A

**Powerpoint Basics**

**Fonts**

**DO:** Use sans serif - e.g. *Arial/Helvetica* - easier to read than serif fonts like *Times*.

**DO:** Use large, readable fonts – 18-36.

**DO NOT:** Use all caps - hard to read, and appears like shouting

**DO NOT:** Capitalize all title words – slows reading

**Color**

**DO:** Use high contrast and simplest background – e.g. BLACK letters on WHITE background. No fancy backgrounds (e.g. logos).

**DO:** In dark halls/conferences, WHITE text on black BG

**DO NOT:** Use low contrast text on colored BG. e.g. *This is BAD*

**Content**

**DO:** Every slide headed by statement

**DO NOT:** Have text blocks – audience reads them, and doesn’t listen to you.

**DO:** Unveil list items as you get to them

**DO:** Include simple image on every slide - appeals to visual senses (text + image + sound from speaker)- maximum communication

**DO:** Give audience simple images - EXPLAIN graphs – the audience isn’t familiar with them.

**DO:** Simplify images to remove extraneous info that is not explained

**General**

**DO NOT:** Use fancy transitions (boring, and worse, annoying)

**DO:** Unveil text and new images - especially if need to maintain context

**DO NOT:** Drown audience with data - "less is more".

**Structure**

**DO:** Construct a story if possible – much more memorable.

**DO:** Start with interesting broad question, show details, end with summary and broad ending.

**DO:** Have last slide (after acknowledgements) repeat conclusions.
Presentation Basics

**DO**

- Face audience
- Make eye contact — individuals or groups in large hall
- Smile — friendliness is infectious
- Be enthusiastic — shows interest and engages audience
- Speak clearly.
- Pace delivery. Slower delivery has more "gravitas." Fast delivery sounds nervous, and may be difficult to follow.
- Plant yourself and move only a little if needed.
- Exaggerate gestures — like theater actors. Emphasizes words.

**DO NOT**

- Turn and gesture at, or point to, screen
- Talk to back of room or ceiling
- Pace the stage.
- Mumble. Project your voice.
Selected Resources

1. Angelika Hofman, Writing in the Biological Sciences, OUP 2013

2. Susan McConnell – Designing effective scientific presentations: using Powerpoint and structuring your talk
   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hp7Id3Yb9XQ


4. David Rubenson, Opinion: Communication Crisis in Research, The Scientist, 01/30/2013