

Facilitator Resources

**Interactive Presentations**

***Concept*** - Interactive Presentations use effective audience participation to increase attention and retention. This is much more than asking for Q&A at the end. The presenter should think of themselves as a facilitator of a learning experience rather than a lecturer.

***Learning Styles*** -There are three common basic learning styles – auditory, visual, kinesthetic. Successful presenters engage their audience in all three; tell them, show them, and have them demonstrate their learning.

***Presentation/Facilitation Practice Points*** - Here are tips for getting the most effective interaction and retention of content from participants during an interactive presentation:

* Start the presentation by encouraging 100% participation throughout the presentation.
* Walk out into the audience. Don't stay behind a podium.
* Don't ask closed end questions such as, "Are there any questions?" The answer is "yes" or "no." Ask open ended questions like, "What questions do you have?" After you ask this question, wait up to 10 seconds. Someone will talk.
* Ask a question and take a hand-raising poll, once people get warmed up to interacting in a large group, you can begin calling on individuals for input.
* Break up into small groups to brainstorm a question and present back to the larger group
* During the presentation tell participants to write down important points, summarize them yourself, or suggest they capture that thought. Test the mastery of the major learning points in the presentation.
* Use Story telling or personal examples (paint a mental picture in the participant’s mind).
* Ask a volunteer(s) to write audience ideas on a whiteboard or flipchart.
* A variety of ways to include interaction in your presentation are through the following: handouts with blanks, Case studies to illustrate key points, role playing to stimulate understanding and retention, Flash card quiz, or Rapid Reflection techniques.
* Try a quick True or False quiz– presenter makes a series of statements about the topic and asks participants to decide whether each is true or false.
* Generate group discussion - Ask participants to turn to one to three people near them and discuss a question or topic. Give them time to talk, and then ask them to share with entire group.
* Instruct participants to write questions anonymously on cards and have someone collect them and pass them to you. Do a Q&A session.
* Throughout and at the end thank everyone for their participation and [risk-taking](http://www.psychologytoday.com/basics/sensation-seeking), even if you disagree with the input

***Checking for involvement and understanding*** – Use of the above can keep you from falling into the audience "dead zone", blank faces and eyes staring back at you. Regardless of the specific techniques used you must read the group, scan participant non-verbals, and create a safe environment for interaction. Let participant energy take you where you need to go

**PowerPoint Presentation Suggestions**

Courtesy of Dave Gunby

When you deliver a presentation, seminar or class, you communicate a selection of information and data to educate and persuade your audience. You cannot present everything, so you must focus on the audience understanding the information you do present. With this in mind focus your slides on aiding in the audience’s understanding of your topic.

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| Guideline | Explanation | Support |
| Embrace the Blank Screen | Not everything you say should be driven by or on a slide. Your credibility is enhanced by being able to speak on your topic for extended periods of time without the aid of a visual aid.  | When a public figure has to apologize, is s/he more believable when using speaker notes (or even worse, a script) or when speaking extemporaneously?  |
| Headlines not Titles | The top line on your slides should clearly identify the key point of your slide, not simply a title. Headlines may be longer than titles, but they aid audience retention.  | Research published in “Technical Communication” journal, May 2006. Michael Alley (Penn State) and Colleagues <http://www.tek-ritr.com/tech_comm/uploads/Topics/powerpoint_headlines.pdf>  |
| Unload Your Bullets  | Get rid of bullets as much as you can on slides. They remind your audience of boring presentations and trap your audience into reading your slides. The audience cannot read your slides and listen to you simultaneously.  | Research conducted by Richard E. Mayer, Professor of Psychology, University of California Santa Barbara. Mayer's book is titled, Multi-Media Learning. For an interview on the topic, go to:<http://www.sociablemedia.com/articles_mayer.htm>  |
| Picture This | Rather than bullets, use a picture to illustrate a point. Pictures are more memorable than a line of text (or several lines of text). Additionally, the brain processes pictures with less effort than with text.  | Dr. Stephen Kosslyn, Dean of Social Sciences at Harvard University, has done much of this research. For a brief introduction on this concept, read: <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/powerpoint-help/show-me-what-brain-research-says-about-visuals-in-powerpoint-HA010277194.aspx>  |
| Pictures Left, Text Right | If you must use a picture (other than the headline) AND text, put the picture on the left side and the text on the right side. However, it’s not recommended to use a picture and text.  | Based on brain-hemisphericity research conducted by Roger Sperry and Michael Gazzaniga at California Institute of Technology (started in 1954, Sperry won Nobel Prize in 1981). |
| Chart Your Path | Tables are usually a more complex version of bullets/text. Convert tables to charts to make a more powerful impact on your audience.  | Edward Tufte, [professor emeritus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Professor_emeritus) of [political science](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Political_science), [statistics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Statistics), and [computer science](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Computer_science) at [Yale University](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yale_University) has detailed the value of graphic visual display of information in his book, The Visual Display of Quantitative Information. However, much of the information he uses as examples are far too complex to be used on a slide; but rather for printed materials. |
| Legends are for Historians | Put labels on elements on the chart rather than using a legend. Legends make it more difficult for the audience to quickly understand the chart’s content. | When a chart has a corresponding legend, the reader must look back and forth repeatedly between the chart and the legend to fully understand it. The Excel Chart Doctor illustrates how Series Labels create a quicker impact. <http://processtrends.com/toc_chart_doctor.htm>. You can also go to <http://www.juiceanalytics.com/visualization-resources/>  |
| Four by Four | If you must use bullets, limit yourself to four bullets/slide and four words/bullet. This puts the onus on you to interpret the brief bullets for the audience and makes it easier for the audience to quickly read your slide while listening to you.  | See the citations above relating to Richard E. Mayer’s work. |
| Six Foot Rule | When creating your slides, zoom to 100% to check the size of your text. All text should be readable from six feet away from your computer monitor. This includes the text labels on charts.  | <http://www.roadtools.com/tips.html> is a good resource for font style, size, and color schemes. Many visual presentation experts recommend using fonts 28 pt. or larger to guarantee easy readability. |