HOW TO MAKE A KILLER PRESENTATION

Also known as THE POWER POINT MANIFESTO.

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Aljaž Tepina

FACT

People can read faster than you speak. Which means they will read, what is on the slide, before you are able to tell it. So there is no point in you repeating it.

You are the main star of the talk. The presentation is there to support you, not the other way around. The people should listen to you, not read the slides.

YOU ARE DOING IT WRONG

Most people make the mistake of using the presentations in the following ways.

PROMPTER

People can read by themselves – they don't need you to read it for them.

HAND-OUTS

Some people have a lot of information written on slides, so they can give it away as reading material. Better to make a specific document for that. Like the one you are reading now.

DATA DUMPS

If people wanted to read, they would buy a book. They don't want to read your text, which you probably copied from somewhere else. Same goes for more than one image, complicated graphs and gigantic tables.

ONE IDEA | ONE SLIDE

You got an idea? Put in on ONE slide! Make it stand out.

If you have something important to say, give it the respect of being the sole thing on the slide.

When you have another thing to say – break it into another slide.

BREAK

Don't you listen? I said break it into another slide.

Better to have 60 "straight to the point" slides than 20 confusing ones.

NO BULLSHIT

If you have nothing to say, shut up. I mean, do not put it into your presentation.

Sometimes you will get an extra idea and will want to add it to the existing slide. Because making a new slide would be just too extreme.

Now take a step back and think hard if this extra idea is really necessary to be included. Do not bullshit. Get to the point.

USE NO MORE THAN SIX WORDS

Twitter has 140 characters. That is totally too much. You will present your idea in under six words. Because there is no presentation so complex that this rule needs to be broken. Also, the audience starts reading and nobody likes that.

If you feel the need to use a punctuation mark, you are doing it wrong.

7X7

There used to be a guideline a presentation should not have more than 7 words in 7 rows. I don't know about you, but that sounds like a paragraph to me. And paragraphs have to be read. Simplify.

• NO BULLET POINTS

If your idea has to be broken down into bullet points, than it is not a singular idea anymore, isn't it?

Bullet points are advised to be broken down into separate slides.

NO ANIMATION

Animations distract from content.

If you really need them, implement them carefully and in good taste.

STRUCTURE

Break your presentation into building blocks.

Examples

- problem → pathway → solution
- problem → solution → reasoning
- anecdote → problem → solution → deeper meaning
- a series of arguments → supported by examples

Give no more than 3 reason to support your point. People won't remember more.

MATCHING COLOURS

Use some colour theory. Designers in the audience will be thankful.

HIGH CONTAST

Most projectors suck. Low contrast and washed colours. Make sure your presentation is visible on all occasions.

FEW FONTS

Too many fonts are tacky and distasteful. Pick one and stick with it.

Use good font weight so it is readable from a distance.

Avoid ultra-thin fonts because they disappear into the background.

Use Comic Sans only when appropriate. Ironically.

LESS TEXT, MORE IMAGE

People are visual animals. We prefer to see than to read. It's faster.

Text influences our logical side. Pictures influence our emotional side. Emotional people are easily influenced by the idea.

BIGGER IS BETTER

Easier to see in the back.

ONE IMAGE | ONE SLIDE

Look at "ONE IDEA | ONE SLIDE".

Keep the message straightforward and focused.

Again, use big images.

GET GOOD PICTURES

No point in showing an image, if it is not worth to look at.

Grown-ups use photos, not clipart.

Professional quality images will make your presentation stand out.

SHARE

People can get the slides they missed after the presentation.

Your presentation can be useful to the people who haven't been there.

It can be a good reference.

FEEDBACK

Feedback. Get some.

Because that is how you learn.

THANK YOU

People gave you time and space to present to them. Be thankful for the opportunity.

Gratefulness is an excellent networking technique.

WORDS OF WISDOM

Simplicity is about subtracting the obvious, and adding the meaningful.

- JOHN MAEDA

RESOURCES

http://www.slideshare.net/thecroaker/death-by-powerpoint

http://business.tutsplus.com/articles/22-tips-designing-an-effective-slide-deck-presentation--fsw-11378

http://www.lifehacker.co.in/technology/How-Can-I-Take-My-PowerPoint-Presentations-From-Dull-to-Amazing/articleshow/20092417.cms