

# Slideware Tips

## Applications

**PowerPoint** ~ the 400 lb. gorilla = what ~95% of the academics/scientists use.

**Keynote** ~ Mac (iOS)-based PowerPoint Alternative, more elegant in some respects, but fairly template driven

**Acrobat** ~ Generic pdf viewer, can present anything you can make a pdf of. This is a nice fallback format to have at the ready should you have computer issues. Does not do multimedia.

**Prezi** ~ This is a whiz-bang alternative to PowerPoint where zooming is viewed as always better than discrete slides/slide transitions. This is designed for online presentation/viewing, but it does have a stand alone presentation app. Doesn't handle multimedia very well, often will lag significantly when running on networked computers. Very template driven; cannot necessarily customize slides.

**Google Presentation (part of Google Docs)** ~ this is PowerPoint alternative that you all have access to via MyCI and your drive. Basic functionality of PowerPoint. Browser based, but you can export it to other formats (PowerPoint, etc.)

**Haiku Deck** ~ online, template-based platform. Lots of templates and over 35 million stock photos that can be used within the slide templates.

**Slide Bureau** ~ for iPads, but it does allow for people to create presentations that are more customized than your traditional PowerPoint slide. The interface is centered on pre-made templates.

**Zoho Show** ~ cloud-based option that supports the import of many file types (.ppt, .pptx, .pps, .ppsx, .odp, .sxi) and retains the look of those original document when viewed online. Clean interface. Allows multiple authors to collaborate simultaneously on the creation of the presentation. Lots of vector-based graphics tools for creation/editing.

**Sliderocket** ~ browser and template-based tool, but options allow you to add in live data from real-time feeds. Version control, privacy control with plus metrics to track who is viewing your slideshow, where they viewed it, who they've shared it with, which slides they looked at and for how long. HTML5 compatible.

**Powtoon** ~ presentation animation tool. Generates animated videos. It is not difficult to learn, but is not suitable to live presentations. They have an education app.

*Other potential tools you might want to explore once you have mastered the basics: Emaze, Projeqt, Slideshare, Articulate Presenter, KnowledgeVision, GoAnimate, Slidesnack,*

# Approaches to a Lecture/Talk

**open book** ~ Tell them what you are going to tell them, go ahead and tell them, then tell them what you just told them.

**suspense** ~ Pose a problem or question, discuss history and previous confusion, tell them how the problem was solved.

**comparative** ~ Pose a problem or controversy, alternate between perspective 1 and perspective 2, compare and contrast at each stage.

**empty tree** ~ Pose a concept or problem, fill in the historical events, thought process, or data with audience participation.

**sales pitch** ~ Define a problem, make audience feel insecure/concerned, conclude with showing how your result or proposition resolves the tension/problem.

## Guidelines for Presentations (for the novice)

- horizontal text should be sans serif font (*i.e.* Helvetica), but vertical text (*i.e.* y-axis labels) is easier to read if it is a serif font (*i.e.* Times)
- TEXT THAT IS ALL CAPS IS HARD TO READ, AVOID IT
- omit punctuation (commas, periods, *etc.*)
- avoid justifying your text
- no more than 6 text lines per slide
- no more than 7 words per line
- no more than 8 lines in a table
- no more than 3 ideas/points per graph
- visuals should convey essential concepts within the 1<sup>st</sup> 5 seconds
- avoid several text slides in a row
- make elements (fonts, lines, *etc.*) as BIG as possible
- avoid contrasting green and red (colorblind people have hard time)
- always use consistent formatting
- avoid too much detail
- avoid distracting graphics or animations

# Is my text big enough?

To figure out if your text (or another element) is big enough to be seen from the back of the room, try these techniques. You should be able to see everything easily:

**At your computer** ~ push your chair 6 feet away from the computer screen, try to read

**Paper (or overhead) printout** ~ put on floor, stand on top of your chair and look down

**On a slide (who am I kidding, you guys don't even know what slides are!)**~ hold slide between thumb and forefinger at arms length and try to read

## Stuff that comes with practice

- maintain eye contact with audience (or look at their foreheads)
- speak clearly
- avoid umms and ahs...pauses are okay and allow people to digest what you said
- avoid the “insane laser pointer”
- dim lights only, DO NOT turn them out completely
- before you begin, check for any cords or other things which can cause you to trip
- face the audience, not the screen.
- to focus attention, emphasize your point, or engage the audience, turn off projector (or insert a black slide) and walk toward audience
- always spell check AND re-read entire presentation (and have a friend read it)
- if you need to apologize for a slide you probably shouldn't use it
- be prepared for projector (or computer) problems (they WILL happen)
- avoid too much humor/too many jokes
- If you have complex diagrams, figures, or timelines: print them out as handouts with their labels, etc. omitted. This allows the student to focus on you rather than copy the figure, but still requires students to label them (engaging them in the learning process without burdening them with mundane copying per se).