Avoiding Death by PowerPoint

Workshop Objectives
- identify barriers to learning using PowerPoint
- explore ways to overcome barriers to learning
- apply research-based insights to increase learning with PowerPoint

Discussion and demonstration of:
1) principles for effective use of PowerPoint
2) tips and tricks for PowerPoint
3) Personal Response Systems and other ways to add interactivity

Note: this workshop is NOT hands-on.

Research-based Principles for Effective Use of PowerPoint

Signaling
- People learn better when the material is organized with clear outlines and headings
- Instead of writing a Title, write a Headline that explains the main idea of the slide

Multimedia
- People learn better from words and pictures than from words alone.
- Find images in your textbook, clipart, Library resources or the Web. Don’t forget to cite the source of the images!

Modality
- People understand a multimedia explanation better when the words are presented as narration rather than on-screen text.
- Reduce visual overload by moving text off-screen, and shift processing to the auditory channel by narrating the content instead.

Segmentation
- People learn better when information is presented in bite-size segments.
- Break up information by adding slides – one per point. If one slide is too long, duplicate it and then delete information from each one.

Coherence
- People learn better when extraneous material is excluded rather than included.
- Cut everything out of your PowerPoint slides that does not support your main idea. Keep it simple!

PowerPoint Tips and Tricks

Add images
- Many textbooks come with PowerPoint presentations or digital versions of the images on a CD. Check with the publisher’s representative.
- ClipArt
- Use Google Images to find pictures, but please reference the source of the images!
- See more sources for images at http://guides.library.duke.edu/images

Simplify information
- Divide the information among a series of slides
- Have the materials add in on mouse click – “custom animation”
- Cover the materials with rectangles that disappear as you need the information

Speak from notes, not slides
- Print out your presentation as “notes” pages and bring them with you to refer to during your lesson. Write notes on them so you know what points to cover, and you will always know what slide is next.
- Include a list of slides to facilitate jumping back and forth during the presentation.

Be flexible
- To skip back and forth between slides: type in the slide number and then hit the enter key. The presentation will jump to that slide

Know when to say when
- To get a blank screen during your presentation, type “w” for a white screen or “b” for a black screen.

Use other applications
- Use alt-Tab to go between your PowerPoint presentation and other screens (for example, web pages or Word files). It’s faster than embedding links.

Be prepared
- Load everything you need on the computer ahead of time!
- If you are using a computer other than your own, test the presentation before the session!
Useful references with URLs

Learning PowerPoint

PowerPoint training module

Creating good presentations

Another post about giving good talks
http://scienceblogs.com/principles/2006/11/how_to_do_a_good_powerpoint_le.php

Some tips on giving presentations
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F5NEB4I5gpw

Demonstration of color-blindness
http://www.vischeck.com/examples/

Fun examples of “bad” presentations

Presentation on What not to do with PowerPoint
http://cit.information.unl.edu/tips/Webpage/saveasjpegs/index.shtml

An example of a “bad” presentation
http://scienceblogs.com/sciencewoman/2008/09/the_worst_powerpoint_i_could_m_1.php

A blog post on a “bad” PowerPoint template
http://scienceblogs.com/worldsfair/2008/09/is_this_the_most_evil_powerpoi.php

A JFK speech reproduced with PowerPoint
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZVFcagL1nsA

A stand-up comedian tackles PowerPoint
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cagxPIVqrtM