It’s All Too Much!

- This page contains too many words for a presentation slide. It is not written in point form, making it difficult both for your audience to read and for you to present each point. Although there are exactly the same number of points on this slide as the previous slide, it looks much more complicated. In short, your audience will spend too much time trying to read this paragraph instead of listening to you.
It’s Still Too Much!

● This page still contains too many words for a presentation slide.
  – It’s written in point form, but the amount of text makes it difficult both for your audience to read and for you to present each point.
  – Although there are exactly the same number of sentences on this slide as the previous slide, it still looks complicated.

● In short, your audience will spend too much time trying to read this paragraph instead of listening to you.
  – Too much!
Minimalist Slide Structure

- 1-2 slides per minute of your presentation
- Key words and phrases, not complete sentences
- 1-3 points per slide maximum
- Image heavy, minimal text: why?
Let Text Breathe with Line Spacing

- 1-2 slides per minute of your presentation
- Key words and phrases, not complete sentences
- 1-3 points per slide maximum

VS

- 1-2 slides per minute of your presentation
- Key words and phrases, not complete sentences
- 1-3 points per slide maximum
Visible and Consistent Fonts

● CAPITALIZE ONLY WHEN NECESSARY

● Don’t use a complicated font

● Standard fonts like Times New Roman or Arial

● Different size fonts for main points and secondary points
  – Size 28-point font
  – 24-point font
  – 12-point
Rainbows are Awesome!

- Using a font color that does not contrast with the background color is hard to read
- Using color for decoration is distracting and annoying.
- Using a different color for each point is unnecessary
  - Using a different color for secondary points is also unnecessary
- Trying to be creative can also be bad
Consistent and Contrasting Colors

- Use a color of font that contrasts sharply with the background
  - Ex: blue font on white background

- Use color to reinforce the logic of your structure
  - Ex: light blue title and dark blue text

- Use color to emphasize a point
  - But only use this occasionally
Do You Need a Background?

- Simple and light backgrounds
- Use the same background consistently throughout your presentation
- Is a background even necessary?
Do You Need a Background?

- Is a background even necessary?
- What is the purpose?
- How does it contribute to the presentation?
Dominating and Irritating Background

- Avoid backgrounds that are distracting or difficult to read from
- Always be consistent with the background that you use
Communicate Information Visually

For the Fiscal Year Ended Sept. 30

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revenues</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>323,749</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patient Service, net</td>
<td>495,484</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unrestricted Contributions and Bequests</td>
<td>50,960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Operating</td>
<td>13,025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Revenues</strong></td>
<td><strong>$883,218</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fiscal Year 2010 Income

- Research: 37%
- Patient Service: 56%
- Unrestricted Contributions and Bequests: 6%
- Other Revenue: 1%

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“Imposter Cycle” (Clance & Imes, 1985)
Audience-Focused Graph Design

Population Sizes Through Time

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Example Improved

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Example Improved Again

Grid lines: Does the audience care about the exact data points?
Legend: Why make the reader look back and forth?
Axes: Is the labeling between major tick marks unnecessary?
Do You Need a Header?

Dr. Levi Garraway

Completed 2 full genome scans with DNA from prostate cancer patients
Dr. Levi Garraway

Completed 2 full genome scans with DNA from prostate cancer patients

Photo of Dr. Levi Garraway © Source unknown. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see http://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/

Diagram of genome scans © Source unknown. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see http://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/
Spelling and Grammar

- Proofread your slides for:
  - spelling mistakes
  - the use of repeated words
  - grammatical errors you might have made

- Have someone else review your slides!
How To Conclude?

Audience will remember your last words
- Reiterate the main point(s) of your presentation
- Suggest future avenues of research (if applicable)
- Communicate challenges/concerns to target the Q&A

Effective and strong closing line
- Avoid ending a presentation abruptly
- What are the magic words?

“Thank You”
Hedging your Claims

**Hedging**: to evade the risk of commitment by leaving open a way of retreat; to minimize risk.
Why Hedge in an Article for the Public?

“Immunotherapy has been shown to slow tumor growth in mice, and researchers believe that this therapeutic approach can *may one day* help treat people suffering from cancer.”
# Common Hedge Words

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>nouns</th>
<th>adverbs</th>
<th>verbs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>supposition</td>
<td>presumably</td>
<td>appear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>idea</td>
<td>presumably</td>
<td>postulate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>speculation</td>
<td>probably</td>
<td>suggest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conjecture</td>
<td>possibly</td>
<td>seem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>possibility</td>
<td>apparently</td>
<td>seem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inference</td>
<td>not unlikely</td>
<td>may be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>seemingly</td>
<td>speculate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

from *Successful Scientific Writing*, 2nd. Ed.

Why Avoid Excessive Hedging?

“Scientists do not know the cause of the degenerative change, but potentially one cause may be an infection by a possible parasite that might be ingested through certain foods.”

“Hey, wait your turn!”
One hedge word per sentence, please.

Image source: Pixabay