Guidelines for producing effective PowerPoint presentations at SOE 2023

Summary:

If PowerPoint is used well, it will help presenters to organize and communicate complex information, clearly and concisely. This document contains some basic guidelines that will help you to use PowerPoint more efficiently at SOE 2023.

PowerPoint is an excellent resource for presenters. If used well, it can help to organize and communicate complex information, clearly and concisely.

It is important to remember that your PowerPoint slide will be seen in a large room. Below are some basic guidelines that will help you to use PowerPoint more effectively.

PowerPoint as a tool

PowerPoint is designed specifically for use during live presentations. Therefore, the design considerations are fundamentally different to those for print or web. Colours, font size, and layout should be quite different for a live presentation.

Slide layout

The layout of the slides should be simple and uncluttered. If you wish, there can be a single title line, and/or a small graphic of some sort. Otherwise, the slide area should be available for your text. Do not extend your text area to the very edges of the slide. **Please create your presentation in 16:9 format.**
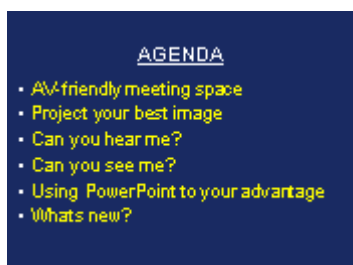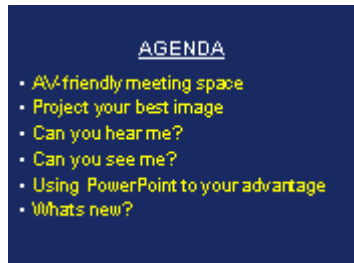

RIGHT

WRONG

Colours

The wrong choice of text and background colours can make your presentation virtually unreadable. White background with black text is probably the most common mistake presenters make. A white

background will generate a very strong light on the screen and in that light, even a bold black text, will almost disappear.
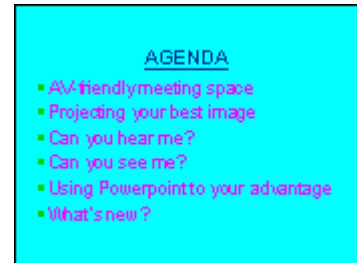
Generally, a dark background with light text is recommended. Avoid other combinations and always avoid white backgrounds. The proven successful combination is a dark blue background with yellow text.
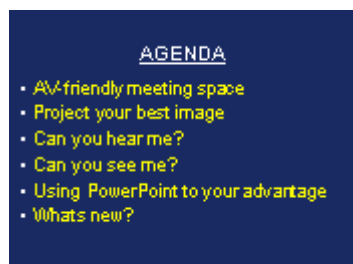

| RIGHT | WRONG | WRONG |

Text selection and size

PowerPoint is designed to help you organize your thoughts into a presentation – one thought per slide. If you look at it this way, it will help you to break your presentation down into concise elements that will fit into six lines on one slide.

The proven guideline is to have no more than six lines of text and the headline on each slide. This should allow you to use a font size of 32 pt - 36 pt.

| RIGHT | WRONG |

Text should be in a single font style and size – generally a sans serif font, such as Arial, is good. All text should be the same colour. You should only use fonts that are available in Windows, otherwise they may not be supported by the computers at the conference. The SOE 2023 computers will be running MS PowerPoint.

Bullet points

Each bullet should start with a bullet point and have eight words or less. Avoid using periods, ALL CAPS, paragraphs. It is better to just use brief and concise phrases instead of complete sentences.

Animations

Animations specify how the bullets on each slide appear (such as fade in one by one). But they are very difficult to work with during live presentation are often distracting for the viewers.

As a general rule, you should **not use animations** to build your slides. Instead, have all the bullets or other information on your slide appear at the same time.

Transitions

Transitions specify how the display changes (such as fading to black) as the presentation moves from one slide to the next.

If you want to use transitions, keep them simple!

Transitions between slides should be the same for all slides – dissolves, wipes, or box-outs are all quite effective. Avoid the more elaborate transitions – they simply distract from your message.

Pictures

Picture files can be very large and files of excessive size can affect the performance of your computer and the proper running of your presentation. We recommend the use of .JPG (JPEG Files Interchange Format) files when inserting pictures. Try to keep the pictures as small as possible (less than 100kB is recommended). Insert pictures as embedded objects, not as linked files.

Charts and graphs

Charts and graphs are frequently a real problem with PowerPoint slides. Often charts are imported from a print source or a web page, and are far too detailed for a live presentation environment. Charts and graphs used in a PowerPoint presentation should be made specifically for that presentation and should follow the same guidelines provided above – with clarity and visibility being the primary considerations:

- Layout - should be simple and uncluttered
- Size - should fill the text area of the slide
- Lines and other chart elements - should be bold and different elements should be in different colours; all colours should contrast with the background
- Text size - should be as large as possible
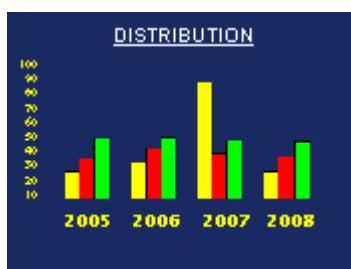
RIGHT
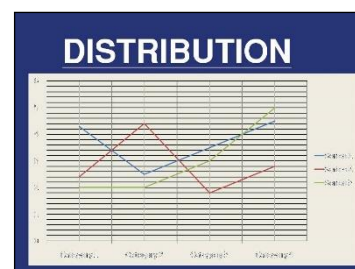
WRONG

Movies and video files

It is common to embed or link video files with PowerPoint presentations.

It is essential that you bring not only your PowerPoint file, but also your video files to the Speakers Support Centre!

The computers at SOE 2023 will play most of the video file types in use. Below is a list of the most common video file types – we can ensure full compatibility with these.

- .MP4, MOV, AVI, MPEG (videos stored in the MPEG format have the extension .mpg or .mpeg)

- Windows Media (videos stored in the Windows Media format have the extension .wmv)

If your PowerPoint presentation is not working properly, if the videos are not embedded correctly or cannot be played, the Speaker Helpdesk will contact you by email. You can check your submitted presentation in advance in the Speaker Support Centre.

If you use a MAC computer

If you have converted a complex Keynote presentation into a PowerPoint presentation, there may be bugs and changes to the original presentation. If you are unsure, please check your presentation in advance in the Speaker Support Centre.