

# Making Great Business Presentations

The Complete Guide  
+ 25 Expert Tips



By Laura Spencer

# Introduction

Learn how to build a powerful business presentation in this ultimate business presentation guide. It's packed with easy steps and actionable tips so you can learn how to build a powerful business presentation quickly.

Jump ahead to any part of this tutorial guide from the Table of Contents to start learning the specifics on how to make a great business presentation.

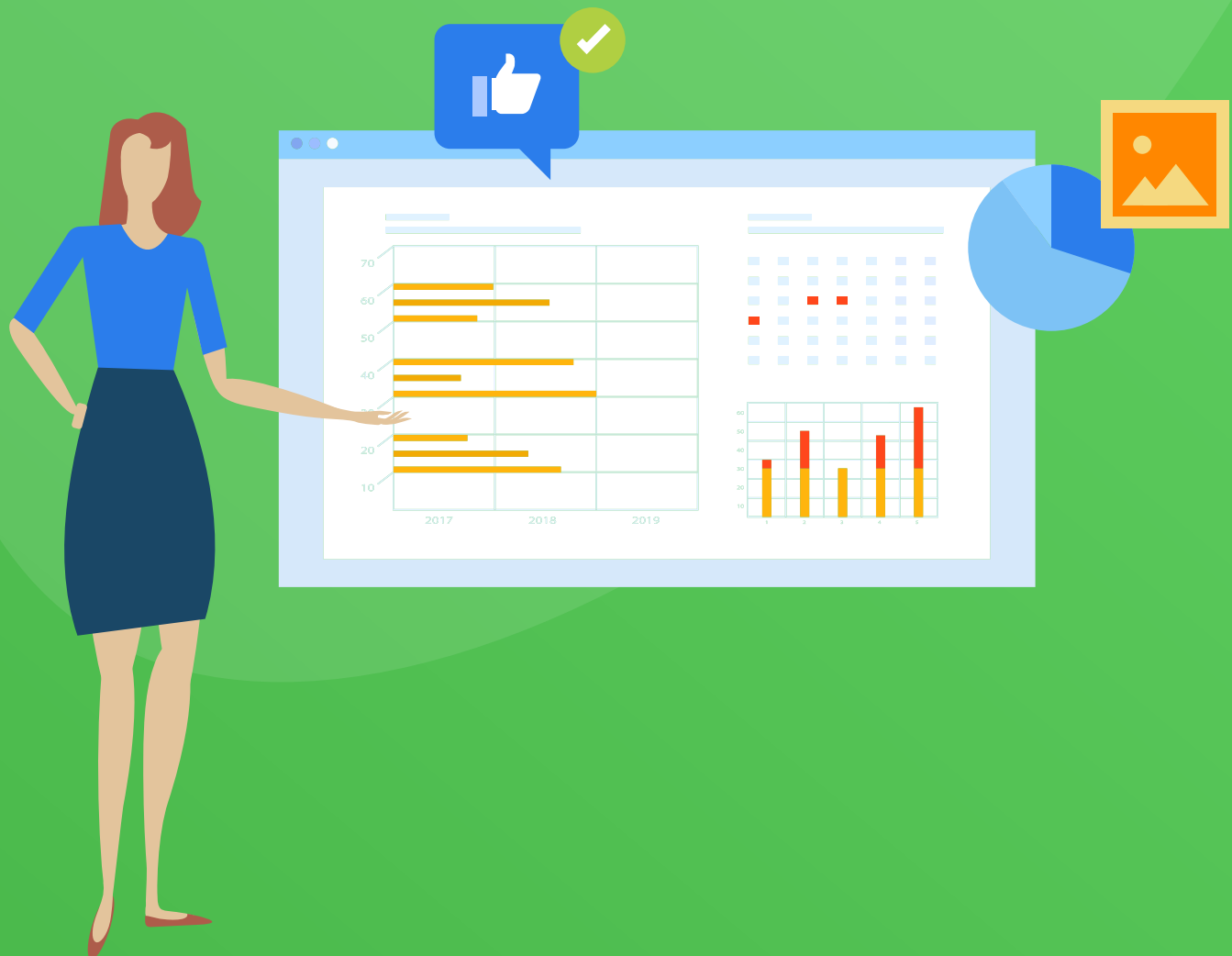


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## CHAPTER 1.

# How to Make a Great (Highly Effective) Business Presentation



Your business presentation represents an investment. You've invested time in creating it, and you'll invest even more time in giving it. That's why you want to get it right.

In this guide, you'll learn tips and techniques that'll help you give a successful business presentation—a presentation that people remember and that changes minds.

We've gathered together a comprehensive set of business presentation tips and techniques you can really use. Learn from the experts how to make a great presentation. Study these good PowerPoint presentation examples, and follow the step-by-step instructions, and you can put together an effective presentation fast.

## IN THIS GUIDE, YOU'LL LEARN HOW TO:

### *Prevent Common Presentation Mistakes*

Learn how to avoid common mistakes that could derail your presentation. If you're new to giving presentations, or if you haven't given a presentation in a while, you'll want to review this section carefully before you start working on your next presentation.

### *Plan and Write an Effective Presentation*

If you're one of those people who struggle to write the content for your presentation, this is for you. We'll take you through the writing process from finding the right topic to creating a written presentation. All you need to do is follow these seven simple steps.

### *Design a Presentation With Impact*

Discover the techniques that creative professionals use to build truly eye-catching slides that your audience will remember long after your presentation. Learn how layout, font choice, and color impact how

your presentation is received. We'll also discuss how to properly use graphics, media, and other special effects in a business presentation.

### *Deliver Your Business Presentation Powerfully*

If giving a business presentation is the part you dread the most, you're not alone. We've got you covered. The public speaking hacks you'll learn will help you give your next presentation (and future business presentations too) with confidence.

### *Add Those Creative Presentation Extras (Oomph)*

Don't miss this special section that's chock full of interesting ways to help your presentation stand out. The information here is especially useful if your audience will be listening to multiple presentations, such as at a business conference.

This guide is designed so that you can work throughout from Chapter 1 to Chapter 9 for complete business presentation training. Or, use the jump links in the Table of Contents to go directly to an area you're struggling with.

## CHAPTER 2.

# How to Prevent 18 Common Business Presentation Mistakes (Fails)



Nothing's worse than a presentation that fails. It's embarrassing and, even worse, it can undermine your message and damage your business brand.

The question is: **How can you prevent your business presentation from failing?**

We'll show you **exactly what to do** to sidestep the most common presentation mistakes. Read this chapter to learn what to do (**and not do**) to avoid a hard fail:

## 1. NO RESEARCH

For a successful presentation, you've got to do your homework. **Planning and research make the difference between a great business presentation and a bad one.**

Your audience can tell if you're not current on the relevant facts. *Not being familiar with your topic undermines your credibility.*

**Try This:** Before you start writing your business presentation, study for it as you would a test. Identify two to three key sources of information. Read each and take notes. Highlight key facts and points.

## 2. READING YOUR SPEECH

**Too many speakers read their presentation directly from their speaker notes or, even worse, from index cards.** Reading a presentation leads to an unnatural speaking style and interferes with your audience rapport.

**Try This:** Practice your speech so you can say it without looking at your speaker notes. That way you can recall it from memory and deliver naturally. (It's okay to have your speaker notes on hand in case you get stuck though.)

## 3. NOT ENOUGH PRACTICE

Practice makes the difference between a so-so business presentation and a great business presentation. **Too many business professionals are tempted to skip the practice because they're too busy. Don't make this mistake!**

Fortunately, there are ways to work practice into your busy schedule.

**Try This:** A week before your business presentation, start practicing your speech three times a day: first thing in the morning, once at lunch, and again in the evening. Give at least one of those speeches in front of a friend or family member who can provide constructive criticism.

We'll share more techniques about how to do a good job presenting your presentation later. In the meantime, learn more about how to effectively practice your speech in this tutorial: [\*How to Get Better At Public Speaking \(Improve With Practice\)\*](#).

## 4. GOING OVER YOUR TIME

For most presentations, you've got a set amount of time to give your speech. **Going over your assigned time is annoying for your**

**audience.** *It's also upsetting for the speaker who comes after you and doesn't have enough time to finish.*

One of the most common causes of going over your allotted time is trying to cover material that's not really related to your core message.

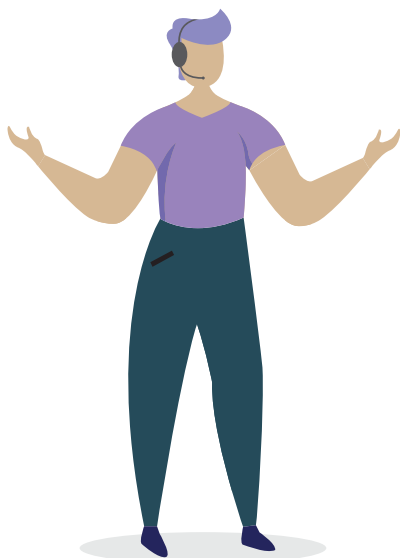
**Try This:** Unleash your inner editor. Read through your presentation with a critical eye. Delete anything that's not part of your core message.

## 5. BAD BODY LANGUAGE

When you give your presentation, you're speaking with your words. But there's another way you're communicating to your audience that you may not even be aware of.

*A [UCLA study](#) shows that **what you say through your body language is as important as the actual words you say.** Research shows that over half of your message is conveyed through non-verbal communication.*

A stiff, nervous posture or awkward, nervous gestures can signal that you're not confident about what you're saying.



**Try This:** Smile during your speech. Smiling does more than just make you look friendly. [According to Psychology Today](#), smiling releases neurotransmitters that'll help you relax. The more relaxed you are, the more natural your body language will be.

## 6. FAILURE TO MAKE EYE CONTACT

Speakers who make regular eye contact with audience members are perceived as being more trustworthy.

Unfortunately, **many speakers are too nervous and forget to make eye contact.** Or they're too shy.

**Try This:** Does the idea of looking at someone in the audience make you nervous? No worries. This trick will get you through. Choose three points on the wall behind the audience. Take turns looking briefly at each point as you speak.

## 7. LACK OF CONVICTION

If you don't believe or care about what you're talking about, how do you expect to convince your audience that it's important?

**When it comes to credibility, sincerity and conviction are important.** *Make sure that you're confident about the truth and importance of your information.*

**Try This:** It's time to get honest. Review your presentation carefully and ask yourself: "Do I really care about this?" If your answer is "no," you're presenting the wrong message.



## 8. BAD DESIGN

A poor presentation design is just as distracting as poor delivery. You don't want your audience spending so much time focusing on how awful, cluttered, or sloppy your presentation looks that they don't hear what you've got to say.

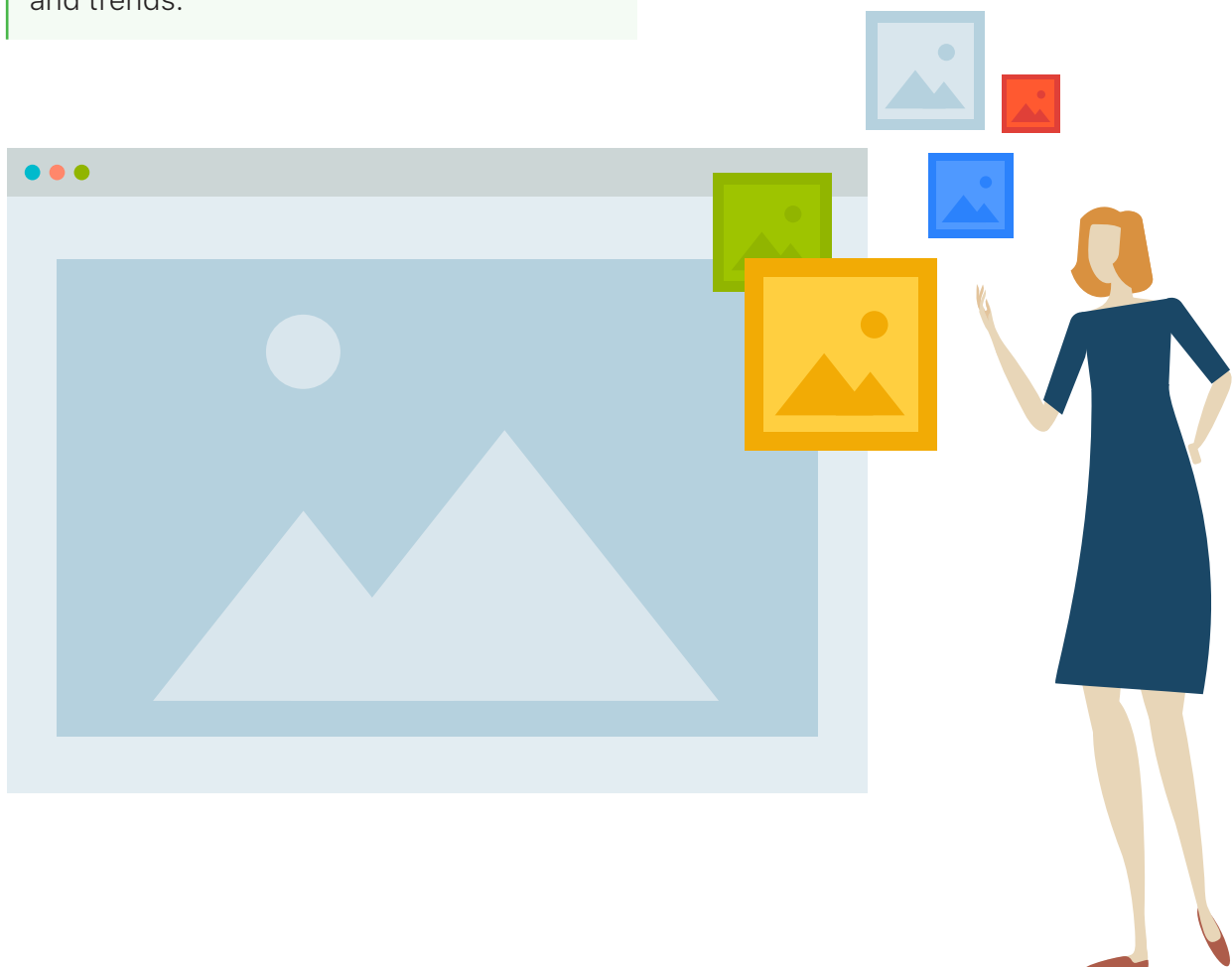
**How your presentation looks is important.** *It should appear polished and professional—a look you can't easily get from free presentation templates.*

**Try This:** Check out the great professional presentation templates available on [Envato Elements](#) and [GraphicRiver](#). Each template is carefully created by a professional designer to take advantage of the latest presentation design tools and trends.

## 9. NOT ENOUGH VISUALS

According to [Brain Rules](#) by John Medina, you're far more likely to remember information presented with a graphic or photo. **After three days, most listeners only retain about 10% of what they've heard. However, when a visual is added, the percentage of information retained increases dramatically—to 65%.**

**Try This:** When you can use an image (such as a graph, chart, or photo), do it. If you're short on professional images, Envato Elements is a good source for professional [photos](#) and other types of high-quality [graphics](#).

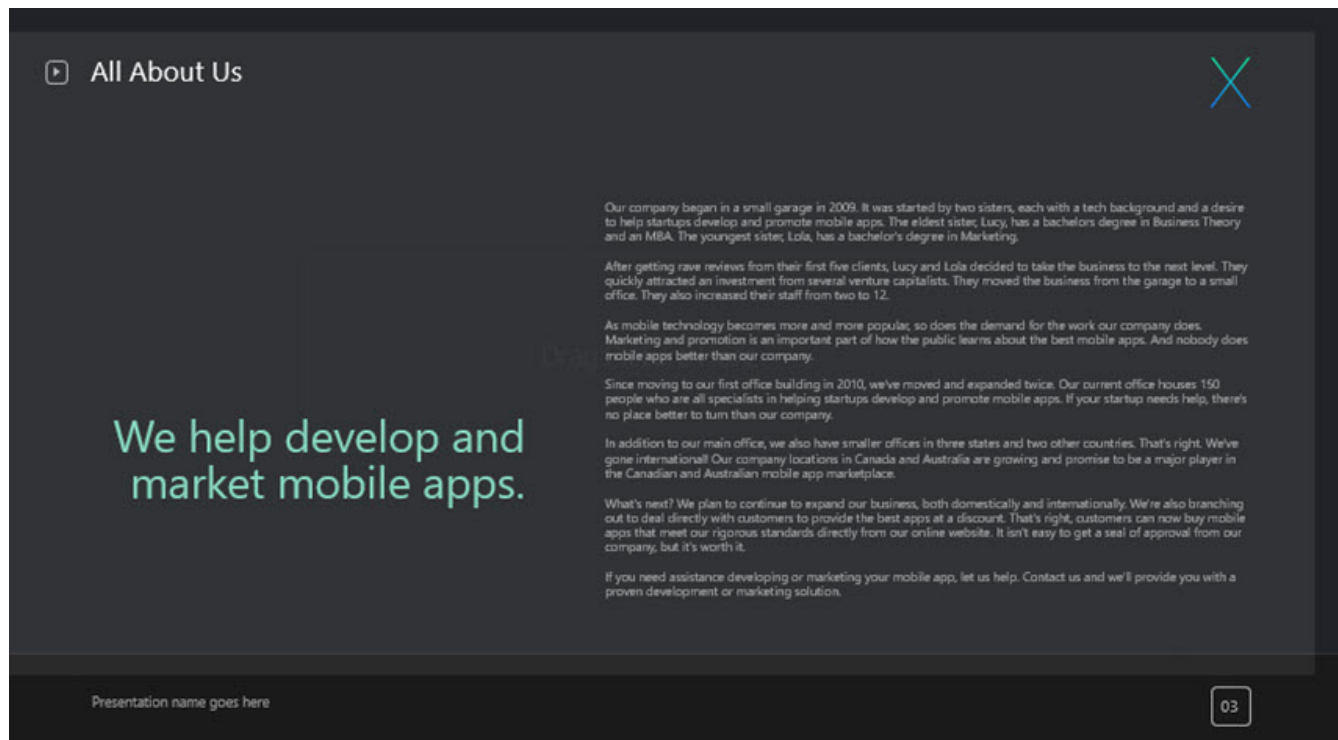


## 10. TOO MUCH TEXT ON A SLIDE

**The fewer words you use, the better.** Your audience isn't going to read (or remember) long blocks of text. So, keep it brief.

What's even worse: presenters often make their text smaller to get more on a slide—making the slide even less readable. You want to avoid this in your presentation slides.

For a problem example of what I mean, take a look at this slide below:



This slide has over 330 words! The presenter reduced the main body text to 18 points to get it in the frame.

*Note: This presentation slide example uses [The X Note - PowerPoint Template](#) from Envato Elements. (You can readily cut the text down in this slide.)*

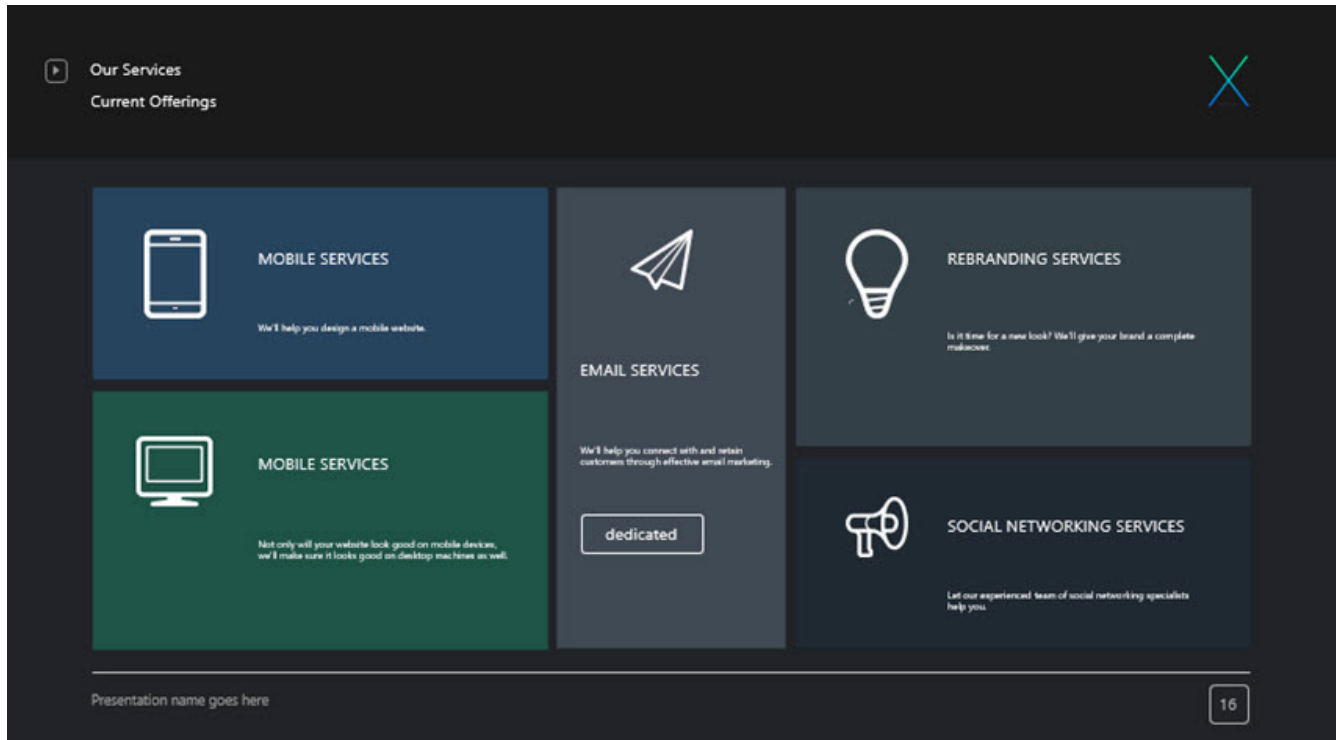
**Try This:** Keep the total number of words per slide to under 25. If there are more than 25 words, edit the text until you get the number of words on the slide down below 25.

## 11. SLIDE TEXT TOO SMALL TO READ

How small is too small? Most experts agree that **body text of less than a 24-point font for a business presentation is too small to read.**

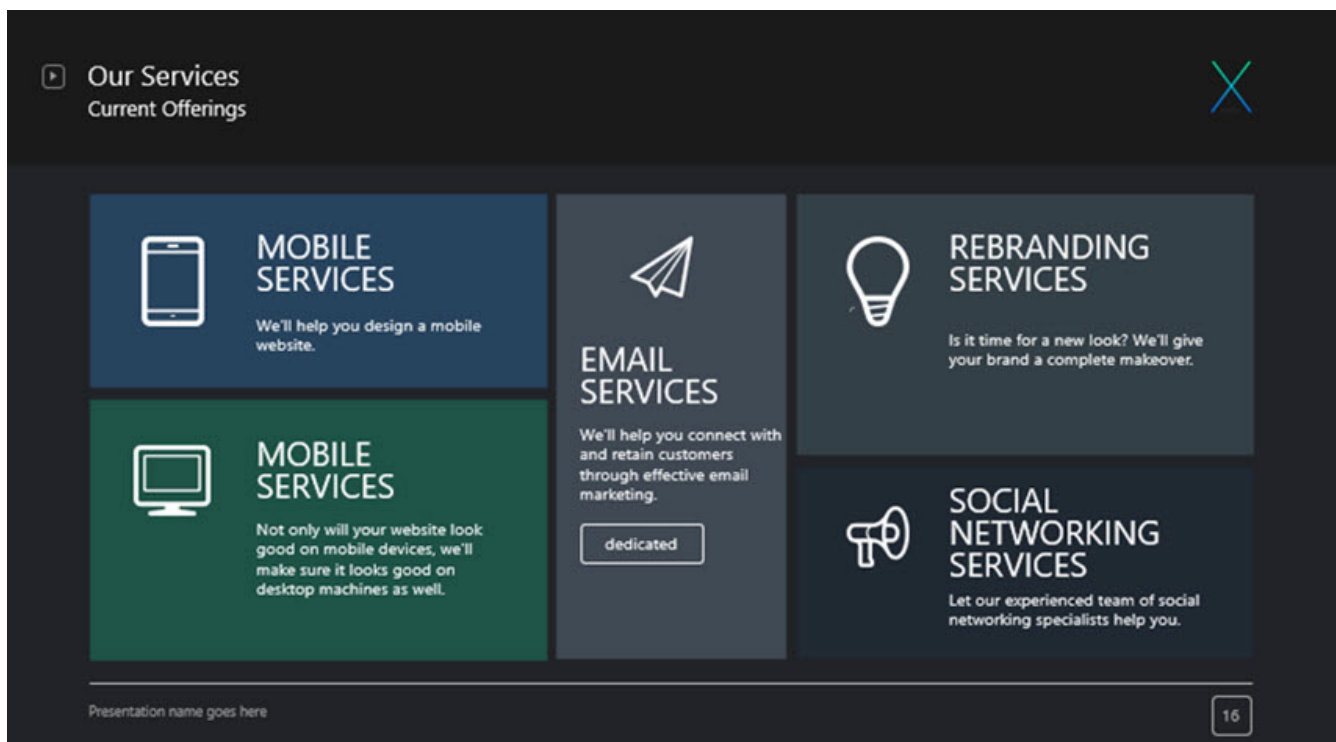
Look at the difference in readability in the two PowerPoint presentation examples below. Now imagine looking at those slides from across a crowded room. Take a look at the the first presentation slide. The headings are done

## Slide With Small Font



The small font size used on this PowerPoint slide makes it difficult to read.

## Slide With Larger Font



The larger font used on this slide makes it much easier to read.

Note: This presentation slide example uses [The X Note – PowerPoint Template](#) from Envato Elements

in a 24-point font, and the body text is in a 14-point font. **That's hard to read.**

In contrast, the headings in the second slide use a 48-point font, and the body text uses a 24-point font. **It's quite a bit larger and easier to read.**

**Try This:** Choose a 28- to 32-point font for your body text, and 32 to 48 points for your headings and subheadings. That way, your audience can read your slides from across a large room.

## 12. NOT USING A LEGIBLE FONT

The most readable fonts for presentations are sans serif, such as these:

- Arial
- Tahoma
- Veranda
- Gill Sans
- Helvetica
- Open Sans

**Avoid script and novelty fonts at all costs as they are extremely hard to read.** Look at the PowerPoint presentation examples on the next page. Which example is easier to read?

A sans serif font appears simpler and easier to read on projection screens. It lacks the extra serifs (small lines at the ends of characters) that are typically added to print font designs.

**Try This:** Replace novelty fonts in your business presentation with more readable sans serif font types. If you're not sure whether the fonts on your slides are readable, ask a friend or colleague for their opinion.

## 13. TOO MANY LISTS

Many presentations have too many lists: both bulleted and numbered. **Yet studies show that lists don't work well.**

In a 2014 study on visualization versus text from *The International Journal of Business Communication*, subjects who were shown a graphic recalled concepts more easily than those shown a bulleted list.

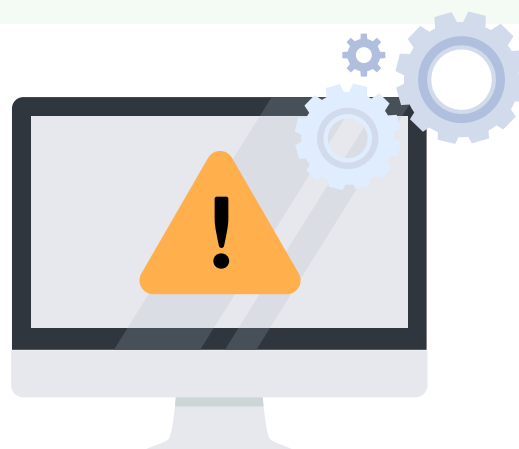
**Try This:** Use lists sparingly. Shorten lists or create a single slide for each list item. Better yet, use a graphic to explain a presentation idea instead of words.

## 14. TECHNICAL PROBLEMS

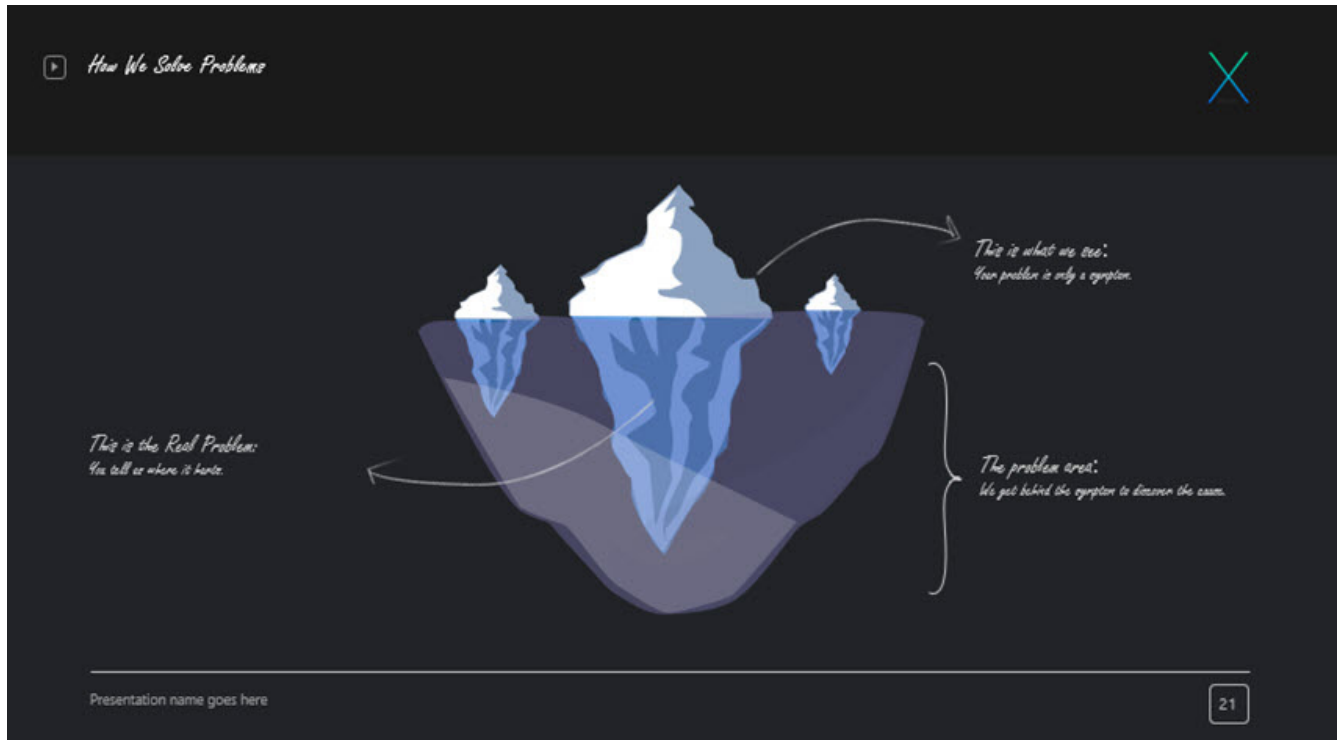
If your equipment fails, you'll have a tough time giving your presentation.

**The best time to find out that your equipment isn't working isn't the day of the presentation.** You won't have adequate time to make alternate arrangements.

**Try This:** Go to your speaking venue the day before your presentation. Hook up your laptop (or other device) to the presentation system. Notice anything that doesn't work and arrange to get backup equipment. Also, test any equipment you'll be using during your speech.

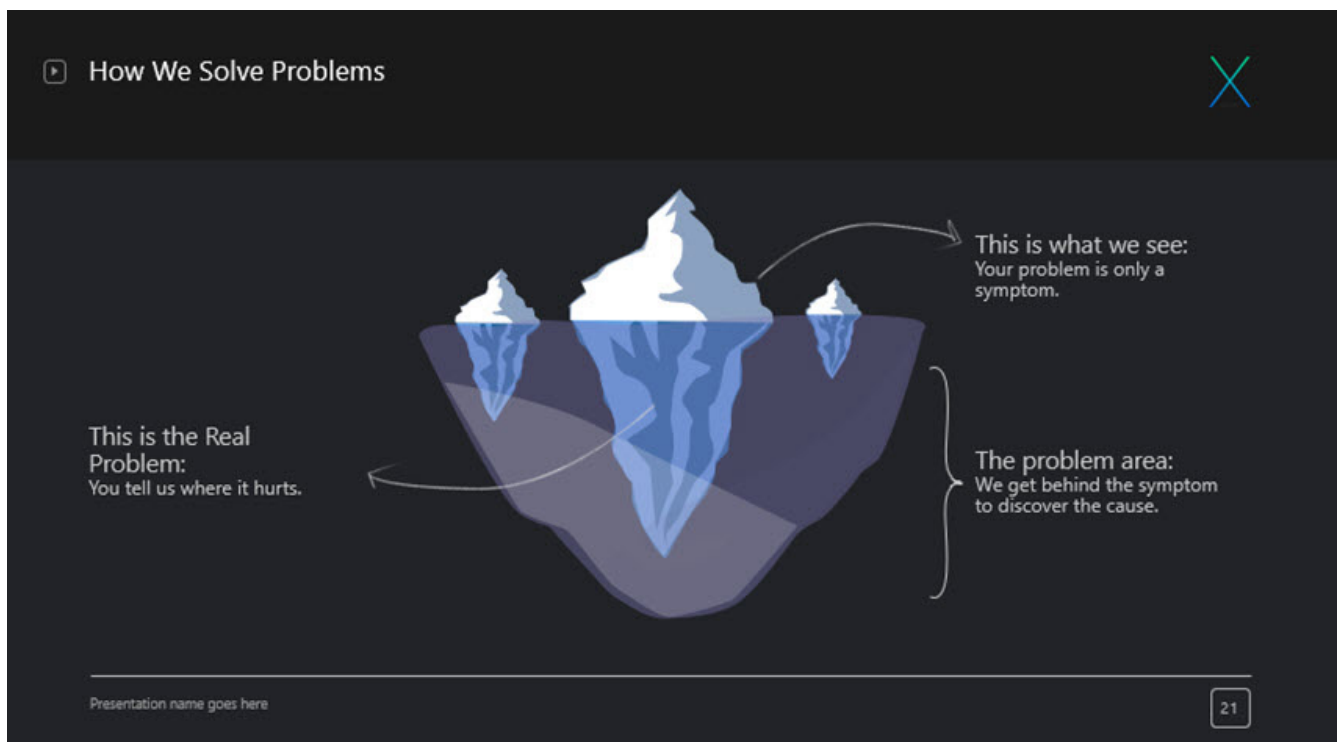


## Script Font Example



This PowerPoint presentation slide example uses the Freestyle Script font. Notice how hard it is to read.

## Readable (Sans Serif) Font



Here's the same presentation slide example using the Open Sans font.

Note: This presentation slide example uses [The X Note – PowerPoint Template](#) from Envato Elements

## 15. NOT RELATING TO YOUR AUDIENCE

A huge presentation mistake many speakers make is addressing their business presentation to the wrong audience. The only way to really be sure that your presentation is geared to your audience is to find out as much as you can about them.

**You can't engage your audience or hold their attention if you don't really know who you're going to be speaking to.**

**Try This:** If the presentation is for an organization you don't normally attend, arrange to attend a meeting before the one in which you'll give your presentation. Get to know your audience as best as possible before presenting.

## 16. NO NEXT STEPS

You've finished your presentation, but your audience is left hanging. What should they do next?

**The next step may seem obvious to you, but your audience hasn't made the connection—so they do nothing.**



**Try This:** Be blunt. Tell the audience exactly what action to do next and how to go about doing it. Provide any details they need to take the next step.

## 17. POOR CHOICE OF CONTENT

**Another common presentation mistake is including content that isn't right for a presentation.** The topic may be too broad to cover in the time that's allowed, or your audience may not have the background needed to understand the topic.

Or you may be using terms your audience doesn't understand.

**Try This:** Review your business presentation text carefully. Explain abbreviations or technical terms you plan to use.

## 18. UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

Having the right expectations is important. **To start, you should have a clear and attainable goal.** *What do you expect to achieve with your presentation?*

If you don't know what to expect from your presentation, it's already in trouble. Another unrealistic expectation is thinking that your listeners will remember all, or nearly all, of the material you present.

**Try This:** Decide on the purpose of your speech. Is your purpose to convince investors to take a chance on your startup? Or is it to persuade customers to buy your product? Include what you need to achieve your goal and leave out the rest.

# 3 Newsworthy Public Business Presentation Mistakes (With Real Examples)

You've just learned how to avoid the most common presentation mistakes. And in case you're thinking that these types of presentation mistakes don't happen often—think again.

Business presentation failure is much more common than you might imagine. Here are three common (and even famous) business presentation mistakes:

## 1. UNEXPECTED EQUIPMENT FAILURE

This famous presentation example just goes to show that equipment failure can happen to anyone.

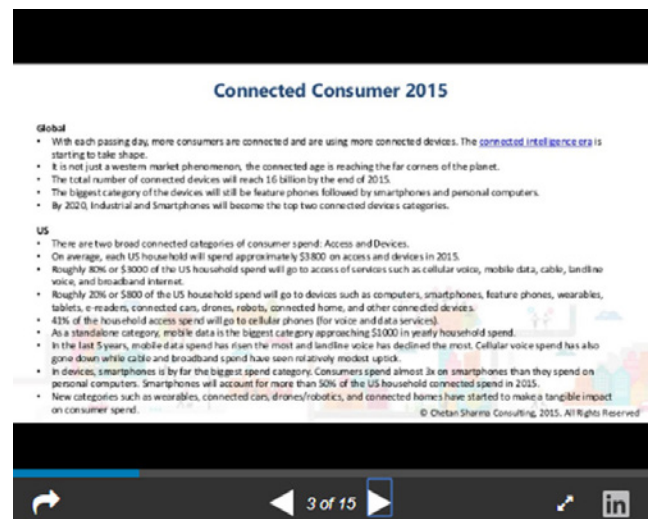
Former Microsoft executive Steven Sinofsky was giving a speech to launch the new Surface tablet—when suddenly the equipment stopped working.

Sinofsky did his best to get through the situation gracefully, quickly swapping the non-working device for another. You can see the presentation [here](#).

## 2. TOO MUCH, TOO SMALL

It looks as if this presenter had a lot of great data to share. It's too bad that they felt compelled to put 14 bullet points (in a small font) on a single page.

Hopefully, the audience was interested enough in the topic to stay engaged:



This example [from a SlideShare presentation](#) has too many bullet points, and the text is too small.

## 3. FORGETTING WHAT TO SAY

You've seen this common presentation mistake on television a dozen times. A celebrity or public figure is giving a speech, and suddenly they stop.

**What happens next makes all the difference in the world.** *A good tactic when you forget*



*part of your speech is to simply admit it to the audience and take a minute or two to recover.*

Even experienced speakers sometimes forget what to say. Watch [this news clip](#) as a news reporter forgets his lines, and notice how he handles it.

Admitting you made a presentation mistake makes you seem relatable to the audience. So, what's the worst thing you can do when you forget what to say next? According to most experts, your audience will see right through it if you try to pretend nothing is wrong.



### ***What's Next?***

You've just learned about 18 common business presentation mistakes and how to avoid them. Learn even more here:

🔗 [\*15 Bad Business Presentation Mistakes \(And How to Avoid Poor Results\)\*](#)

🔗 [\*18+ Best PowerPoint SlideShare Presentation Examples\*](#)

You might be wondering:

*Are there other presentation tips I can use to make my business presentation more effective?*

That's what I'm going to cover next in this guide. You'll learn additional presentation tips and techniques to help you create a great business presentation. We'll also explain how to avoid business presentation mistakes in more depth.



## CHAPTER 3.

# 25+ Best Business Presentation Tips From the Experts



## You want to learn how to give an effective presentation, and you want to learn fast!

The best way to learn something is from someone who's already doing it successfully. That's why we've gathered over 25 great presentation tips from public-speaking experts from around the world. Look no further for winning presentation ideas.

Get unique insights from the business presentation tips for public speaking that we've gathered here—from presentation tips on how to prepare yourself to presentation skills tips for what to do on the day of your presentation and beyond.

I've divided these presentation tips into:

- Tips for Before Your Presentation
- Tips for During Your Presentation
- Tips for After Your Presentation

Are you ready to start learning from these effective presentation (skills) tips?

Let's get started...

### EFFECTIVE BUSINESS PRESENTATION TIPS FOR BEFORE YOUR SPEECH

Get started quickly with these expert tips for a good presentation:

#### 1. Pay Attention to Your Introduction & Closing

Pay extra attention to how you begin and end your business presentation. Your beginning and ending make the biggest impact on your audience.

*Textbook author and speaking instructor*

Mark Powell points out the importance of the opening and close as follows:

*"Research shows that audiences remember the first and last few minutes of a presentation long after they've forgotten most of what was said in the middle."*

For Powell's whole lesson on how to effectively open and close a presentation, view [his video](#) (including business presentation examples).

Find even more effective presentation tips about starting and closing a presentation here: [How to Start a Presentation Strong and End Powerfully](#)

#### 2. Stand Up When You Practice

If you're practicing your presentation from the comfort of your armchair, you're doing it wrong. [Jennefer Witter](#), the CEO/Founder of the Boreland Group Inc., explains:

*"Most of us are seated when rehearsing. However, I strongly suggest you do at least one rehearsal standing up. Most speaking engagements require you to stand. Get comfortable talking on your feet."*

Read the rest of Witter's advice on how to prepare for a presentation in this article on the [Ellevote Network](#).

This Envato Tuts+ tutorial provides more excellent presentation skills tips for rehearsing your business presentation: [How to Get Better At Public Speaking \(Improve With Practice\)](#)

### 3. Don't Underestimate the Importance of Public Speaking

To succeed in business, communication skills—speaking and writing—are key. Don't make the mistake of overlooking these vital areas.

Indra Nooyi, board member at Amazon and former PepsiCo executive, said:

*"You cannot over-invest in communication skills—written and oral communication skills..."*

Read more about what Nooyi had to say about the importance of investing in communication skills in this [Forbes](#) article.

### 4. Write a Presentation That Sounds Good

You may be used to writing business papers and reports that are meant to be read. But **what works for a written report won't work for a live audience.**

Senior communications executive [Karen Addis](#) puts it like this:

*"Write for the ear, not for the eye. What reads fine on paper may be a mouthful when spoken."*

You'll find more effective business presentation tips from Addis on the [GuideStar blog](#). We'll also share **exactly** how to write an effective presentation later in this guide.

### 5. Use an Outline

An outline is a key element to help you get started. **A good outline helps you organize your speech.** It also helps ensure that you don't leave any presentation ideas out.

2001 Toastmasters world champion speaker Darren LaCroix calls an outline:

*"The second most important step in the process of creating a great speech."*

Today, LaCroix trains others on how to speak successfully through his [Stage Time University training program](#). For more on what LaCroix has to say about outlines, watch the YouTube video [here](#).

### 6. Your Presentation Is About Your Audience

Too many speakers focus their presentation on themselves. They make the speech about what they're trying to say or how they feel.

**Your presentation is not about you.** Author and blogger Seth Godin points this out:

*"The members of the audience are interested in themselves. The audience wants to know what they can use, what they can learn, or at the very least, how they can be entertained."*

Read Godin's entire blog post to discover [more](#) about speaking in public.

### 7. Know Your Message

Your audience won't get your message unless you've focused in on it. Figure out what your message is before you give your presentation.

Speech and message coach [Michelle Mazur](#) explains:

*"My one piece of advice is to get clear on the ONE and only one message that you want your audience to remember. Research shows that most audiences forget 80%-90% of what they hear a speaker say within 24-hours of hearing that speaker. If you want to be memorable, get clear on that one core message and drive that point home in your speech."*

Mazur is the author of several books on speaking and thought leadership. Mazur also founded a company that helps speakers and businesspeople become thought leaders.

## 8. Don't Underestimate the Power of a Story

Storytelling is a powerful way to get your audience's attention—and keep it. **Learn how to tell a good story, and your presentation will be better for it.**

Lisa Bloom is a [consultant, trainer](#), and author of *Cinderella and the Coach - the Power of Storytelling for Coaching Success!* Bloom also has an extensive background in training and development in large, multinational organizations.

Here's what Bloom's got to say about the importance of storytelling:

*"Using story in your presentation awakens your creativity while providing a refreshing perspective to re-energize and engage your audience and move them to action. If you want your presentation to have impact, you need to tell powerful stories."*

*Let's say you have a high-stake opportunity; you need to make a very specific impression—to close a deal or secure funding. You may not get a second chance. By using the right story at the right time, you can access your authentic, inspired self while learning to creatively articulate your vision & ideas. This means you get to connect deeply, contribute widely and inspire the people that matter."*

## 9. Know What You're Selling

**If you're giving a business presentation, you're likely selling something.** Do you know

what it is? If not, your presentation is already in trouble.

Marissa Mayer, CEO of [Lumi Labs](#) (formerly CEO of Yahoo) puts it this way:

*"Our theory is, if you need the user to tell you what you're selling, then you don't know what you're selling, and it's probably not going to be a good experience."*

Find more [inspiring Marissa Mayer quotes](#) at Inc.

## 10. Your Purpose as a Speaker

You may think you know the purpose of your business presentation, but **there's one purpose to your business presentation that's the same no matter who's giving it.**

Chris Anderson is the curator of [TED](#) (the organization that gives us TED Talks) and also a TED speaker. Here's Anderson's insight on what all great speeches have in common:

*"Your number one task as a speaker is to transfer into your listeners' minds an extraordinary gift, a strange and beautiful object that we call an idea."*

Watch Anderson explain the importance of sharing ideas and other TED Talk presentation tips [here](#).

## 11. Tell Your Audience What to Do Next

You've almost finished your speech, but you're not done yet. Don't assume your audience knows what to do after your presentation. **You've got to tell them what to do next.**

Digital Content Strategist and international speaker [Donna Moritz](#) helps businesses leverage the power of visual storytelling and content strategy. Moritz advises that

speakers provide the audience with actionable takeaways:

*“Ensure that you focus on key, actionable takeaways that your audience will remember and can easily implement. This means one key point per slide - even eliminate dot points altogether - and use stories to bring home those key points. We remember well-told stories way beyond any slide or speaker, so match the power of storytelling with powerful, visual slides. It will make you a more memorable speaker. And more importantly it will make your message so memorable that your audience will take action!”*

## EXCELLENT PRESENTATION SKILLS TIPS TO USE DURING YOUR SPEECH

When it's time to make your presentation, turn to these excellent presentation skills tips for public speaking.

### 12. It's Okay to Be Silent

**You don't have to talk all the time.** Being quiet connects you with your audience.

Here's what veteran speaker Dan Pallotta has to say about the value of silence:

*“Be silent and look at the audience. Five seconds. Seven seconds. Just taking them in. Connecting with them. But never do it for effect. Do it to get intimate with your audience.”*

You'll find more of Pallotta's effective presentation tips in this [Harvard Business Review article](#).

### 13. Care About Your Topic

**If you don't care about your topic, your audience will pick up on that.** And if you don't care, they're likely to wonder why they should care.

Author and motivational speaker [Simon Sinek](#) discusses the importance of caring about your topic:

*“I'm often asked, ‘How did you become such a good presenter?’ and I like to joke that I cheat. I only talk about things that I care about, and I only talk about things that I understand. You can't manufacture passion. You can manufacture energy. You can bounce on the stage and scream and yell. That's not passion; that's too much caffeine.”* ([Source: YouTube](#))

Sinek's [TED Talk](#), “How Great Leaders Inspire Action,” is one of the most popular talks of all time.

### 14. Be Authentic

In a recent interview with the Rotarian, award-winning speaker Dananjaya Hettiarachchi addressed the need for speakers to be authentic during their presentations:

*“One of the most important elements is to be authentic. Your voice is as unique as your fingerprint. Your voice, tone, rate, pitch, and volume tell who you are. People need to buy in to you before they buy in to what you're saying or selling.”*

**Most audiences can spot it if you're being insincere.** And you'll lose their interest.

Hettiarachchi is the CEO and founder of an HR company. He's also the 2014 Toastmasters World Speaking Champion. Read the complete interview transcript on Hettiarachchi's blog, [I See Something In You](#).



## 15. It's Normal to be Nervous

If you're nervous about giving your presentation, know that you're not alone. **Even the rich and successful get nervous about public speaking.**

According to [The Times](#), British Royal Prince Harry suffers from stage fright. Here's what that feels like in the prince's own words:

*"My secret is -- believe it or not -- I get incredibly nervous before public speaking, no matter how big the crowd or the audience and, um, despite the fact that I laugh and joke all the time I get incredibly nervous, if not anxious, actually, before going into rooms full of people when I'm wearing a suit... And now that I've confessed that, I'll probably be even more worried that people are looking at me."*

## 16. Let Your Nerves Empower You

Are you nervous about your business presentation? You're in good company. Even celebrities and public figures get nervous in front of crowds.

A former NFL player for the Houston Oilers, [Bo Eason](#) today coaches people to become better presenters and storytellers. Eason describes how nerves can actually be helpful:

*"Back when I was performing my play, 'Runt of the Litter', my hands would shake like crazy every time I stepped on stage. My coach at the time would say, 'That's not nerves, it's love. You want to be good. You love and honor the audience. That's called love, not nerves. It's okay.'"*

*"Eventually... my nerves became fuel and the shaking did stop. But sometimes, even now, they'll still shake. It's just how it is; I care. I like when people care. Nerves are your jet fuel. Don't try to pretend you don't have them." [\(YouTube\)](#)*



## 17. Avoid Dry Mouth

Here's a very real challenge many speakers face, but seldom talk about. Dry mouth.

Dry mouth happens when your mouth doesn't produce enough saliva. **And it can be triggered by stress.**

John Zimmer, attorney and accomplished public speaker, has ten effective presentation tips to help you avoid dry mouth. Here's our favorite from the list:

*"Chew citrus-flavoured gum or a lozenge before speaking, but don't forget to spit it out before going on stage!"*

I like this tip because of how practical it is. You might not always have access to water, but it's easy to slip a pack of gum into your pocket before giving a presentation.

Explore the complete list of Zimmer's [great presentation tips for dealing with dry mouth](#) on the blog, Manner of Speaking.

## 18. Lean on Your Slides

Every speaker dreads forgetting what they're talking about. But Rand Fishkin offers an effective business presentation tip for just that situation:

*"Lean on your slides. If you have trouble remembering a story perfectly and telling it well, lean on your slides to help guide you*

*through with visuals to convey each part of the story.”*

Fishkin is best known as the founder and former CEO of the popular [Moz](#) site and more recently the host of [Whiteboard Friday](#). Fishkin is also an accomplished public speaker.

Read the complete interview with Fishkin at the [Wistia for Marketing blog](#).

*Later in the guide, you'll learn how to create eye-catching slides that'll capture your listener's attention.*

## 19. Your Voice Is Important

You may not think about your voice, but your voice is an important tool for your presentation. Learning how to use it properly will make you a more effective speaker.

[Vocal coach](#) to celebrities and one of the world's leading authorities on voice, Roger Love talks about the importance of your voice:

*“Start thinking about what you SOUND LIKE. Your voice is the most powerful communication tool you possess. A 2017 Yale study proved that we have learned to lie with our words and our body language, but the sounds of your voice reveal authenticity and truth.*

*Learn how to use melody, volume, pitch, and pace to create sounds that move people emotionally. When you find your voice, you find your self-confidence, your storytelling ability, your charisma, and your influence. Only then can you create effective and outstanding business presentations.”*

## 20. Move Wisely

When you give your presentation, **make your movements count**. If you look aimless

or awkward, it'll make your audience uncomfortable.

The 2018 winner of the [Toastmasters World Championship of Public Speaking](#) agrees. Ramona Smith explains how paying attention to movement helped:

*“I used to pace for no reason,” Smith told Business Insider. “My movements weren't on purpose. I didn't have intentional movement. But I learned that you need to move with each point. So plant your feet, say what you have to say, move on to your next point.”*

You can find more of Smith's public speaking advice on [Business Insider](#).

## 21. Relax and Be Natural

Too many business speakers stand stiffly, making unnatural gestures. Or they fill their speech with flowery words they'd never use in real life.

Famed entrepreneur Sir Richard Branson favors a different approach. Here's the public speaking advice Branson gave (via [Inc.](#)).

*“Picture yourself in a living room having a chat with your friends. You would be relaxed and comfortable talking to them, the same applies when public speaking.”*

## EFFECTIVE PRESENTATION TIPS FOR AFTER YOUR SPEECH

The tips below help you make the most of something most business presenters forget to think about. What happens after a presentation?

Here are some business presentation tips for what you should do when you're done speaking.

## 22. Ask for Feedback

One of the biggest questions most speakers have after their business presentation is whether it went well. Author and speech coach Suzannah Baum shares one presentation idea to find that out:

*“When my presentation was done, I sought out the event planner immediately to get her feedback, put in terms of ‘Did the content meet your objectives?’”*

You’ll find more of Baum’s insights on the blog, [Bring Power to Your Words](#).

## 23. Don’t Skip the Q&A Session

At the end of your presentation, give your listeners a chance to ask questions. A question and answer session lets you address any concerns members of your audience have. The right answers to an important question may even close the deal.

Professional communicator and author [Stacey Hanke](#) regularly gives keynote



speeches and conducts workshops. Hanke highlights the importance of having a Q&A session as follows:

*“Answering a question provides an opportunity for you to bond with those asking, even if the question is challenging. Questions allow you to clarify misunderstandings and set the record straight.”*

Discover more of Stacey Hanke’s effective presentation tips in this article, [The Best Way to Respond to Questions After a Presentation or Meeting](#).

## 24. Questions Are Good

If you think of questions after your presentations as a negative, think again. If the audience is asking questions, that’s actually positive, according to former executive and presentation coach [Theodore May](#).

May puts it this way:

*“But questions are not only good, they are essential. The successful presenter wants to be asked questions. ...good and even difficult on-topic questions are what you want as a presenter.”*

May offers even more tips for creating a great presentation in this article in the [CIO digital magazine](#).

## 25. Reconnect With Prospects

You’re not done when your business presentation ends. This is especially true if you made a sales presentation.

**Following up with key prospects after a presentation is the important step many business professionals skip.** Follow-up may feel awkward, but it doesn’t have to be that way.





Author and sales coach Jill Konrath provides this presentation tip for connecting with prospects:

*“Your prospects want to work with someone who’s constantly thinking about how they can improve their business. Be that person.”*

Read more of Konrath’s presentation follow-up advice in the article, [3 Sales Follow-Up Strategies to Replace “Touching Base”](#).

You’ll also find follow-up is easier if you’ve got something your prospect is interested in to talk about.

## 26. Get Feedback

To improve your presentation skills, **ask for feedback. Then listen to it.**

Feedback lets you know how you did with your presentation. **It also tells you what you should do differently the next time.**

Founder of Global Public Speaking and former diplomat [Allison Shapira](#) provides some practical presentation skills tips on how to get feedback. Here’s one of the most useful tips:

*“You’ll be tempted to respond with, “yes, but...” and be defensive when receiving the feedback. Simply listen and learn from someone else’s interpretation of your speech.”*

If you’re open to it, feedback will help you improve your presentation skills.

## GET STARTED ON YOUR PRESENTATION

You’ve just gotten business tips for making effective presentations from over 25 experts. Now it’s time to start creating your own great business presentation.

For more business presentation tips that work and inspiring presentation quotes, study these Tuts+ tutorials:

🔗 [15 Inspiring Public Speaking Quotes \(Famous, Funny, & Fear-Reducing\)](#)

🔗 [15+ Best Business Presentation Tips: Quotes From the Experts](#)

Next, we’ll share what you need to know about planning and writing great presentations.

Stay tuned to learn more about how to make (plan and write) a great presentation...

## CHAPTER 4.

# How to Plan (+Write) a Powerful Presentation Quickly in 7 Simple Steps



Preparation equals success. Planning and writing are your secret weapons for giving a powerful presentation.

Let's dive into the presentation writing process.

## 7 SIMPLE STEPS TO PLAN & WRITE YOUR PRESENTATION

The presentation planning/writing process isn't hard. It can be summed up in seven easy-to-follow presentation writing steps.

Many presenters skip important steps and pay for it when they give a poor presentation. Don't be one of those underprepared presenters.

Here are the seven steps to follow to plan and write a great presentation:

1. Discover Your Purpose
2. Study Your Business Presentation Topic
3. List Your Main Ideas
4. Create a Presentation Outline
5. Plan a Presentation Format
6. Focus on the Opening & Closing
7. Create the Written Presentation

These seven presentation writing steps will help you write a killer business presentation. Let's look at each one:

### **Step 1. 5 Easy Questions to Discover Your Presentation's Purpose**

Your presentation's purpose is what you want to get from your presentation when you're done. Determining this is the first step in how to give a good presentation. Skip this and you might as well not give a presentation at all.

There are tools you can use to help you pinpoint your purpose. To start, ask yourself these questions:

1. Why am I giving this talk?
2. What does my business want from this presentation?
3. Is the presentation informative?
4. Is it a sales presentation?
5. Do I want to rally people to my cause?

Once you've answered these questions, set a goal. It needs to be specific, and it needs to be measurable. If you're unsure how to set effective goals, review this Envato Tuts+ tutorial: [\*How to Set Effective Goals for Your Freelance Business\*](#)

The presentation writing process for setting goals for your speech is similar.

Now that you've set your goal, focus on it. It's the reason you're giving this presentation, after all. Everything in your presentation should advance your goal—especially your business presentation topic.

So how do you choose a presentation topic?

### **Here's a Common Scenario**

You're invited to give a presentation at a conference. Your company, a public relations agency, wants five new clients as a result of your presentation. You choose the business presentation topic: *How PR Will Help You Find a Winning Brand Identity*.



In the example above, you could have chosen to cover all the benefits your PR company offers. But having a topic that broad would mean:

- You don't cover any one point with enough detail.
- Your presentation runs too long.
- You lose your audience's attention.

**Try This:** You should be able to cover your topic in 18 minutes or less. Why is this important? Attention span [research from TED Talks](#) shows that audiences can't pay attention past 18 minutes. More on presentation length later.

Once you've discovered your presentation's purpose, you're ready to do your research.

### **Step 2. Be the Expert: Study Your Topic**

Not understanding your topic or not getting to know your audience well is a recipe for presentation failure. Even worse—it'll make you look foolish. Effective speakers study their topic and their audience.

### **Business Presentation Topic Research Questions**

- Is the content accurate?
- Is the information current?
- Are there multiple sources for the information?

### **Audience Research Questions:**

- What do they already know?
- What will be new information for them?
- What terms do they understand?

If you've been asked to speak for an external organization, ask that organization who your audience is and what they already know. Your company should also have some information on prospective customers.

**Try This:** Use demographic and psychographic studies to learn more about your audience. [Facebook Audience Insights](#) and [Google Trends](#) can provide helpful information.

Learn more about how to target an audience in these Envato Tuts+ tutorials:

🔗 [How to Use Psychographics to Better Target Your Marketing](#)

🔗 [How to Define a Target Audience \(For Your Marketing Plans\)](#)

Once you've finished your research, it's time to choose your speaking points.

### **Step 3. Choose Your Main Points**

During your research, you've gathered a lot of information. You've likely got more than you need.

Narrow it down to the main points that you want to present. Choose the information

that's most important to your audience and to meeting your goal.

List the information you've gathered.  
Now, review it. Cut anything:

- your audience already knows;
- your audience doesn't need to know; or,
- that doesn't advance your goal.

Think of this presentation writing process as a funnel. You pour information into one end. Only the information that advances your goal comes out the other end. This keeps you from bogging your audience down with too much information.

Now, divide all the information into similar categories. You should start to see a natural grouping.

In the PR agency example above, the speaker finds that statistics on the importance of brand identity are important. They also find a case study where a redesigned brand identity led to increased customer awareness.

*How many points should your presentation have?* Many speech experts recommend having three main points (the so-called Rule of Three). The Rule of Three is not a hard and fast rule. It depends on how much you say about each point.

It's better to have fewer points that are well supported than a lot of barely supported points that your audience won't remember anyway.

**Remember:** The ideal presentation length for most listeners is 15 to 20 minutes.



**Try This:** If you're scheduled to speak for more than 18 minutes, break your presentation into sections. Each section should be 18 minutes long or less. Use extra time to answer questions.

**Example:** Break a 45-minute presentation into two 18-minute speeches with a four-minute break in the middle and a five-minute question and answer session at the end.

**Pro Secret:** Get around the 18-minute attention span limit by planning a series of shorter presentations. (*Just make sure they're not scheduled back to back.*) This strategy works best if you've got more than one goal.

#### Step 4. Get Organized: How to Write a Presentation Outline

Once you know what your main points are, create an outline. You may wonder: *how do you write an outline for a presentation?*

Here's what to do:

A presentation outline is like the outline for any other document. It sets the order of the information you'll present.

At its most basic, a short presentation outline includes:

1. introduction
2. first point
3. second point
4. third point
5. conclusion

Fill out these general headings with titles specific to your own presentation.

That basic outline works for a short presentation; your presentation outline will vary with your audience and subject matter. A longer presentation outline could look like this:

1. introduction
2. first main point
3. support for point
4. break
5. second main point
6. support for point
7. video
8. third main point
9. support for point
10. questions and answers
11. conclusion

You've just created the outline for your presentation. Now you're ready to plan a presentation format.



## Step 5. Looks Count—Plan Your Presentation Format

Once you've selected your topic and main points, it's time to plan your presentation format. For most business situations, a slideshow is the most effective presentation format you can use.

There are some significant advantages to using a slideshow format:

- It adds a visual component.
- You can easily integrate other media, such as audio or video.
- There are plenty of tools to help you create a slideshow.
- There are thousands of *professionally designed templates* to make your slideshow look good. (*We'll take a closer look at how to use a professional presentation template later.*)
- You control the pace of the presentation.
- You can leave a copy of the presentation with your audience when it's over.

While there's plenty of negative chatter about slideshows in general, and PowerPoint specifically, the truth is that they're wildly popular. *According to the BBC*, there are more than 500 million PowerPoint users worldwide, and over 30 million presentations are given each day.

There's a reason slideshows are so popular. They're effective.

If you look closely at the complaints people make about slideshows, they're really about the way the presentation software is used. Common complaints include:

- The presentation was poorly organized.
- The slides were poorly designed.
- The text was too small to read.
- The presentation went too long.

But these aren't problems with the slideshow presentation format or any specific slideshow tool. There are two words for these problems: **USER ERROR**. And *user error is exactly what you'll avoid by following the advice in this guide.*

## Step 6. Write the Start and Finish of Your Presentation

The opening and conclusion of your presentation are important. The opening is where your listeners get their first impression of you. The closing is your last chance to get your message across.

For an effective presentation, take the time to get your start and finish right.

### 9 Presentation Writing Tips for a Successful Opening

The opening sets the tone for your presentation. Use the presentation writing tips below to grab your listeners' attention right from the start:

1. **Make a bold claim.** This could be an astounding or even a shocking statement.
2. **Contradict expectations.** Say the opposite of what the listener expects here.
3. **Stimulate curiosity.** Start by presenting something curious or unusual that you'll proceed to explain.
4. **Ask questions.** Involving the audience right from the beginning is an effective way to engage them.
5. **Spin a surprising story.** Storytelling is an effective presentation technique.
6. **Quote a well-known personality or a famous proverb.** Starting with a quote is overused, but if done right can pull your audience in.
7. **Tell a joke.** If you know your audience well enough to know what they'll find funny, a joke can be a good opening.



8. **Show a video.** A short but powerful video can make a huge impact on your audience.
9. **Reference a current event.** If something momentous is happening, don't try to compete. Instead, begin your presentation by briefly talking about what's going on.

Towards the end of your intro, tell your audience what to expect from the presentation. Share your presentation structure. For example, if there's a break in the middle of the presentation or if you'd like them to save all their questions until the end, tell them so in your opening.

### Conclude Powerfully

Your presentation conclusion is your last chance to point out what you want your audience to take with them when they leave.

*If you're giving a sales presentation, appeal to your audience with a call to action. Many presentations omit this vital piece, yet it can mean the difference between success and failure. A call to action tells the audience what to do next.*

Other **options for closing your presentation** include:

- a vision of the future
- a contrarian example
- a question and answer segment

Learn more about how to start and close a presentation:

[!\[\]\(faf942dc3e59ce8eb64b4ac481eca7e0\_img.jpg\) Make an Impact—How to Start a Presentation Strong and End Powerfully](#)

## Step 7. How to Write a Great Presentation

You've completed a presentation outline. You've worked on your introduction and conclusion. You're now ready to create your written presentation.

You don't need presentation software for this stage. We'll add that in the next step. For now, a good writing tool will do. Follow this **presentation writing process**:

1. Start with your presentation outline.
2. Create presentation slide text for the introduction, each main point, and the conclusion.
3. Write about your most compelling points in the first few slides.

To be effective, use short sentences and phrases to write your presentation. Review your content more than once to cut out wordiness and reduce unnecessary information.

Don't put too much information on each individual slide. If a slide contains too much information, your audience won't grasp everything you're sharing. *Divide slides with too much material into several slides.*

Learn more about writing a business presentation here:

[!\[\]\(56549452e01ca28bdf2500ced9653143\_img.jpg\) How to Write a Professional PowerPoint Presentation \(Discover the Writing Process\)](#)

**Try This:** Use planned pauses and transitions such as audience participation, videos, or other devices to divide a long presentation into smaller segments.

**Caution:** Humor can affect how your presentation is received. Humor lightens the mood and breaks up your material. But not everyone finds the same things funny. If you're not sure how a particular joke will be received, leave it out.

Keep reading to learn how to choose your presentation software...



## CHAPTER 5.

# How to Choose the Best Business Presentation Software

+Quick Start Tips



You've planned and written your presentation. Now, it's time to build it. Before you can do that, you've got to choose the best business presentation software for you to use.

We'll help you make the right choice for your presentation. We'll give you the information you need. Let's take a close look at the best (and most popular) presentation software options:

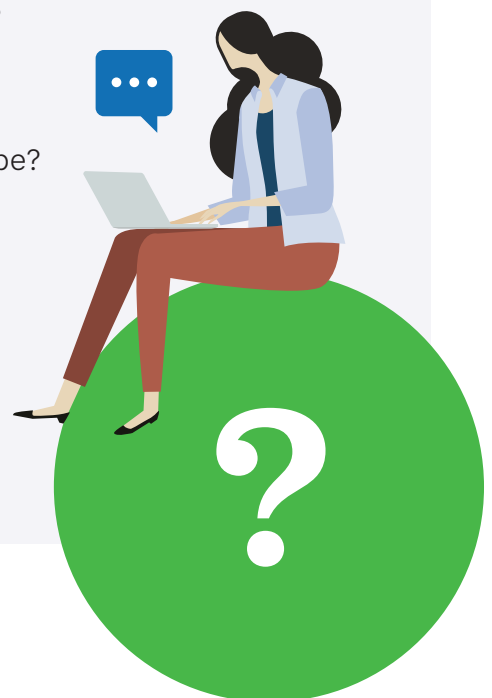
## TAKE THE QUIZ!

### *What Business Presentation Software Is Right for You?*

It helps to know as much about your presentation needs as possible. That's why we're including this presentation software quiz:

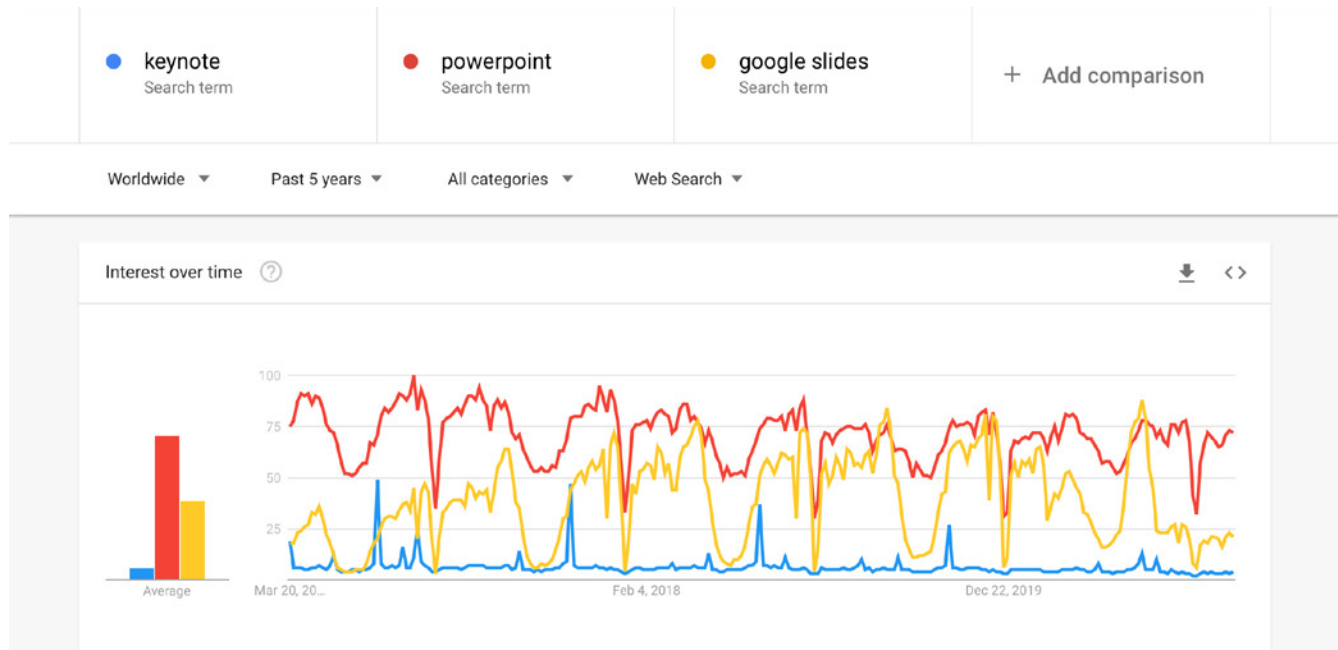
1. What presentation software (if any) do you use now?
2. What software requirements (if any) does your business have?
3. What hardware and operating system do you use?
4. What presentation tools do you have experience with?
5. What is your budget for presentation software?
6. How often will you work on the presentation with a team?
7. Do you need to use special effects like animation?
8. Do you need to import audio or video files?
9. Will you be exporting your presentation to another file type?
10. Do you often forget to save your files?
11. Do you use a Mac or a PC?
12. Do you ever need to work offline?

Remember your answers to these questions. *We'll revisit this quiz at the end of the chapter to help you find the right software tool for you.*



Now let's compare three of the most popular business presentation software packages. Let's examine [\*PowerPoint vs. Google Slides vs. Keynote\*](#).

Take a look at this [\*Google Trends\*](#) chart for a quick look at how these three tools compare. The chart measures how many searches there were for each of the three major tools worldwide:



This Google Trends chart compares the popularity of PowerPoint vs. Keynote vs. Google Slides

Let's explore the differences between Keynote, PowerPoint, and Google Slides. Let's look at each software tool independently.

## 1. MICROSOFT POWERPOINT

### *Popular With Companies*

Estimates place the number of Microsoft PowerPoint users at over 500 million ([\*via BBC News\*](#)). PowerPoint is, without question, the most popular business presentation software.

If you work for a company, your business likely uses PowerPoint. If you're required to use PowerPoint, your decision is already made.

You may already be somewhat familiar with PowerPoint. Maybe you've even already created a business PowerPoint presentation.

That familiarity means you'll be able to learn to use this powerful presentation tool fast.

Are you new to PowerPoint? Learn more about what PowerPoint is and how to get started quickly here:

[\*What Is Microsoft PowerPoint? +How to Start Using It For Presentations \(Now\)\*](#)

[\*How to Learn PowerPoint Quickly \(Complete Beginner's Guide\)\*](#)

Study the [\*Envato PowerPoint Ultimate Tutorial Guide\*](#) to learn even more about using PowerPoint.

**Try This:** If you created your outline in Microsoft Word and saved it on your PC, you can import it directly into PowerPoint. With PowerPoint open, click **Open > Browse**. Go to the file where your outline is stored. To the right of the **File name** field, switch from **All PowerPoint Presentations** to **All Files**. Click on your outline file and then click **Open**. PowerPoint creates a new presentation, with each paragraph of your outline in the title field of a new slide.

## Advantages of Microsoft PowerPoint

Now, let's look at the **advantages of Microsoft PowerPoint and its disadvantages**.

Even though it's popular, its popularity is not all there is to PowerPoint. Here are some of the many advantages of Microsoft PowerPoint:

- It's part of Microsoft Office 365 (works with Office productivity tools like Word, Excel, and more).
- It can export PowerPoint files to over a dozen different file types, ranging from .pdf to .rtf.
- It can import (embed) [audio](#) and [video](#) files.
- It includes 50 animations and special effects.
- Collaboration is possible through OneDrive.
- Offline access is possible in PowerPoint.
- It has free iOS and Android mobile apps.

## Disadvantages of Microsoft PowerPoint

Now that we've looked at the advantages of Microsoft PowerPoint, it's time to look at the disadvantages. One disadvantage is that it can be difficult to collaborate with others.

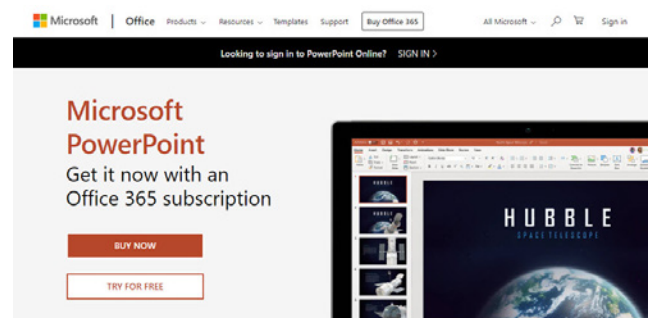
Recently, PowerPoint has improved the ability to collaborate in real-time. However, there are still more steps than with Google Slides. To work with another user, you must save the presentation to OneDrive and invite the people you want to collaborate with.

## Professional Microsoft PowerPoint Templates

One final advantage of Microsoft PowerPoint is the number of professionally designed presentation templates available. Here are some great business PowerPoint templates to help you create great presentations, as well as info on how to customize them quickly:

🔗 [22+ Professional PowerPoint Templates: For Better Business PPT Presentations](#)

🔗 [How to Make Professional PowerPoint Presentations \(With PPT Templates\)](#)



A popular option for business, PowerPoint is used by many companies worldwide.

## 2. GOOGLE SLIDES

### Great Collaboration & Great Price

Do you need professional productivity tools? Is real-time collaboration part of your job? Is your budget limited?

Consider using Google Slides. It's a readily available presentation software tool that's part of Google's productivity suite, which includes Sheets and Google Docs. Best of all, **it's free** when you create a Google account.

Are you new to Google Slides? Learn more about what Google Slides is and how to get started quickly here:

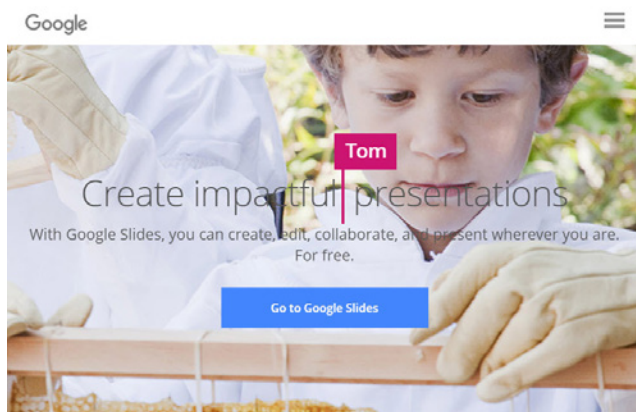
🔗 [\*What Is Google Slides? Great \(Free\) Online Presentation Software\*](#)

🔗 [\*How to Use Google Slides \(Quick Start Guide\)\*](#)

Study the [\*Envato Google Slides Ultimate Tutorial Guide\*](#) to learn even more about Google Slides.

**Try This:** Did you know that you could copy a Google Slides slide from one presentation to another? To do this, open the Google Slides business presentation with the slide design you want. Click the desired slide and click **Control-C** to copy the slide to your clipboard. Open a second business presentation that you want to copy the slide to. Click the slide before where you want to insert the copied slide. Click **Control-V** to paste the copied slide into the second presentation.

Now, let's look at the **advantages and disadvantages of Google Slides**.



It's worth learning about the advantages and disadvantages of Google Slides.

## *Advantages of Google Slides*

- It's free with a Google account.
- Share online for real-time editing and collaboration.
- Your work is saved automatically in Google Slides.
- It keeps a revision history, making it possible to go back to an earlier version.
- It's part of Google Drive (works with Google Drive's productivity tools like Google Docs, Sheets, and more).
- Export Google Slides files to several different file types (although not as many as with PowerPoint).
- You can insert [\*audio\*](#) or [\*video\*](#) files.
- Includes animation and special effects (although not as many as PowerPoint).
- Free iOS mobile app.

## *Disadvantages of Google Slides*

One of the disadvantages of Google Slides is that you must have a Google account to use it. And there are also fewer choices for effects and themes.

## *Professional Google Slides Templates*

Discover professionally designed Google Slides templates and how to quickly create a great business presentation with them:

🔗 [\*25 Best Business Presentation Templates for Google Slides\*](#)

🔗 [\*How to Create a Presentation From a Google Slides Theme\*](#)

## 3. APPLE KEYNOTE

### *Great for Mac Users*

You may be wondering: *what is Keynote?* Keynote is Apple's presentation software tool. It's part of Apple's iWork productivity suite that includes Pages and Numbers.



A key difference between Keynote and PowerPoint is that Keynote is designed for a Mac.

To choose between Keynote and PowerPoint, read on to learn the difference between them.

If you've got a Mac, remember that Keynote already comes with your computer. Learn what Keynote is and how to get started quickly here:

🔗 [\*What Is Apple Keynote Software? +How to Start Using It to Make Presentations\*](#)

🔗 [\*How to Create a Basic Keynote Presentation \(On Your Mac\)\*](#)

Study the [\*Envato Apple Keynote Ultimate Tutorial Guide\*](#) to learn how to use Keynote.

**Try This:** Did you know you can stream a Keynote presentation using Keynote Live? Click the **Keynote Live** button on the menu at the top of the screen. You'll be prompted to save your presentation to your iCloud account. Then, click the **Continue** button. Send the URL to the viewers you want to share your presentation with. Press **Play** to start streaming your presentation.

Now, let's look at **Apple Keynote advantages and disadvantages**.

### *Keynote Advantages*

- It comes with your Mac computer.
- Keynote is part of the iWork productivity suite (works with productivity tools like Pages, Numbers, and more).
- Export Keynote files to several different file types (including Apple-specific file types like QuickTime).
- Insert [\*audio\*](#) or [\*video\*](#) files.
- Share and collaborate through your iCloud drive.
- Includes about 30 animation and 40 special effects (although not as many as PowerPoint).
- Work on the files offline.

### *Keynote Disadvantages*

Keynote also has some disadvantages, the main one being that it's for the Mac only. PC users can't work on Keynote files.

### *Professional Keynote Templates*

Create great presentations using Keynote with these great business Keynote templates and helpful tutorial:

🔗 [\*20 Best Keynote Presentation Templates \(Designs For Mac Users\)\*](#)

🔗 [\*How to Make a Great Presentation in Keynote With Template Designs\*](#)



## YOUR FINAL DECISION—CHOOSE THE RIGHT PRESENTATION SOFTWARE FOR YOU

Let's revisit the Business Presentations Software Quiz. Your answers to the questions on the quiz reveal which presentation software you'll like.

### ***PowerPoint May Be the Right Business Presentation Software for You If:***

- You answered "PowerPoint" to questions 1, 2, and 4.
- You answered "PC" and "Windows" to question 3.
- For question 5, you had over \$150 in the budget for a single user.
- For question 6, you answered "occasionally" or "rarely".
- For questions 7, 8, 9, or 12, you answered "yes".

PowerPoint is ideal for businesses that use the Microsoft Office productivity suite. It's also great for companies whose workers create business presentations independently.

### ***Google Slides May Be the Right Business Presentation Software for You If:***

- You answered "Google Slides" to questions 1, 2, and 4.
- For question 5, you had little to nothing in the budget.
- For question 6, you answered "often".
- For questions 7, 8, and 10, you answered "yes".

Google Slides is ideal for businesses that use the Google Drive productivity suite. It's also great for companies whose workers rely on real-time collaboration.

### ***Keynote May Be the Right Business Presentation Software for You If:***

- You answered "Keynote" to questions 1, 2, and 4.
- You answered "Mac," "Apple," "macOS," or "iOS" to question 3.
- For question 6, you answered "often".
- For question 11, you answered "Mac".

Keynote is ideal for businesses that work on Macs and use the iWork productivity suite.

For a more in-depth comparison of these three software presentation tools, look at:

[!\[\]\(95b425611cbd2b8716a140cf67c81822\_img.jpg\) \*PowerPoint vs. Keynote vs. Google Slides: What Is the Best Presentation Software?\*](#)

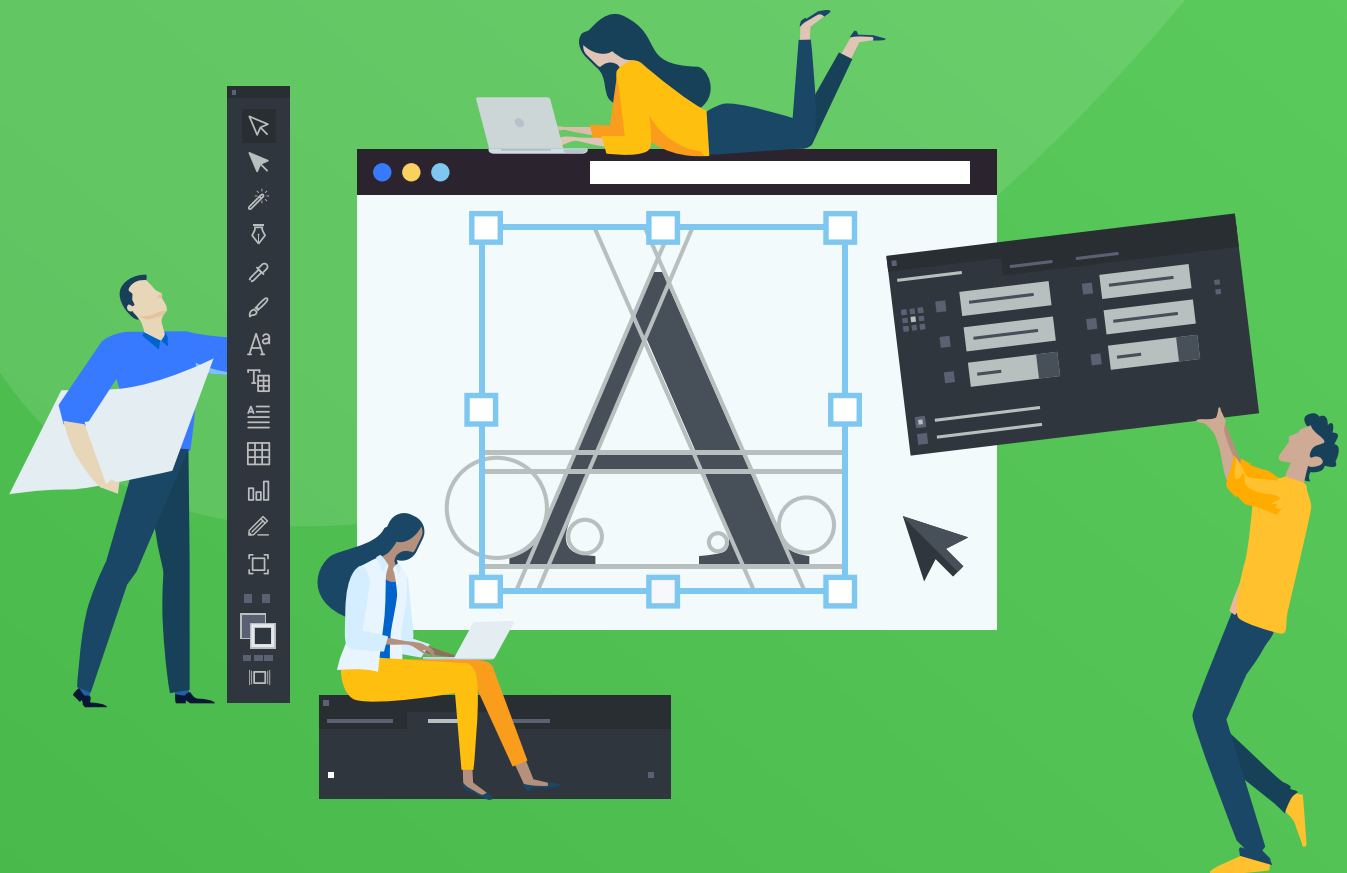
For even more software presentation tools, look here:

[!\[\]\(4f6bf54ae7e4144a72d78316053e412d\_img.jpg\) \*20 Best Presentation Making Software Alternatives to PowerPoint\*](#)

Now that you've selected a presentation software tool, read on to learn how to design your business presentation.

## CHAPTER 6.

# How to Design a Killer Business Presentation Like a Creative Professional





You know your message. You've researched your topic and your audience. You've created your outline. And you've chosen a presentation software tool.

But for an effective business slideshow that moves people to action, you need a visually appealing presentation. Want a presentation your audience will remember? A good presentation design makes the difference.

The presentation slide design tips here will show you what to do (complete with PowerPoint presentation examples).

## GET THE RIGHT KIND OF ATTENTION WITH THESE 6 PRESENTATION DESIGN BASICS

Pay attention to these six presentation design basics as you design your presentation:

1. Slide Layout
2. Font Choice
3. Color
4. Graphics
5. Media
6. Special Effects

Let's look at each element individually:

### 1. Slide Layout

A slide's layout is the organization of your content and the visual elements on each slide. Think about your presentation content as you design the layout of each slide of your presentation.

Look at what you've written. Imagine what type of slide design would be effective for each point. Some points may fit naturally on a slide with text alongside an image. Other points may be best shown through a slide with a chart or graph.



Keep each slide design as simple as possible. A cluttered design will draw attention away from your content. Also, for complicated points, you may need more than one slide. And that's okay.

**Try This:** Draw thumbnails or create a storyboard to show a visual picture of the type of slide designs you need. (Don't confuse these thumbnails with the **Thumbnail** view in many software presentation tools.) These thumbnails are simply rough sketches of what various slides in your presentation will look like. You don't have to be an artist. A simple drawing will do.

## 2. Font Choice

When choosing a font, think about both font type and font size.

**Font type** refers to the look of the font. Some fonts work for casual use, but not for a professional presentation. Choose a font that's easy to read. San serif fonts like Tahoma or Gil Sans work well, especially for headings.

**Font size** is also important when creating a presentation. The font needs to be large enough for an audience to read from across the room. Use at least a 24-point font.

Don't use too many different fonts in your presentation. Fonts should coordinate with each other and not be distracting.

Learn more about fonts here:

🔗 [A Beginner's Guide to Pairing Fonts](#)

**Try This:** Pull out your branded business materials such as stationery, brochures, and business cards. List the fonts used. (If you're not sure, ask your marketing department.) Replace the current fonts in your slide presentation with these fonts if they work well on screen.

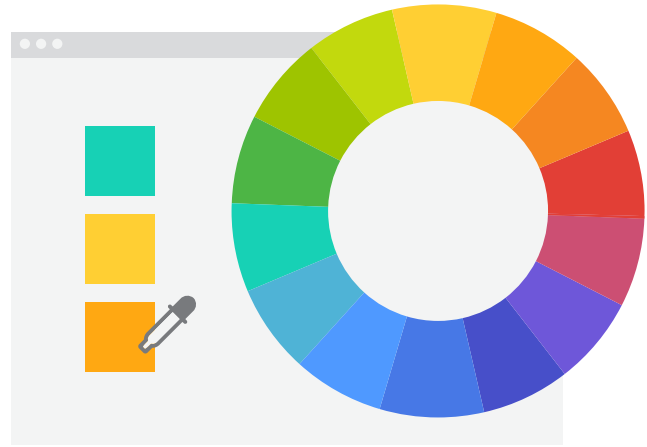
Learn how to change your presentation fonts here:

🔗 [How to Add Custom Fonts to PowerPoint in 60 Seconds](#)

🔗 [How to Add New Fonts to Google Slides in 60 Seconds](#)

## 3. Color Choice

Color plays a big part in any presentation. Colors send powerful visual messages. Choose the colors for your slide background, fonts, and accent text carefully.



The wrong colors will give listeners the wrong idea about your brand or message. Too many colors or clashing colors make your presentation appear garish and amateurish.

Color also lets you brand your presentations. When designing your presentation, think about your business color and design scheme.

Re-examine your branded materials (your website, stationery, and business cards). Compare them with the colors you plan to use for your presentation. It should all work together.

Learn all about color in the Envato Tuts+ tutorial:

🔗 [A Comprehensive Introduction to Color in Design](#)

## 4. Graphics

To help your listeners remember your main points, make wise use of graphics. Remember that the right visuals can help your listeners retain up to 65% of what you say (according to [Brain Rules](#)).

Consider using these types of graphics to give your business presentation a visual edge:

- photos
- illustrations
- infographics
- icons

It's important to use graphics wisely, though. Putting too many images on a slide or using unprofessional graphics will actually leave listeners with a negative impression.

**Try This:** If you've got an [Envato Elements](#) subscription, you've got unlimited access to various design resources. Browse through the [photos](#), [illustrations](#), [infographics](#), and [icons](#) to find professionally designed visuals that meet your needs.

## 5. Media Choice

Embed a short video or audio into your presentation to provide some variety for your audience.

But be careful. Too many videos or audio messages will overpower your presentation and distract your audience. Limit your use of embedded media.

The media you choose should be professionally produced. Don't embed sloppy, amateurish video or audio into your presentation.

Also, keep the embedded video or audio short. Under a minute is best, but don't let it go longer than two minutes.

Find the best media to enhance your business presentation by asking these questions:

- Is this media related to my goal?
- Is the media professional?
- Does the media fit our company's image?
- How long is it?

**Try This:** Play a royalty-free soundtrack on a loop before your presentation starts. Download professionally produced royalty-free music files with your [Envato Elements](#) subscription or for a single low fee from [AudioJungle](#).

## 6. Special Effects

Use the special effects that come with most presentation software to add extra interest to your presentation design.

The two types of special effects are:

- animations
- transitions

**Animations** are used to move the elements of your slide. Animations can move the slide body text, images, and other objects of your slide design.

**Transitions** are a specialized type of animation that are used between slides.

Don't overuse special effects. Too many special effects distract from your main message. But sprinkling in a few special effects can add interest to your presentation.

Learn how to use animations in your presentation here:

🔗 [How to Add Animations in Apple Keynote \(Complete Guide\)](#)

🔗 [How to Add Animations to Your PowerPoint Presentations](#)

🔗 [How to Use Google Slides Animations and Timed Transitions](#)

## HOW TO USE A PRESENTATION TEMPLATE: 3 EASY STEPS TO FOLLOW

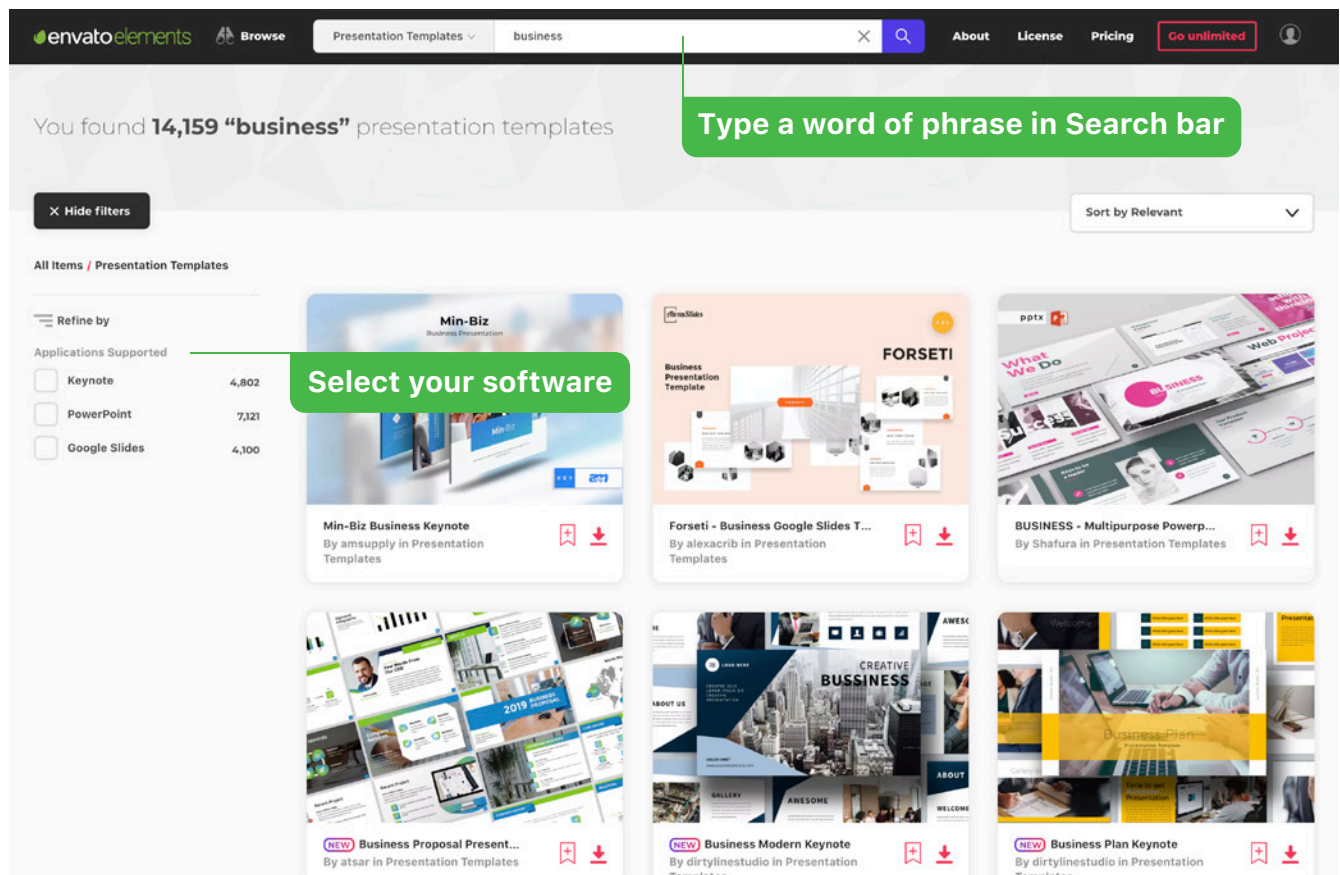
A professionally designed business presentation template gives you a head start at making visually appealing presentations. Some of the other advantages of using a professional presentation template include:

- makes the most of your presentation software
- includes a ton of presentation design options
- updated often to current standards and trends

Are you wondering how to use a template? Here are three easy steps to get you started:

### 1. Search for a Pro Presentation Template Design

Find a professionally designed template at [Envato Elements](#), which has thousands of presentation templates available. Use the **Search** bar and filters to find the right template for you, whether that's for PowerPoint, Google Slides, or Keynote.



Envato Elements has thousands of [attractive presentation templates](#).

If you're having trouble finding the right presentation template, there are some great PowerPoint presentation template choices in these articles:

[🔗 19+ Best PowerPoint PPT Template Designs](#)

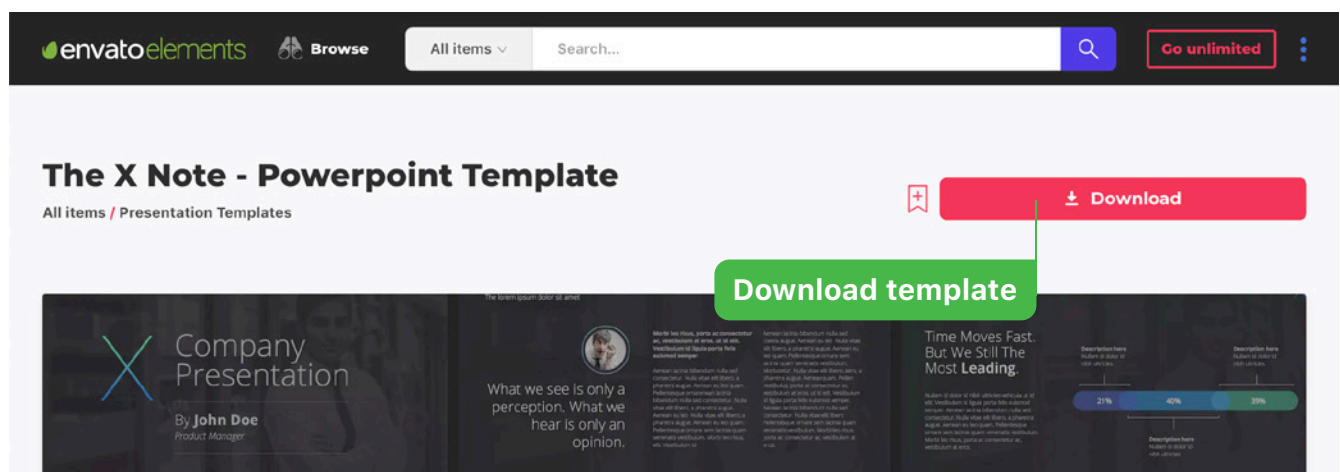
[🔗 25 Best Business Presentation Templates for Google Slides](#)

[🔗 20+ Mac Keynote Themes: Made to Customize Quickly](#)

No matter what presentation software you're using, you'll find visually appealing presentation choices in these curated lists.

## 2. Download a Great Presentation Template Design

When you've found the right presentation design template for you, download it.



The [X Note PowerPoint template](#) is one of many presentation template choices.

In this example, we're using [The X Note PowerPoint Template](#). This template has a dark and light version. It also has 43 unique presentation slide designs included.

## 3. Customize Your Template

You'll receive a zip file containing a presentation folder. Extract the files. Use your presentation software to open the template.

You're now ready to customize the presentation slide design template with your own details. You can quickly add your presentation content, photos, and graphics, change the colors, and fully customize it to your needs.

Learn more about customizing a PowerPoint template:

[🔗 How to Quickly Customize a PowerPoint Template Design](#)



## 5 TOP BUSINESS PRESENTATION EXAMPLES (WITH POWERFUL VISUAL DESIGNS)

Let's look at how using a professional template design can quickly transform your presentation material from dull to interesting. Here are five before and after business PowerPoint presentation examples:

### 1. The Our Story Slide

In most business presentations, there's a slide that tells the audience what a company is about. To the right is a before example of this type of slide using one of the standard basic templates included in PowerPoint.

As you can see, it's very basic. It tells the story, but it's not a visually appealing design.

Now let's look at the same information, but this time we've used **slide #4** from [The X Note PowerPoint Template \(dark version\)](#). We've also added [an image from Envato Elements](#) to grab the viewer's attention.

#### The AnyTown Consulting Story

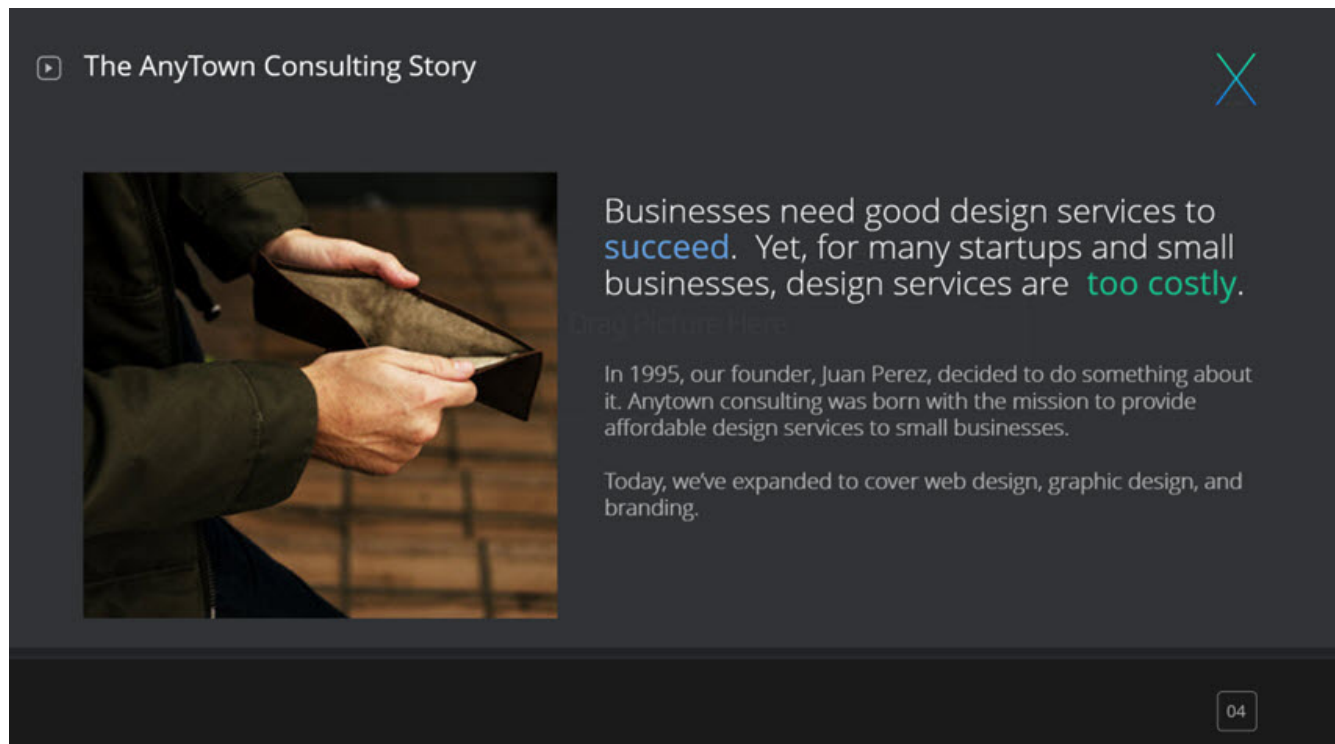
Businesses need good design services to succeed. Yet, for many startups and small businesses, design services are too costly.

In 1995, our founder, Juan Perez, decided to do something about it. AnyTown Consulting was born with the mission to provide affordable design services to small businesses.

Today, we've expanded to cover web design, graphic design, and branding.

This slide looks like many presentations—a boring design with no visual appeal.

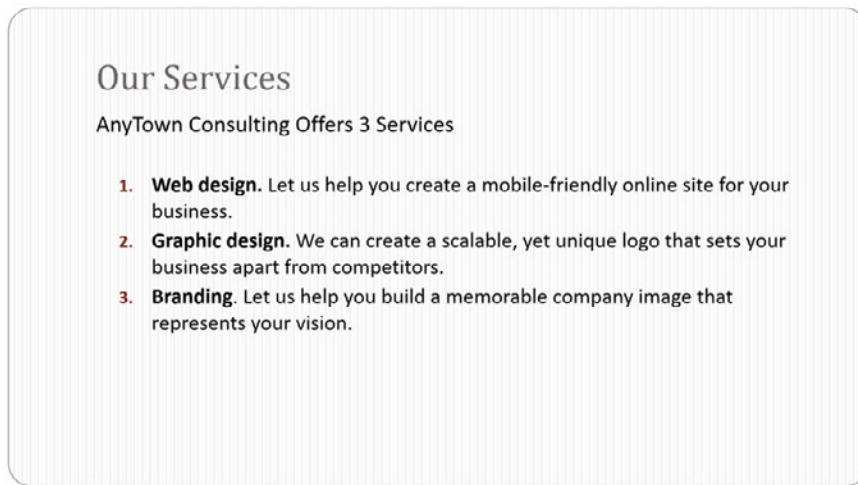
**Try This:** Make your company story come to life. Add a photo of your product or service in action to your slide design.



Create an eye-catching slide with slide #4 of the dark version of The X Note PowerPoint template.

## 2. The Our Services Slide

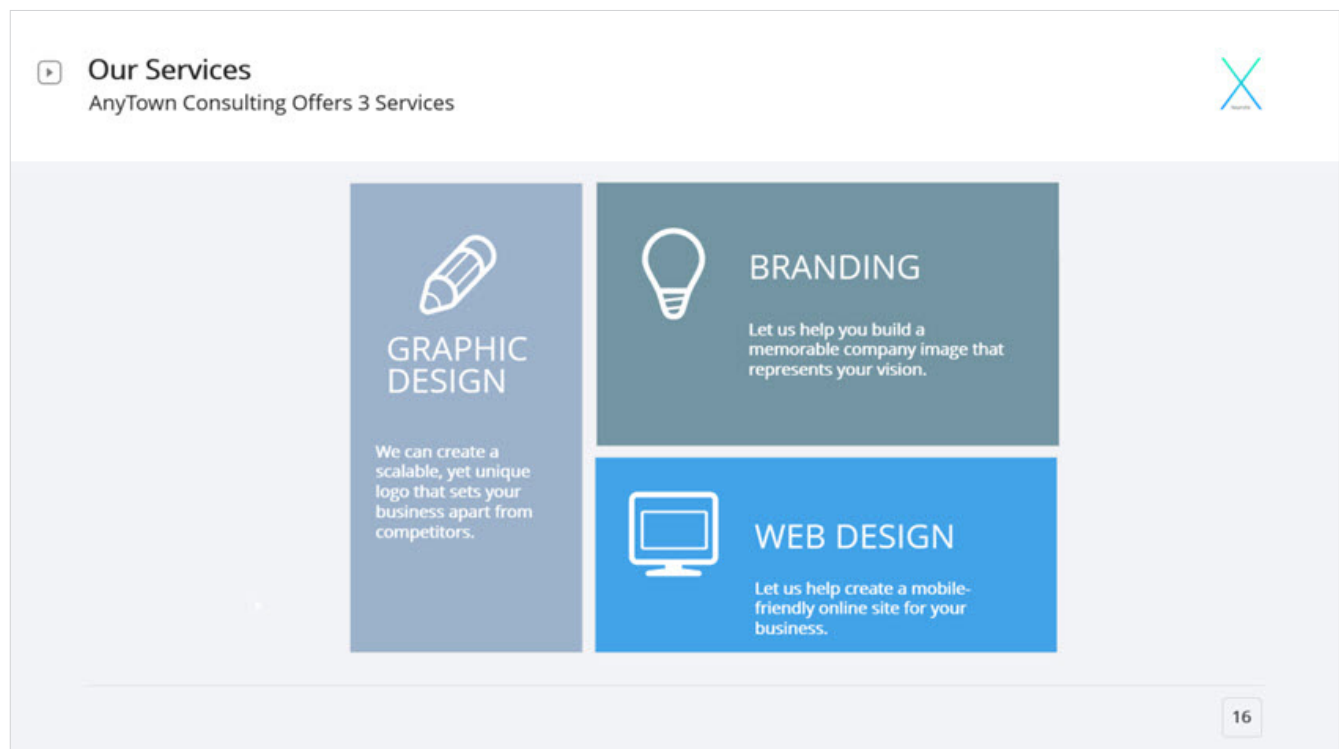
Businesses use the *Our Services Slide (or Our Products Slide)* to explain what they have to offer. Here's a before example of this type of slide using the same standard template as before:



Here's a typical list slide format used by many presenters.

This time, we've used the light version of The [X Note PowerPoint Template](#), slide #16, to redo the slide design. Look at what a difference the template makes in this after example:

The icons we added here to the professionally designed slide came with the template and dramatically transform our presentation content!



Using a professional template can make a real difference.



### 3. The Timeline Slide

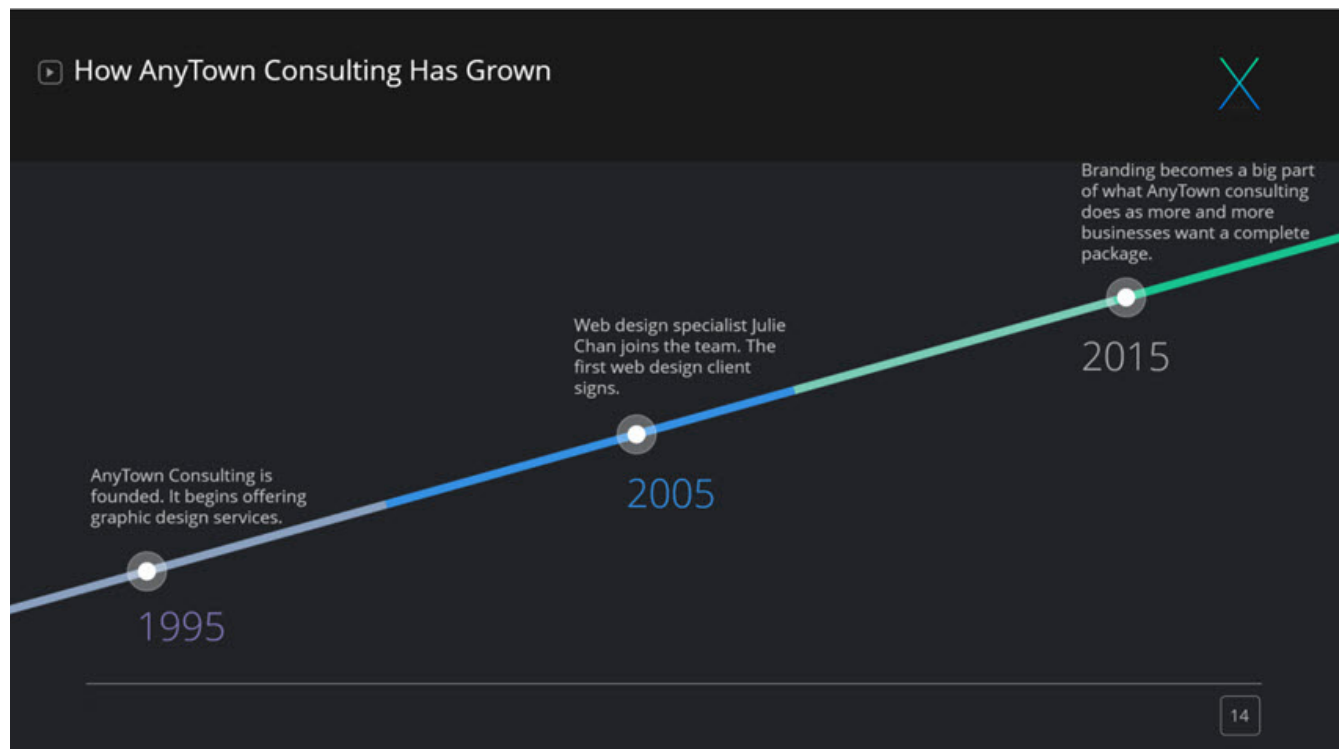
Many default presentation slide templates lack a timeline graphic. Without a graphic, a bulleted list is often the best you can do.

#### How AnyTown Consulting Has Grown

- **1995.** AnyTown Consulting is founded. It begins offering graphic design services.
- **2005.** Web design specialist Julie Chan joins the team. The first web design client signs.
- **2015.** Branding becomes a big part of what AnyTown consulting does as more and more businesses want a complete package.

Without many graphic options for showing data, you may be forced to resort to bullets.

But premium templates give you the option to display your timeline data visually. Here's a look at the same timeline using **slide #14** from the **dark version** of [The X Note PowerPoint Template](#):



Notice how the upward slope of the timeline hints at growth.

#### 4. The Awards Slide

If your business has received awards, you'll want to show those off in your presentation. Without many graphic options for showing your data, you may be forced to resort to bullets again. Here's a before example using a default PPT template:



The company's awards don't catch the audience's attention with this typical non-premium template.

Look at the difference that a creative slide design can make (based on **slide #15** of the light version of [The X Note PowerPoint Template](#)):



Notice how the creative slide design catches your eye and draws attention to the company's awards.

## 5. The Pie Chart

Reading a list of statistics is dull. But if your slideshow template design is limited, a list may be all you've got to show your listeners. Here's a before example of some key data using a standard template design:

### AnyTown Consulting Project Type

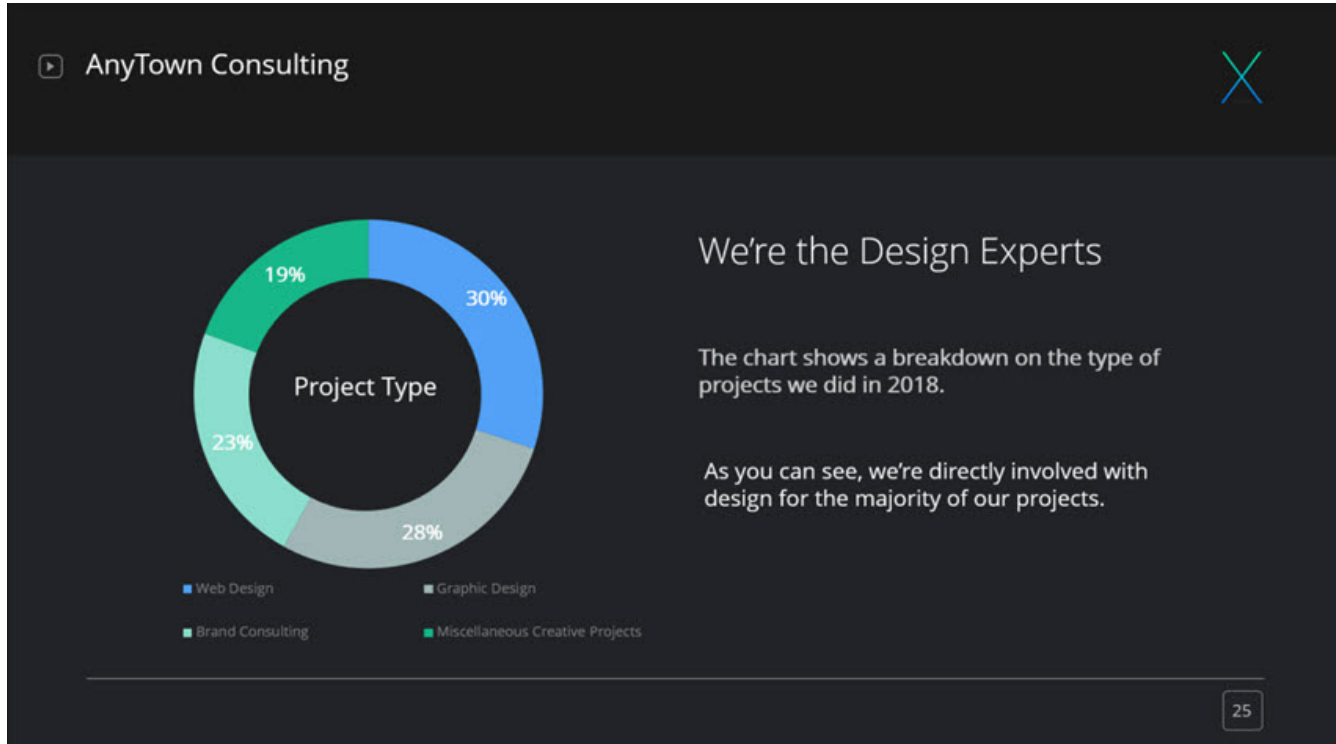
We're the design experts. Here's the breakdown on the type of projects we did in 2018:

- 30% web design
- 28% graphic design
- 23% brand consulting
- 19% miscellaneous creative projects

As you can see, we're directly involved with design for the majority of our projects.

Another bulleted list, yawn... Will this presentation ever end?

A chart, like a pie chart, brings boring data to life. (Based on **slide template #25** from the dark version of [The X Note PowerPoint Template](#).):



This pie chart shows the same information as the list, but without boring the audience.

For some additional PowerPoint presentation design techniques, review:

- 🔗 [How to Make a Good PowerPoint Design Even Better](#)
- 🔗 [10 Presentation Design Tips \(To Make the Best Pitch Deck\)](#)
- 🔗 [25+ Inspirational PowerPoint Presentation Design Examples \(2018\)](#)

## SHOULD YOU HIRE A DESIGNER? (HANDY CHECKLIST)

You've just learned the key design elements for creating an effective presentation.

Professional presentation templates make it easy for nearly anyone to create an attractive and impactful presentation. But there are times when hiring a designer to create your presentation might be best.

Use the list below to decide whether you need to hire a professional designer to create your presentation:

- You're too busy to create a presentation.
- You're in the middle of branding. You want the designer to create a unique presentation look you'll use again and again.
- You've got a generous budget for presentations.
- You don't know how to use presentation software (and don't have time to learn).
- The stakes for this presentation are high.
- You're not confident in your ability to communicate your message to your audience.
- You need someone to provide professional input on what you've done so far.

A professional designer can create a unique presentation theme that fits well with your branding. A presentation designer also has experience and graphic design training to draw upon. They can present you with great design options.

**Try This:** If you're looking for a professional presentation designer, check out Envato Studio. There's a category for [presentation design services](#), with a curated selection of professionals you can quickly work with.



## CHAPTER 7.

# Get Maximum Audience Impact:

Give (Deliver) Great Business Presentations



You want your business presentation to make a difference.  
You want your audience to remember it. You want them to act  
on what they hear.

You may think you can't control this aspect of your speech. But you can. Stay tuned to learn how to give a great presentation with maximum audience impact.

Let's start with a look at the art of giving a good presentation.

## 6 TOP TIPS FOR GIVING A GOOD PRESENTATION

Use these powerful public speaking techniques to deliver a presentation that makes a difference. In this chapter's tips for giving a presentation, you'll learn how to:

1. project confidence through body language
2. manage your speaking voice
3. captivate your audience by telling a story
4. have a good start (and killer close)
5. use strategic pauses for effect
6. win your audience over with a smile

Let's examine each tip separately:

### 1. Project Confidence Through Body Language

Your body language (also known as non-verbal communication) tells your audience as much as your words. What your audience sees needs to match what you're saying.

Most experts agree that non-verbal communication is as important as (if not more important than) the words you say (Source: [The Nonverbal Group](#)).

The body language you use as you give your presentation includes your:

- posture
- gestures
- movements
- expressions
- eye contact

Standing stiffly before your audience, reading from cards or a computer screen—as so many speakers do—doesn't inspire confidence in your message.

Instead, stand naturally. Don't be afraid to move. It's okay to make hand gestures or move across the stage. Don't overdo it, though. Keep your movements natural and relaxed.

Your expressions also play a big role in your non-verbal communication. If your expression makes you look uncomfortable, your audience will feel uncomfortable too.

A quick fix for an uncomfortable expression is a smile. Try a friendly smile just before you start your speech and after you pause. We'll talk more about the importance of a smile later.

For more detailed information on body language, study this Envato Tuts+ tutorial:

🔗 [\*Importance of Body Language in Presentations: +How to Use It Effectively.\*](#)

**Try This:** Once you've learned your speech, practice presenting a "dry run" in front of a friend or colleague. Ask them to notice the impression your body language leaves rather than the actual words you're saying. Also, ask whether you're slouching or standing stiffly. They can also tell you whether your movements are distracting or effective.

## 2. Manage Your Speaking Voice

How you sound also makes a huge impact on your audience. If you're going to deliver a presentation that has an impact, you need to pay attention to the way you speak.

Common speaking mistakes include:

- speaking too quickly
- speaking too softly
- speaking in a monotone voice
- mumbling or otherwise not speaking clearly
- overusing unnecessary interjections like "um," "like," and "you know"

**Your voice leaves a big impression on your listener. It also determines whether they can understand what you're saying.** If your listener must work too hard to understand you, they'll give up. You've lost their attention.

Managing your voice improves with practice. But first you've got to know what to work on.

**Try This:** Use a webcam, smartphone, or other device to record you practicing your presentation. As you play it back, look for problem areas where you need to improve. Take notes on the tone of your voice, how fast you're speaking, and the volume of your voice. Also, notice how often you use interjections. These are all details you can work on improving.

## 3. Captivate Your Audience: By Telling a Story

It's a scientific fact that people love stories. **Studies show that messages with a story are 35% more effective than messages without a story.** (Source: [\*Inc.\*](#)) The same source indicates that the most popular TED Talks are over half narrative.





According to a [study from neuroeconomist Paul Zak](#), we love stories because they cause our brains to produce:

- oxytocin, a neurochemical associated with empathy
- cortisol, a neurochemical that helps us focus

This is particularly true for stories with a dramatic arc. Learn more about Zak's work and about how stories affect behavior in [this](#) YouTube video.

**If your product or service has dramatically changed someone's life, tell that story.** Your presentation will be more effective because of it.

#### **4. For a Presentation That Sticks: Have a Good Start (And Killer Close)**

How you begin and how you end your presentation means the difference between a talk that sticks with your audience and one they forget.

**The opening of your business presentation sets the tone for the rest of the presentation.** Like it or not, the audience

decides within seconds whether they want to pay attention or not. [This Time magazine article](#) puts the human attention span at less than ten seconds.

And once you've lost your audience's interest, you'll have to work twice as hard to capture it. In fact, you may never get their interest. Here are five effective ways to start a business presentation:

- 1. Be bold.** A bold statement, spoken with confidence, will capture your listener's attention.
- 2. Be contrary.** Get people to pay attention by saying the opposite of what most people expect.

- 3. Make them wonder.** Curiosity is a powerful way to get your audience to focus on what you say.
- 4. Ask questions.** Questions are a great way to engage your listeners.
- 5. Use storytelling.** You just learned about how effective stories are. A good story makes a good opening.

Just as the beginning of your presentation is important, so is the end. **If your audience is still listening at the end of your speech, that means they're interested. Don't blow it with a weak ending!**

Three great ways to end your business presentation powerfully include:

- 1. A call to action.** Tell your audience what to do next.
- 2. A vision of the future.** Leave them with a dream of what could be.
- 3. Close loops.** While your presentation opens with a story or sparking imagination, your conclusion is where to pull all those open threads together into a killer ending.

For a detailed lesson on how to start and end a presentation powerfully, turn to this Envato tutorial:

[🔗 \*Make an Impact—How to Start a Presentation Strong and End Powerfully\*](#)

#### **5. How to Use Strategic Pauses for Effect**

Using pauses to give a presentation may seem illogical. After all, you've got a limited amount of time to talk, and you want to say everything you need to say.

Yet, used correctly, pauses work. **Some of the most effective bits of your speech are when you're not talking.** If you want to know how to give a killer presentation, learn when and how to pause.

Some of the advantages of strategically placed pauses:

- **Audience connection.** Remember what Dan Pallotta said about the power of silence and audience intimacy in Chapter 3.
- **Refocus listeners.** Pauses give listeners a chance to gather their thoughts and refocus on your presentation.
- **Better pace.** A pause helps you control the pace of your presentation.
- **Human needs.** It's good to give your audience a chance to stand up, stretch, and so on.

So, when should you pause? Here are some great times to pause:

1. You've just made a major point.
2. You've just asked a question.
3. Your audience is laughing or otherwise making noise.
4. For dramatic effect when telling a story.

Most pauses don't need to be long. A few seconds to a minute is often all it takes to be effective.

A longer pause can serve as a transition to break a long speech into chunks your viewers can appreciate and are more likely to retain.

## 6. Win Your Audience Over With a Smile

**Facial expressions are a specific type of body language.** And one facial expression is more important than the rest. Enter the smile.

Smiling during your presentation makes a difference for you and for your audience.

Smiling can help improve your mood and relieve stress (Source: [Psychology Today](#)). If you start your presentation with a smile, you're less likely to be anxious.

A sincere smile is also catchy. If you smile, your audience is more likely to smile back. Also, a genuine smile is perceived as positive. People who smile are seen as friendly and more trustworthy.

Learn more about the power and benefits of smiling in [this YouTube video from Ron Gutman](#).

Another secret to delivering an effective presentation is learning to deal with your nerves.



## GET COMFORTABLE: DELIVER A PRESENTATION WITH CONFIDENCE (AND WITHOUT ANXIETY)

It's no secret that many people hate giving presentations. **Even experienced speakers get presentation anxiety.**

If you're one of the many, many people who struggle with a fear of public speaking (also known as glossophobia), you're not alone. You can still give an effective presentation.

Occasionally, your speaking anxiety will be so obvious that it distracts from your message. But most of the time your listeners will understand that you're nervous. They've likely given speeches themselves, so they know what it feels like.

**Your listeners will forgive you if you make a few mistakes.** They know that you're only human and that humans make mistakes.

In fact, you're probably more critical of your speaking ability than your audience is.

Here's **your go-to list of tips for giving a presentation with confidence:**

- An hour or so before the presentation, imagine that your speech is already over, and you nailed it. Repeat the visualization of a successful outcome several times.
- A half hour or so before, plan on doing some light exercise. A brisk walk fits the bill perfectly.
- As you begin speaking, focus on various audience members. But don't stare at any one person for too long. (If looking at people makes you uncomfortable, look at various spots on the wall directly behind your audience.)

- If you do happen to make a mistake, pause. Take a deep breath and collect your thoughts. Sip some water if you've got some. Then, keep going. Don't make a big deal about the mistake.
- Some public speakers find that glancing at a friendly face in the audience helps. If this is you, make a mental note of where your friendly face is located before you begin speaking.

For more information on how to overcome the fear of public speaking and how to speak confidently, study these Envato tutorials:

[!\[\]\(4fe57c3593bf1b21d272ae7ac8dfaf77\_img.jpg\) \*How to Overcome Your Fear of Public Speaking\*](#)

[!\[\]\(0d5ec72f61334709c3fc9450209b754f\_img.jpg\) \*How to Speak Confidently in Public \(Like a Pro\)\*](#)

**One Final Tip:** Practice works! The more you practice, the easier giving a presentation will be for you. Organizations like [\*Toastmasters International\*](#) and professional [\*meetups\*](#) can help you to practice and improve your speaking skills.

Not only is speaking confidently to your audience important, but so too is choosing the right venue to present in and getting familiar with it.

## USE THIS CHECKLIST TO FIND THE PERFECT VENUE FOR YOUR BUSINESS PRESENTATION QUICKLY

Where you give your presentation does make a difference. Choosing the right speaking venue means a better experience for both you and your audience.

As soon as possible, learn everything you can about the facility where you'll give your presentation. **If you can, pay a pre-presentation visit.** Find out what's available at the speaking location and what you need to bring with you.

**To choose a good speaking venue, use the following items as a checklist:**

The facility is easy for audience members to find.

There are enough chairs for all the members of your expected audience.

Audience members can hear (and see) your presentation regardless of where they're seated.

There are restrooms convenient to the main speaking area.

Get a specific list of provided equipment.\*

Make sure there are enough electrical outlets.

The room has a place for you to project your slideshow (either a screen or a blank wall).

The room will be heated (or cooled) to a comfortable temperature.

*\* Provided equipment can include cables, computer with keyboard and mouse,*

*microphone and other sound equipment, a remote, a video adapter, and a working projector.*

**If you've got any questions about the facility before the date of your presentation, ask.** Most venues are happy to work with you.

On the day of your presentation, bring any equipment that won't be provided by your venue. Also, bring a laptop or phone charger.

You've just learned the best way to deliver a presentation for maximum impact. Next, we'll discuss those extras that can add something special to your presentation.



## CHAPTER 8.

# 7 Creative Ideas That'll Add Extra Oomph to Any Business Presentation



For a truly impactful presentation, you need to go above and beyond the expectations of your audience. Here are seven creative presentation ideas you can put to good use right away to make your presentation more memorable.

## 1. GIVE AWAY SOME SWAG

People love getting free stuff. A swag bag full of branded items means they'll remember your organization each time they pick up that branded pen or pencil, keychain, folder, or other branded item.

Here's a list of easily branded items, perfect for a swag bag:

- pens and pencils
- keychains
- folders
- notepads
- calendars
- coffee mugs
- tote bags

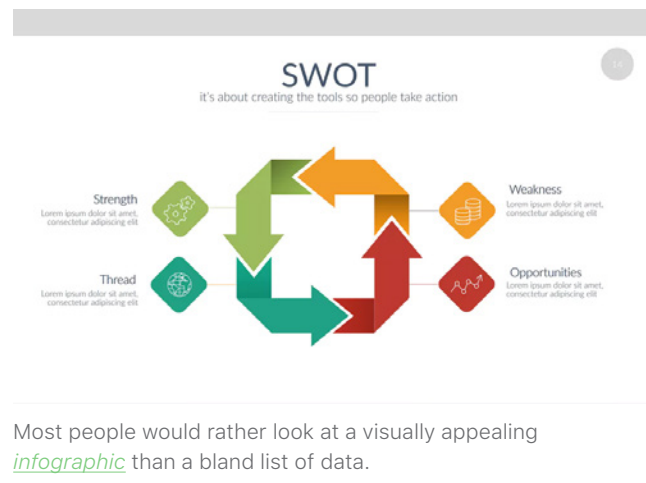
Make sure that each swag bag item displays your company name and phone number. If you're wondering how your logo would look on a promotional item, you can [create mockups using Placeit](#).

**Try This:** Put together a book or pamphlet of tips related to your product or service. Give it away to audience members as part of your swag bag, or by itself.

## 2. USE AN INFOGRAPHIC IN YOUR SLIDES

Infographics present facts, figures, and other concepts in an attractive, visual way. Keep your listeners interested while you present data that might otherwise seem boring.

Notice how the colorful infographic below catches your eye:



Learn more about infographics in these Envato Tuts+ articles:

- 🔗 [20 Best Infographic PowerPoint Presentation Templates-With Great PPT Data Slides](#)
- 🔗 [What Is an Infographic & How It Can Help Your Presentation](#)
- 🔗 [How to Edit a Brain Infographic PowerPoint Template in 60 Seconds](#)

### 3. ADD A HUMAN ELEMENT TO YOUR PRESENTATION

Adding a human element is another creative presentation idea for extra oomph. People love stories, and they're especially drawn to stories about people.

We've already talked about how effective storytelling can be. Learn more about storytelling in these Envato Tuts+ articles:

🔗 [\*How to Write Great Pitch Decks \(With Powerful Storytelling Techniques\)\*](#)

🔗 [\*How to Tell Effective Visual Stories in Your PowerPoint Presentations\*](#)

**Try This:** Poll your top 20 customers. Ask each one whether your product or service has made a difference in their life. Also ask whether they'd be willing to share their story. Contact the customers who said "yes." Use their responses to create a powerful human impact story for your presentation.

### 4. INVOLVE THE AUDIENCE: TRY A Q&A

Many presentation software packages include a question and answer tool. For example, with Google Slides you can let audience members ask questions online. This can be helpful for large audiences or if some of your audience members are remote.

Here's a peek at how the Google Slides Q&A tool works. First, the audience is provided with a URL where they can ask questions:

Ask a question at [goo.gl/slides/](https://goo.gl/slides/)

SWIFT CO. 3

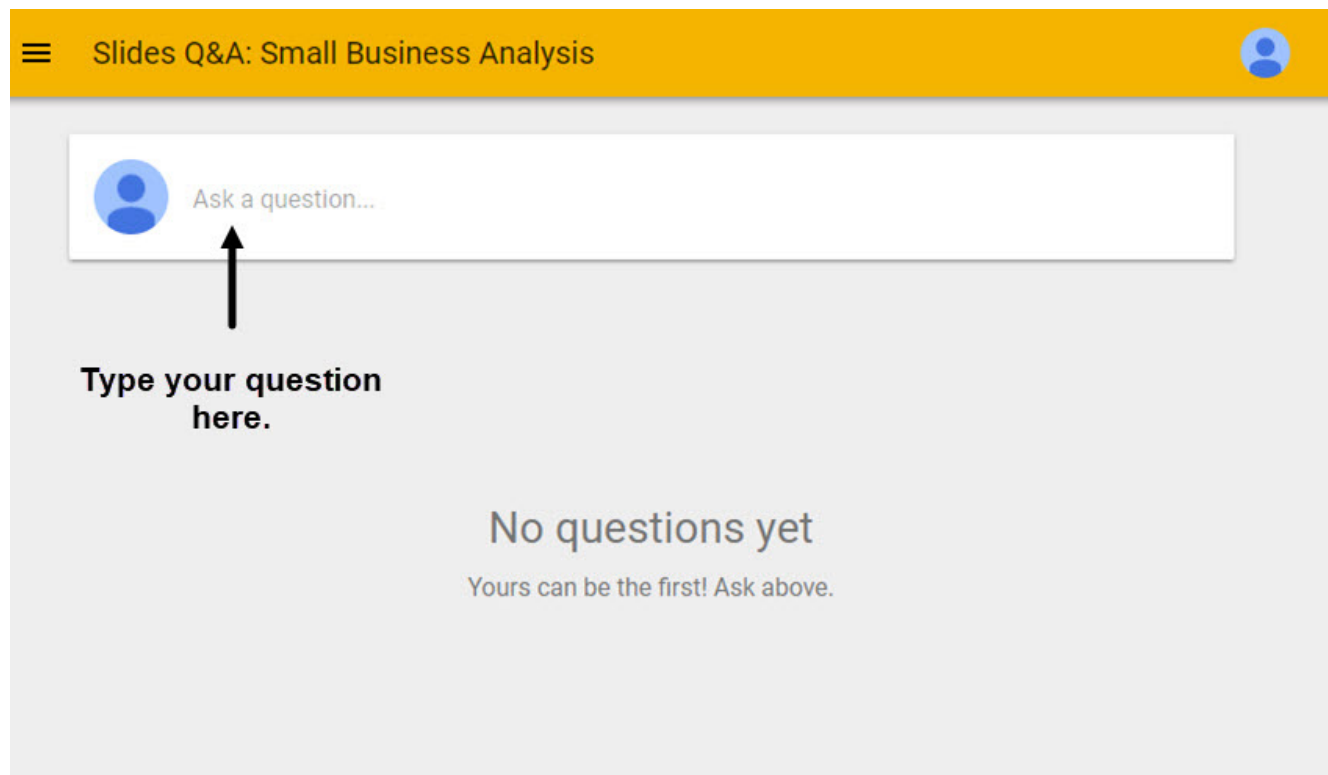
#### SELF-EMPLOYMENT VS EMPLOYEE (U.S.)

SELF-EMPLOYED	EMPLOYEE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must find clients and projects</li> <li>• Income varies depending on workload</li> <li>• Solely responsible for taxes and social security withholding</li> <li>• May receive a MISC-1099</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employer provides work assignments</li> <li>• Income constant, or based on hours worked</li> <li>• Employer withholds federal taxes and social security withholding</li> <li>• Receives a W-2</li> </ul>

Google Slides will generate a Q&A URL where audience members can ask questions.



If an audience member clicks on the link, they're prompted to ask their question:



This is the screen an audience member would see if they went to the Google Slides Q&A URL.

Learn more about the Google Slides Q&A feature in this article:

[!\[\]\(d66ff64371a51729ac8c1cdaa685ba6f\_img.jpg\) 14+ \(Quick\) Professional Tips to Using Google Slides Better](#)

Here are additional ways to involve your audience:

- Ask for a show of hands if the audience agrees or can relate to your question.
- Ask for an audience volunteer for a visual representation.

## 5. SHOW A COMPELLING IMAGE

They say a picture is worth a thousand words. The right image can speak volumes.

Images are powerful when they:

- stir an emotion
- stimulate the imagination
- capture an important moment

The most effective images are those that tell a story. Look at the image below:



An eye-catching image can add a lot of interest to your business presentation. (Image source: [Envato Elements](#))

When you see this image, you realize this person has run out of gas for their car. You may wonder:

- How long have they been walking?
- How far do they have to go?
- Why are they alone?

The image can also be used symbolically to illustrate concepts like:

- the need to be prepared
- hitting a road bump in a journey
- dealing with the unexpected

**Try This:** When you use a compelling image in your presentation, pause for a moment to let your audience absorb the image. Then, move on to your point.

## 6. ADD A VIDEO OR ANIMATION

An animation or video can add interest to a presentation. Be sure to add an animation or video that's professionally done and relevant to your presentation.

Be careful about letting your video take over your presentation. The video you choose should enhance your message, but not overpower your presentation.

To learn more about using videos and animations, study these Envato Tuts+ articles:

- 🔗 [\*How to Add YouTube Video to Google Slides Presentations\*](#)
- 🔗 [\*How to Play a Video Automatically in PowerPoint\*](#)
- 🔗 [\*20 Animated PowerPoint Templates With Amazing Interactive Slides\*](#)

## 7. BE AVAILABLE

A valuable extra you can add to your business presentation is to be available after it's over.

If the speaking venue permits, stick around for at least 30 minutes. Use the time to network with audience members and answer questions that didn't come up during the question and answer session.

Those who approach you after the presentation are more likely to be serious prospects for your product or service.

## REMEMBER THIS: DON'T ADD TOO MUCH OOMPH!

Adding one or two of these creative elements to your presentation will help capture your listener's attention. Yet using an 'oomph' element on every slide in your presentation will most likely just overwhelm your audience. Apply these enticing elements judiciously.

You'll find even more creative presentation ideas in these Envato Tuts+ articles:

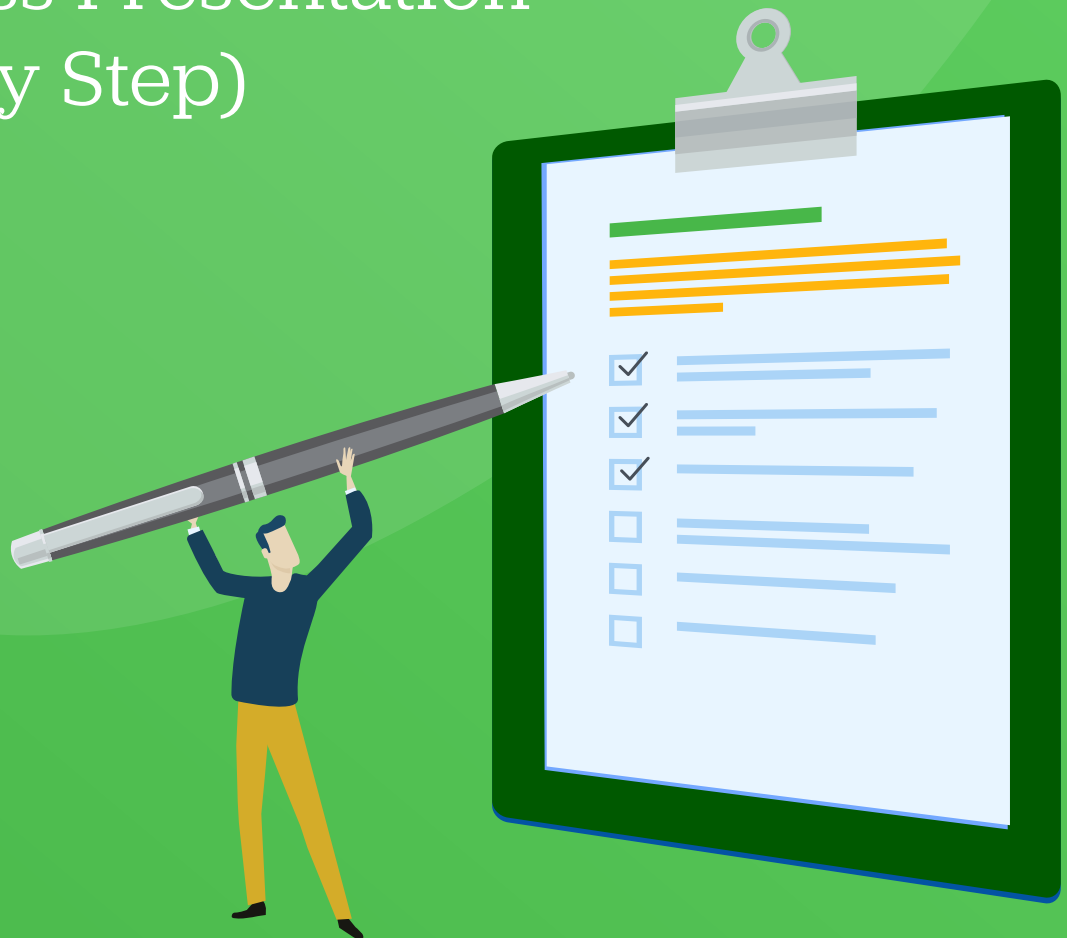
- 🔗 [\*43 Effective PowerPoint Presentation Tips \(To Improve Your Skills\)\*](#)
- 🔗 [\*10 Creative Presentation Ideas: That Will Inspire Your Audience to Action\*](#)

Remember, one of the best ways to add 'oomph' to your business presentation is to be prepared. And being better prepared is what this guide is all about.

## CHAPTER 9.

# Business Presentation Checklist:

To Prepare for Your Next  
Business Presentation  
(Step by Step)



To help put all of these presentation tips and techniques into practice, we've created a handy quick-action PDF checklist that'll walk you through everything you've just learned. It's included in your free download package.

Simply check off each item as you prepare your next presentation.



# Conclusion:

Take Action & Make  
a Great Presentation  
(Start Now!)



You've just learned about all about business presentations. You've discovered how to make great presentations and how to avoid common business presentation mistakes. It's time to act on what you've learned. The next step is up to you.

Do you want to learn more about presentations? You'll find many more helpful tutorials about making great presentations and using top presentation tools at [Envato Tuts+](#).

Also, an online version of The Complete Guide to Making Great Presentations is available [here](#).

For a truly effective presentation, you'll want to use a professionally designed business presentation template. Download the templates you need from [Envato Elements](#) or [Envato Market](#).





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