Big Pitch PowerPoint Slide Strategies

Marcus Weakley, Ph.D.
Director, Center for Writing & Rhetoric
Today's Goals

- Understand How to Adapt to the Context
- Strategies for Interacting with the Slide
- Strategies for Design
Use Your Slide to Augment & Complement

- **Less is more.**
- Text and complicated graphics can distract your audience.
- You want your audience to focus on you, not read your slide.

- **Creativity creates interest.**
- Do not rely on your slide to convey your message.
- It should simply complement your oration.
Two Strategies: Refer or Ignore

- Goal: take audience on a journey verbally (& maybe visually, too)
- Ignore the slide so that it acts as a backdrop
- Let the image speak for itself
- Clear and focused
- Easily accessible
- Representative image
Ignore/Backdrop Example
Be Strategic If Referencing the Slide Directly

- Choose a 15 - 30 second section to draw the audience's attention to the slide
- Be specific and direct
- Plan the moment to create effect—when to highlight and how to draw back to your speaking

- Some motivations for doing this are when the image(s) help:
  - Explain complex ideas
  - Visually summarize key project elements
Reference Example 1
Unique Reference Example
Personalize Your Presentation

- Work personal touches into the slide to stand out, convey emotion, & engage
- Centralize your message, your takeaway
- How can your slide help you do that? Is there a metaphor/symbol?
Use of a Metaphor/Symbol

Racing to Improve Heart Transplants
Design Strategies

- One image for entire slide
- Design graphic or combine a few images
- Centralize one image as central point & work around it
- Approach slide as a grid & work in sections
Other Ideas

- Image plus words
- Close-up
- Process, Stages, or Steps
- Picture of you “in action” or the site of your work
Example from 3MT

Tip of the Day: The Dos & Don’ts of 3MT Slides

How do you fit an 80,000 word thesis onto one PowerPoint slide? The answer is, you don’t. We all know that your slide must be static – no animations, no transitions, no audio or video – but there’s still a temptation to cram as much information as possible onto that one small page. We have seen great presentations let down by overwhelming, overly complicated slides. Similarly, presentations that might have otherwise flown under the radar, become all the more memorable with a powerful slide accompanying them.

Below are 2 examples which, in our humble opinion, show what makes a good & a bad slide.

- [https://www.facebook.com/3MTofficial/posts/971513052947149](https://www.facebook.com/3MTofficial/posts/971513052947149)
Combined Examples

CATALYZING CHANGE: LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL

80% REDUCTION
What approach do you think will work for your slide, and what are you thinking about including on it?
Contact Us!

3mt@cgu.edu
www.cgu.edu/thebigpitch