**A Guide for Giving a Slide Presentation**

**By Robert Middleton**

**Why Presentations?**

I’ve learned that presentations are the most powerful marketing tool in the world. Nothing else works better to present the case for your service or program.

It’s an opportunity to share your ideas with a captive audience who needs what you have to offer.

This document shares some ideas for making your presentation more powerful and effective.

Work to implement these ideas and you’ll emerge with a presentation that will convert interest in your service/program into a commitment to working with you.

**The Steps in Developing Your Presentation**

**1. Set up your Template in Power Point or Keynote**

**Make it a 16:9 ratio** (for a wide computer screen)

The size I use is 1024 X 576. Or it could be 1000 X 562 etc.

*Do NOT use the narrower, default ratio.*

**Use a background that is not too busy.**

It doesn’t need to include your branding, but it’s OK if you do so. PowerPoint and Keynote have a number of pre-designed templates if you want to use them.

**2. Font size and type**

I recommend a large, bold font for ALL your text.

I use about 60-80pt for headings and 50-60pt for text. No kidding. Big!!

A good, reliable font is Open Sans as it comes in many weights. You can download it from <http://fonts.google.com> for free. Get it now!

I tend to center my text on the slide.

Don’t use more than two colors. I tend to use red and black as they have the highest contrast. But other colors can work fine as well.

The simplest presentations are mostly words – no images. They still have impact, in fact they really work well.

Generally, you don’t want more than a headline and five lines of text on each slide.

Ideally, you can animate the presentation, so that one line appears at a time. This is not complex to do.

The last thing you want is to show a lot of text at once. Especially small text. If you do that, people are reading your text ahead of you.

With Keynote, you can output the slides to Acrobat with all the animation builds.

For Power Point, you can run your slides through this little tool and it will break the slides into all the animation builds. Then convert to Acrobat.

<http://www.maxonthenet.altervista.org/ppsplit.php>

Sometimes, you want just a few words on each slide.

The words are both a script and an outline. You read the words as they appear in the presentation, but then you can expand on them explaining more as you go.

You can watch from my latest sample how I do this. This will really help to see how to do this well.

<http://actionplan.club/wtw>

**3.** **Graphics, photos and Illustrations**

If you want to use graphics, photos or illustrations, pick images that really stand out and get attention. Nothing boring.

You can ‘punctuate’ your presentation with an attention-getting graphic here or there.

If you want to do a picture on every slide (I.e. a picture to the left and text to the right), you will dramatically increase the time it takes to develop your presentation, but not necessarily increase its effectiveness.

I suggest you start with words only and then add graphics later if you think they will measurably increase the impact.

Lots of good graphics available at <http://123RF.com> for about $2 each.

**4. The Flow of your presentation and Marketing Syntax**

**It’s important to use Marketing Syntax for maximum impact.** Marketing Syntax refers to the order of the ideas you present. They are as follows (and you should have already done this in your presentation template).

**Situation/Problem/Challenge**

Have a few slides that talk about what is going on, what is not working for the client right now. This should be information that the client already agrees with, things they want to change.

**Desired Outcomes**

Have a few slides that talk about the kind of results they want or changes and solutions they want to see. Make sure to be very clear about the Ultimate Outcome they would like to realize.

**How You Do It**

This is the heart of your presentation where you talk about the key ideas/principles/system/strategies you use in your business to get that Ultimate Outcome.

Don’t make it too complicated and don’t make it too simplistic. Keep it to three or five key ideas. Explain enough to prove you know what you are talking about but not so much that it gets overly complex.

Point to how your approach/strategy/system works to produce the results your client is looking for. Give evidence with examples, case studies and/or testimonials quotes.

**Explain the Nuts and Bolts of Your Program/Service**

Explain how your consulting/coaching/training works. What happens? Who does what? How does the structure work? I.e. How long do you work for, when do you meet, etc.

**Next Steps**

In most cases, when presenting to a business, you are not making a direct pitch for the sale in the presentation. You are giving them enough information to let them know if it’s worth exploring further.

At the end you may say something like: “Ok, that’s how this program works to give your company this Ultimate Outcome. If you think my program/service might be a good fit for you, the next step is a conversation to learn more about your needs, followed by a proposal.”

**Meeting/Strategy Session**

Then you set up a session to discuss their needs in more depth and determine how to move forward.

**5. Design, Practice, Tweak**

I find that when putting together my presentation, I do a LOT of tweaking of the words. They are like the script of a play. This is not an improvisation where you are just wining it and rambling your way through it. It is a performance.

Once your presentation is together you need to practice it out loud several times. Giving a presentation is a performance art. You need to make it interesting and compelling without going over the top. That is, you don’t need to resort to hype or exaggeration. But if you are presenting an important piece of information, you need to put some energy and emphasis into it.

Presenting to a group is a little different than presenting to an individual, but the best way to think of all presentations is as if you are just presenting to one person (not a group or crowd). This makes your presentation more intimate and accessible.

**6. How Long Does it Take?**

A good presentation will take several hours to prepare. Any failures I’ve had in the past were all related to failures to prepare sufficiently. The presentation itself can take 6 to 12 hours to put together. Then you need to take a few hours to practice.

I do a LOT of tweaking in preparing a presentation. Every word counts.

A typical presentation will be from 50 to 75 slides.

The good news is that you will be using this same presentation over and over and over. So it’s time well spent.

So, time to get started. One slide at a time.

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