

Tips for Visual Aids

In General

- Keep it simple.
- Use aids to enhance presentation, not overwhelm it.
- Obey the 666 rule: no more than 6 words per bullet, 6 bullets per image and 6 word slides in a row.
- Each visual should represent a single idea.
- Dark backgrounds for slides only look good when presented in very dark rooms. Light backgrounds work well when the room isn't completely dark.
- Use the same fonts, colors and graphic styles for continuity and flow.
- Once you've completed your visual aids, test them in the room you'll be presenting.
- Have backup disks available.
- Never fuss with equipment settings during a presentation.

Fonts

- Pick a font that fits the message.
- Don't use more than two fonts in a presentation.
- Don't overuse boldface, italic or all caps.
- Use upper and lower case letters.
- In general, don't use a font size smaller than 18 points.
- Headlines should be in the range of 35-45 points.
- Sans serif fonts, such as Helvetica or Ariel, are easier to read when projected.
- Preview your presentation by stepping back 5-6 feet from your monitor. If you can read it, it should work when projected.
- Use a larger font and/or different color for title text.
- Minimize text when projecting charts or graphs. Let the graphics speak for themselves. Use only enough text to clearly label the graphic.

Color

- Colors may look different when projected. Check them.
- Light colors on dark backgrounds attract the eye.
- Limit the number of colors on a single screen image.
- Bright colors make small objects and thin lines stand out.
- Use colors that reflects the message (see "emotions of colors").
- Select colors that match or compliment your corporate/department identity.
- Colors that are opposite to each other on the color wheel (red and green, blue and orange, yellow and purple) rarely look good on the same slide.

Emotions of Colors

- Red = stop, alert, life, revolution, passion
- Orange/yellow = optimism, warmth, wisdom, caution
- White = innocence, hopeful, day, truth, clean, new
- Black = night, gravity, importance, solemn, mortality
- Green = growth, youth, health, fertility, proceed
- Purple = regal, spirituality, sophisticated, nostalgia
- Gray = integrity, maturity, neutrality, discretion
- Blue = dignity, trust, stability, day, devotion, justice

PowerPoint Shortcut Controls

<u>Description</u>	<u>Shortcut</u>
Advance to the next slide	N, ENTER, the SPACEBAR, or mouse click
Return to the previous slide	P or BACKSPACE
Go to slide	+ENTER
Display a black screen	B
Return to the slide show from a black screen	B
Display a white screen	W
Return to the slide show from a white screen	W
End slide show	ESC
Erase on-screen annotations	E
Change the pointer to a pen	CTRL+P
Change the pen to a pointer	CTRL+A
Display the shortcut menu	SHIFT+F10 or right-click

(These tips are adapted from a handout by Maria Aselage in the Communication Lab.)

