slide.



There are three main types of visual evidence:

1. An image or photograph which directly represents or is a metaphor for what you're talking about.



2. A chart to help people visualise your statistics. The slide below shows a stack of coins which is animated so that it grows by 95%.



3. A diagram which helps your audience understand the concept or process you're describing.





#### Key Message slide

Create a slide for the key message of your presentation. This slide only has the key message on a simple background. That makes the key message stand out and ensures that nothing can distract from your audience getting the key message.



You'll show your key message slide both times you say your key message: near the beginning of your presentation and at the end.

## Preview/summary slide

This slide allows people to see the three parts of your presentation.

Kiva? How can you do it?

#### <u>Resource</u>

How to do an agenda slide like Garr Reynolds

### Black slide

The fourth type of slide is the black slide. When you don't need a slide, don't show a slide. Identify those points in your presentation and insert a slide with a black background. When you click onto that slide, the screen will go blank.

## **Final words**

I hope this guide has been useful. If you have any questions do send me an e-mail. Go well with your presentation.

Olivia Mitchell

## **Presentation Planner**

