



Preparing Effective Presentations
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Description. The emerging presentation software and hypermedia information systems (i.e., Web) allow educators an opportunity to design various instructional materials. Instructional design is a process used primarily to develop a wide variety of instructional materials.

Rationale. Using successful instructional design principles maximizes the opportunity for technology presentations to be effective.

Instructional Design Principles.

- **Identify Characteristics of learners.** It is important to be aware of student prerequisite skills, knowledge, and attitudes that learners have. This can be determined by pretesting, gathering data on the students’ learning styles, etc.
- **Develop Objectives.** To produce effective instructional materials, one must consider learning objectives. This requires answering the question, “What should the learner do, think or feel as a result of the instruction?” Objectives serve as the guideline for developing the instruction and for designing measures of student performance. Grouping objectives can aid in determining the sequence of segments in the instructional unit.
- **Determine Content.** Knowing the audience and objectives provides some basis for choosing and organizing the subject content. Questions relating to content that need to be asked include:
 - (a) What areas of the subject content require prerequisite knowledge by the learner?
 - (b) What items of subject content relating to the topic should be taught?
 - (c) In what ways can the subject content be organized?
- **Select and Organize the Content.** Use storyboard cards to list the content -- the factual information related to each objective.
- **Instructional Strategy.** This step involves selecting appropriate instructional materials and technology that can make teaching more efficient, effective, powerful and flexible.

Presentation Guidelines.

Overhead Transparencies

- Write legibly and large. Make letters two to three times bigger so that everyone can read the information from the back of the room.
- Put no more than seven lines on a transparency and spread those lines evenly across the transparency.
- Use color and graphics to add interest and emphasis. Highlight important points by underlining, boxing, or using color pens.
- Number the transparencies; this makes it easy to keep them in order.
- Keep a spare projector bulb on hand and know how to install it.
- Practice using the overhead projector before class and position it so everyone can see it.
- Turn the projector off when you are no longer referring to a transparency. The bright light distracts from the task at hand.

Flip Charts

- Determine, in advance, the number of flip charts you want to use.
- Set the flip charts in positions where all learners can easily see them. Arrange the chairs to ensure that all learners can see.
- Lightly pencil in points you want to recall on blank sheets.
- Keep an extra pad of paper and extra felt-tip pens.
- When using the flip chart, try not to turn your back on the participants.
- Write legibly, big and clear. Put no more than seven lines on a sheet.
- Write on the flipchart systematically. Start at the top left-hand corner and work across and then to the next line.
- Place important material at the top.
- Use rough sketches, abbreviation, and paraphrase.

Slides

- Make sure the slide text is legible and large. Make letters two to three times bigger so that everyone can read the information from the back of the room.
- Frame and number the slides.
- Choose colors carefully. Avoid dark blue and dark red lettering. Instead use bright yellow, orange or pink. Dark backgrounds are preferable to white.
- Practice with the equipment before actually using it. Position it so that everyone can see the projected image.
- Turn off the machine when not using or use a slide projector that converts to a black screen when there is no slide being shown.

PowerPoint Presentations

Font:

- Use large fonts. Allow the PowerPoint design features to select the font size because it will fit the appropriate number of lines on each slide that can be seen in a large room.
- Use font sizes between 18 to 48 point. Note the font on this page is size 11.
- Use a font text that is 'san serif' such as Arial or Helvetica. Avoid 'serif' fonts such as Times because they are difficult to read on the screen.

Color:

- Use contrasting colors. Follow similar tips above with slides.
- Keep the background simple, so it does not distract from your presentation.
- Avoid using red; it is difficult to read.
- Limit the number of colors on one slide.
- Use no more than four colors on charts.

Text, Graphics and Overall Design:

- Avoid all caps, except for titles. ALL CAPS IS DISTRACTING.
- Use no more than 6-8 words per line.
- For bullet points, use the 6 x 6 rule--One thought per line with no more than 6 words per line and no more than 6 lines per slide.
- Avoid using long sentences.
- Use text sparingly. Simplify and limit the number of words on a slide. Include a good combination of words and graphics. Use key phrases.
- Use clip art judiciously. It should enhance the message, not distract from it.
- As appropriate, incorporate audio and video into the presentations.

- Download Internet pages into the presentation. It is not wise to depend on a live-connection to the web; connections may be too slow or other problems may arise.
- Overall Design Rule: print the slide, place it on the floor, and view it from a standing position. Can you see it? If so, then the audience should be able to see it from their seats. If not, enlarge the font and place less text on the slide.

General Presentation:

- Do not read from your slides.
- Do not put everything on the slide. Use the slide as a guide and not a word-by-word repeat of your speech/lecture.
- Always have a back-up plan, in case of technical problems.

PowerPoint Handouts:

- Want people to take notes? Then give them space on the handout to do so; use 3 slides per page.
- Use 1 or 2 slides per page whenever you have small diagrams, charts, graphs, etc. Multiple slides on a page make the smaller text difficult to see.
- Overall Rule: If you have to say, “I’m not sure that you can see this slide”, then the audience probably can NOT see it. Instead make the slide larger; put it on one page; or only put the portion that is the focus of your message on the slide. The rest of the detail can be on one page of the handout and then the audience can see the entire details.

Chalkboard or Whiteboard

- Take your own chalk (whiteboard pens) to the class and extra spares.
- Use colored chalk (or pens) to highlight important points in the lecture.
- Write neatly and horizontally; make sure your writing is large enough to read in the back of the room.
- Give learners time to copy what has been written.
- Talk to the learners, not the chalkboard.
- Be sure to erase (or wipe) the board clearly, so that subsequent information can be seen. Remember sometimes it is necessary to clean a whiteboard with special solution to be sure that all of the previous information has been completely cleared.

Resources Needed for Presentations:

Overhead and slide projectors
 Overhead transparencies
 Flip Charts, paper and pens
 LCD Video Projector

References:

1. Davis, BG. Tools for Teaching. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1993.
2. Diamond, Robert M. Designing and Improving Courses and Curricula in Higher Education. San Francisco, Jossey-Bass, 1989.
3. Powers, B. Instructor Excellence: Mastering the Delivery of Training. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1992.
4. Head, JT. New Directions in Presentation Graphics: Impact on Teaching and Learning. In M.J. Albright and DL Graf (eds.), Teaching in the Information Age: The Role of Educational Technology. New Directions for Teaching and Learning, no. 51. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1992.