

Designing Presentation Slides

Implement basic design skills to enhance communication.

Strengthen basic bullet point slides by writing informative phrases and sentences that better communicate your message.

Move past bullet points to design slides that exploit visual thinking.

Employ five basic design principles: balance, proportion, rhythm, emphasis, and unity.

**One day of classroom instruction, practice,
and individualized learning.**

One year of direct support.



YOU ARE INVITED TO LEARN: For slides that inform and communicate with clarity:

1. Plan your slides.
2. Write text and choose graphics for your slides.
3. Design your slides by implementing five design principles.

ABOUT Designing Presentation Slides

Plan and create slides that inform and communicate with clarity

Research clearly shows that most bullet-point slides do not impart meaningful information and, in some instances, can be detrimental. It's easy to use bullet points since they are the default value for PowerPoint. You must adhere to specific guidelines to create informative and relevant bullet-point slides. Better yet, employ other methods to create and design slides that communicate information to your audience clearly. *Designing Presentation Slides* presents strategies for creating slides that are informative, organized, clear, concise, and targeted to the needs of your audience.

Benefits you will attain. You will learn how to write informative headlines; integrate text and graphics for better comprehension; use visuals and sequencing to best present dense information; and instead of just printing slides, create meaningful handouts. You will learn how to craft a message that resonates, then design slides that communicate with impact and clarity so that your audience receives your message and can act on it.

CLASSROOM TOPICS

Follow a three-step plan-create-design process.

Plan Your Slides

Begin by mapping the journey that is your presentation. Determine:

- ◆ Where you want to go (your objective).
- ◆ Who is coming along (your audience) and what they expect to find at the end.
- ◆ How you are going to get there (your three to five main points).
- ◆ What you are going to do along the way (the details supporting your main points).

Choose how best to plan and organize: outline (by hand or by software), Post-it Notes, mind map, storyboard, or slide sorter.

Create Your Slides

From this plan, determine how your slides will best convey this content. Write full sentences or short phrases to clearly convey meaning, while limiting the amount of information on each slide. (Eschew making your slides a complex outline of your presentation: it's boring.) Carefully choose relevant graphics—photos, artwork, simple charts and graphs, animation—and liberally include them. Exploit the fact that we all think visually.

Your slides must be organized in a logical sequence to bring order into the minds of your audience. An obvious slide organization ensures your audience can focus on your message and not be confused or feel lost as you present. Work to engage the audience through your slides.

Design Your Slides: Five Principles

The principles of design guide how you create your slides; and affect how you organize and arrange text, graphics, information, and other objects on those slides. How you apply these five principles directly affects your message.

Balance provides a sense of equilibrium—either symmetrical and asymmetrical—as it relates to our physical sense of balance that creates tension and a sense of “visual weight”.

Proportion refers to the relative size and scale between one object and another (say, between a person and a mountain).

Rhythm creates a sense of movement by repeating or alternating objects usually with defined intervals (regular, flowing, or progressive) to establish a texture evoking a certain feeling to your audience.

Emphasis marks the primary point of focus, the object that most strongly attracts attention. Other objects thus have secondary and tertiary emphasis.

Unity ensures the design of the entire slide is coherent and harmonious, that all objects work together to achieve a common result.

You will also learn how to use *positive and negative* space, determine the *visual center* of a slide, and employ the *rule of thirds* for maximum impact.

Your Closing Slides

Your closing slides must retain your overall design and bring your presentation full circle, to wrap things up neatly, and present the culmination of your message.

SOLARI'S LEAD INSTRUCTOR

Rich Maggiani



Certified Teacher

Rich is certified to teach professional adults down to high school students. He teaches communication classes to business professionals across the country, as well as to both undergraduate and graduate students. Rich understands that classroom skills must transfer to the job to be most effective, and employs techniques to ensure that training transfers. He holds a Masters degree in Administration, and a Bachelor's in Education. In 2008, Rich earned the rank of Fellow from the Society for Technical Communication. Learners benefit from his academic and professional background.

Instructional Designer and Trainer

For over twenty years, Rich has been designing instruction and teaching for universities, nonprofits, governments, and corporations small and large. Instructional materials include instructor guides, student guides, reference manuals, job aids, tutorials and online help, curricula, and classroom content (concepts, skills, exercises, practice activities and scenarios, and discussion questions). He regularly presents at professional conferences on a variety of communication topics. Rich also writes a series of position papers on communication topics, and authors a column for the professional communication periodical, *Intercom*.

Communication Professional

Rich founded Solari Communication to offer clients a spectrum of communication services that enable companies to prosper. As a business owner, Rich fully appreciates that simple, clear communication is crucial to success. Rich ensures that skills he imparts in the classroom not only benefit students, but more importantly, enable your company to attain its goals.