Tips for creating an effective PowerPoint presentation[1]

TIP	DETAILS
Minimize the number of slides.	To maintain a clear message and to keep your audience attentive and interested, keep the number of slides in your presentation to a minimum.
Choose a font style that your audience can read from a distance.	Choosing the right font style, such as Helvetica or Arial, helps to get your message across. Avoid narrow fonts, such as Arial Narrow, and avoid fonts that include fancy edges, such as Times. To learn more about how you can use pre-designed theme fonts in your presentation, see All about themes, Quick Styles, cell styles, and background styles.
Choose a font size that your audience can read from a distance.	Choosing the right font size helps to get your message across. NOTE The following measurements indicate the size of a font on your computer screen, not projected on a screen for your audience in full screen mode. To enable full screen mode, on the **View** tab, in the **Presentation Views** group, click **Slide Show**. • A one-inch letter is readable from 10 feet. • A two-inch letter is readable from 20 feet. • A three-inch letter is readable from 30 feet. To learn more about how you can use pre-designed theme fonts in your presentation, see All about themes, Quick Styles, cell styles, and background styles.
Keep your text simple by using bullet points or short sentences.	Use bullets or short sentences, and try to keep each to one line; that is, without text wrapping. You want your audience to listen to you present your information, rather than read the screen. Some projectors crop slides at the edges, so long sentences may be cropped. You can remove articles such as "a" and "the" to help reduce the word count on a line.
Use art to help convey your message.	Use graphics to help tell your story. Don't overwhelm your audience by adding too many graphics to a slide, however.
Make labels for charts and graphs understandable.	Use only enough text to make label elements in a chart or graph comprehensible.
Make slide backgrounds subtle and keep them consistent.	Choose an appealing, consistent template or theme that is not too eye-catching. You don't want the background or design to detract from your message. For more information about using themes, see Apply a theme to your presentation.
Use high contrast between background color and text color.	Themes automatically set the contrast between a light background with dark colored text or dark background with light colored text. To learn more about how you can use themes to automatically set a visually satisfying contrast level, see All about themes, Quick Styles, cell styles, and background styles.
Check the spelling and grammar.	To earn and maintain the respect of your audience, always check the spelling and grammar in your presentation.

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[1] http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/powerpoint-help/tips-for-creating-and-delivering-an-effective-presentation-HA010207864.aspx#BM1