Lights, Camera, Action! Tips for Running a PowerPoint Presentation

This document provides presentation techniques for Microsoft PowerPoint.

Before the Show

1. Practice, practice, practice. Be familiar with the content and sequence.
2. Test the computer and projector in the room.
3. Prepare to be passionate and let your enthusiasm come out.
4. Keep the lights on when possible. Turning off the lights (besides inducing sleep) puts all the focus on the screen. You should be the star of the show; the slides are merely a prop.
5. Utilize the Notes feature to create speaking notes.
   a. To create speaker notes, click on the View tab and choose Notes Page.
   b. When printed, these can serve as your cue cards.
c. If using Presenter View with two monitors for presenting, the Notes can appear on your screen while the live slideshow appears projected for the audience.

During the Show

1. Start strong. The audience will give you merely 2-3 minutes to engage them. Don’t waste that time.
2. Explain when you will entertain questions – at any time throughout the presentation or only at the end.
3. As you navigate through the slides, pause as each slide appears, thus giving the audience a chance to read and digest the slide before you start talking. Your speech should amplify the slide content – you should never read a slide to the audience.
4. There are multiple ways to navigate the slides:
   a. Advancing a slide
      i. Click the mouse
      ii. ‘Enter’ on the keyboard
      iii. ‘N’ on the keyboard (for Next)
      iv. The ‘arrow down’ key
      v. The ‘arrow right’ key
      vi. The ‘spacebar’ key
      vii. Right-click and choose Next
   b. Returning to the previous slide
      i. ‘P’ on the keyboard (for Previous)
      ii. The ‘arrow up’ key
      iii. The ‘arrow left’ key
      iv. The ‘Backspace’ key
      v. Right-click and choose Previous
   c. Navigating to a particular slide
      i. Right-click and choose Go to Slide
      ii. Using the keyboard, type the number of the slide you want to go to and press Enter
      iii. The ‘End’ key takes you to the last slide
      iv. The ‘Home’ key takes you to the first slide
5. Utilize PowerPoint’s highlighting and pen features to emphasize a point.
a. While presenting, right-click and choose Pointer Options.

   i. Arrow is the default option.
   ii. Ballpoint Pen allows you to draw with a fine pen.
   iii. Felt Tip Pen allows you to draw with a thicker pen.
   iv. Highlighter allows you to draw with a thick pen.
   v. Ink Color allows you to change the color of your drawing tool.

   1. There are several colors to choose from, including colors that complement your theme.

b. Press the ‘E’ button on your keyboard to erase your drawings during the presentation.

c. When you are finished with the presentation, you will have an option to keep or discard your drawings. Keep saves the drawings so that they will appear the next time you present the slideshow. Discard removes the drawings.

6. To refocus the audience’s attention on you instead of your slide, use the ‘B’ button on the keyboard to turn the screen black. Or use the ‘W’ button on the keyboard to turn the screen white. Press the button again to return to your slide.

7. Use a remote mouse when possible so that you are not tied to the front of the room.

Ending the Show

1. Start a sentence with “In conclusion” – this will refocus the audience’s attention.
2. Conclude with an end slide – perhaps one that summarizes the main points of your presentation, opens the door for questions or discussion, thanks the audience for their time and attention, or provides your contact information for follow-up.
a. Without an end slide, the last visual your audience will have is either the black slide that PowerPoint ends with or the ‘backstage’ view of your presentation. Neither leaves a great impression.

3. Plan time for questions and discussion.
4. Stick the landing. As with gymnasts, remember the importance of finishing strong. What is covered in the last five minutes may be the only content your audience remembers.