



## **TASC CONFERENCES & TRAINING EVENTS**

### **PRESENTER GUIDE # 5**

#### **Tips for Creating Accessible PowerPoints**

**Transcript**

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**1**



Hello. My name is Judie Storandt.

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The Training & Advocacy Support Center (TASC) is a division of NDRN.

**2**

## **PRESENTER GUIDE # 5**

### **Tips for Accessible PowerPoints**

We encourage but do not require presenters to use a well-prepared PowerPoint.

Any PowerPoints and handouts used during our training events need to be accessible for persons with disabilities.

This Guide will help you create PowerPoints that are accessible for persons who are blind or have low vision.

**3**

We encourage the use of PowerPoints for several reasons.

### **Why use a PowerPoint?**

**The advantages to using a PowerPoint include:**

- ✓ The process of creating a PowerPoint helps you to organize your thoughts, and be better prepared.
- ✓ A PowerPoint accommodates visual learning styles.
- ✓ It can reinforce, supplement, and clarify what you have said, and reduce misunderstandings.

**4**

### **More Benefits to Using a PowerPoint**

- ✓ People can often listen better if they don't have to take a lot of notes.
- ✓ It helps people who arrive late to figure out where you are and what you have already covered.
- ✓ It can minimize premature questions if people look ahead to check if you will cover a particular point.

- ✓ It gives people something to remember what you talked about, and how to contact you in the future.

5

Now let's go over the instructions for creating accessible PowerPoint slides.

## Part 1. Instructions for Accessible PowerPoint Slides

The following instructions will increase:

- ✓ visibility for persons who have low vision, and
- ✓ accessibility for persons who are blind and use a screen reader.

6

The first consideration is what font to use.

## Accessible Fonts

### ■ Do not use serif fonts.

Serif fonts have tiny details at the ends of some strokes of letters.

AaBbCc	serif	[do not use]
AaBbCc	sans* serif	[use]

For some individuals, serifs can cause letters to blur together and make them harder to distinguish.

Sans serif fonts include: Arial, Verdana, and Tahoma.

Please **do not** use Times Roman. Because it is a serif font, it can be harder to read.

\*“Sans” means “without” in French.

7

## USE LARGE FONTS

### Handouts

- For hard copies of documents, please use at least 12 point.
- For large-print copies, we use at least 18 point.
- The text version of this Guide was created using Arial 14.

### PowerPoints

- For PowerPoint **slides**, please use at least 22 point.
- For handout copies of PowerPoints, we print 3 slides per page.
- For large-print handouts, we print 1 slide per page.

**Size does matter!**

8

Here are some more instructions.

## Accessible PowerPoint Slides (cont'd)

- Use a dark font (e.g., black) on a light-colored background.
  - A black font on a light background (e.g., white, a pale color, or a light pastel) is easier to read.
  - When printed, this also results in better handouts for writing notes.
- Do not use a design, photo, or anything behind the text on a slide.
- Do not use shadows on letters of the text.
- Do not use gradient shadings in the background.

**Keep text uncluttered.**

9

Bottom line: It's a best practice to keep your slides uncluttered.

The next slides illustrate why we have adopted these instructions.

## Examples of What Not to Do

- ✓ The first slide is an example of problems related to using a light-colored font on a dark background.
- ✓ The next illustrates why not to use a design behind text.
- ✓ The last example illustrates why not to use shadows on letters, or gradient shading for the background.

slides 10 – 12

Now, let's turn to:

### **Special instructions for photos, cartoons, clip art, maps, and other non-text items.**

- Some individuals who are blind use a screen reader that reads documents to them. These devices can only read text, not photos, drawings, and other non-text items.
- There is an easy way to add a text description to non-text items. You can embed an alternative text description (“alt text”) that is not visible on the slide, but which can be read by a screen reader.

### **Instructions using Microsoft PowerPoint.**

- ✓ With your cursor on the non-text item, right click.
- ✓ Select the “size & position” option.
- ✓ At the top of the message box that pops up, choose the “alt text” tab.
- ✓ In the text box, type in a brief description of the non-text item, and close.

There is an “Alt Text” handout with screen shots to illustrate how to do this.

13 & 14

Here is an example of proper usage of non-text items.

## Example: Proper usage of non-text item



For the photo on the left, the “alt text” description that is not visible on the slide is:

“Close-up picture of a bee sitting on a large orange flower.”

We also recommend that you verbally describe any non-text item on a slide, especially when it might be difficult for persons in the back of the room to see what is on a slide.

15

There also are:

## Special Instructions for Charts & Graphs

- As with photos and non-text items, charts and graphs are images that a screen reader typically cannot read.
- An “alternative text” needs to be added for screen readers.
- For example, the alt text for a chart comparing weather by season in two cities might read:

“Chart comparing weather by season in City A and City B in 2006. City A was 10 degrees colder than City B in winter, 8 in Spring, 10 in Summer, and 8 in Fall.”

16

We also suggest that charts and graphs be used sparingly. Make certain that your charts and graphs are really needed in your PowerPoint.

- ✓ Ask yourself whether they are necessary to convey the information you seek to present.
- ✓ If your slides are so full of text that nobody can read them, it’s better to include them on the Conference CD as a resource material.

## More tips to Enhance Visibility of PowerPoint Slides

- **Limit the use of cursive, because it is harder to read.**
- **Do not insert video clips, music, or someone talking unless the information is open-captioned.**
- **Do not justify the text.**
  - Justified text can be harder to follow for persons with low vision.
  - The PowerPoint and the text version of this Guide do not use justified text.

Note: “Justified text” adjusts the spacing between words to make all lines in a paragraph the same length (except the last line).

17

Now let’s review the accessibility best practices for PowerPoints.



## Accessibility Best Practices for PowerPoints

- **Use a sans serif font (e.g., Arial).**
- **Use a large font size -- at least 22 point.**
- **Use a dark text font and a light-colored background.**
- **The text on a slide should have nothing behind it.**
- **Provide “alternative text” descriptions for non-text items.**

18

Here are some general tips to enhance the readability of a PowerPoint.

## Part 2. General tips for Effective PowerPoints

### ➤ Keep it simple, to avoid distractions.

- ✓ Avoid multiple changes in font and font colors.  
Use the same sans serif font (e.g., Arial) throughout.  
Use no more than 3 font sizes on the same slide.
- ✓ Do not use sounds because they can be distracting.
- ✓ Do not use animation (including text fly-in, fade-in, or fade-out).
- ✓ Remove unnecessary words, pictures, and graphs.

19

### Avoid information overload.

- Too much information can result in no information because it decreases people's ability to remember anything.
- Also, when you overload your audience, you shut down dialogue.

## Avoid TMI\*

### ➤ Keep it short.

- Approximately 6 slides for every 10 minutes of speaking time.
- Use bullets followed by words, phrases, or short sentences.
- Do not use long sentences except when necessary (e.g., to quote an essential definition).

### Use the "666 Rule":

**No more than 6 words per bullet, 6 bullets per slide,  
or 6 slides for every 10 minutes of presentation time.**

\*Too Much Information

20



Note: The PowerPoint for this Guide exceeds the 666 Rule because it is a pre-recorded webcast, and I am reading a script without commentary or taking questions.

In closing, here are some miscellaneous suggestions.

- **Number your slides**
  - Numbered slides makes it easier to direct people's attention to a specific slide, especially if you jump over some.
  - A slide number is not needed on the first (title) slide.
- **Include the date on the first slide.**
- **Provide your contact information on the last slide.**

21

### **Part 3. Deadline for Submitting Your PowerPoint**

We need presenters to submit their PowerPoints and handouts by a specified deadline – about 6 weeks before a TASC Conference or other training event.

- This gives us time to verify that your materials are accessible.
- We will also create various accessible formats.

Our staff reviews PowerPoints and handouts for accessibility, and make minor changes as needed.

22

I hope the information in this Guide is useful.

We appreciate your preparing PowerPoints that give individuals with vision disabilities access that is equal to persons who have normal vision.



If you have any questions, please contact the person on our staff who invited you to be a presenter, or contact me directly.

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23

Thank you for your attention.

### **Handouts available online**

<http://www.ndrn.org/Meetings/pr.htm>

- ***Presenter Guide # 5*** (PowerPoint)
- ***Presenter Guide # 5*** (text version)
- ***Presenter Guide # 5*** (large print version)
- ***Alternative Text Instructions with Screen Shots***
- ***TASC Annual Conferences: Guidelines for Speakers***
- ***Before You Create a PowerPoint Presentation ( About.com)***  
<http://desktoppub.about.com/od/microsoft/bb/powerpointrules.htm>

24