

Planning, Designing Delivering a Great PowerPoint Presentation

Overall the skills to build include **Planning**: choosing key points and structuring them logically. **Design**: keeping slides visual, uncluttered and consistent. **Delivery**: clear speech, timing, confidence, and audience engagement. **Recognising Pitfalls**: overloading slides, reading from notes, ignoring visuals, rushing, or exceeding time. **Gaining confidence**: rehearsing and focusing on storytelling rather than memorisation.

1. Plan with Purpose

Start with your key message — what should your audience remember after fifteen minutes?

Structure your presentation into three clear parts:

Introduction (state your topic and why it matters),

Main Section (explain key ideas with examples or evidence),

Conclusion (summarise and leave a final thought).

Keep to three or four main ideas — less is more.

2. Design Your Slides Wisely

Good slides support your words, not replace them.

Use *minimal text*: aim for short phrases or keywords, not paragraphs.

Include strong *visuals* — diagrams, charts, or photos — that illustrate your point instantly.

Avoid clutter: one clear idea per slide.

Choose readable fonts and high-contrast colours (dark text on light background or vice versa).

Use animation only when it helps explain something.

3. Explain with Visual Storytelling

Your slides are prompts, not a script.

Talk about what the image *means* and why it matters.

If you show data, interpret it aloud (don't assume it's self-explanatory).

Use transitions between points so your talk feels connected, not a list of separate facts.

4. Deliver with Confidence

Practise aloud at least twice; know your opening and closing lines.

Time yourself - 15 minutes usually means about 10–12 slides.

Speak slowly and clearly.

If you need them, you can always use cue cards or short notes but don't read everything (=be prompted by little phrases to remind you don't write huge blocks of text notes).

Pauses can often be useful to help a key idea sink in.

Smile - it calms nerves and connects you with the audience.

5. Avoid Common Pitfalls

Too much text (nobody reads paragraphs on slides).

Tiny fonts or poor contrast.

Reading every word off the screen.

Rushing because you haven't rehearsed.

Ignoring visuals or talking over busy slides.

Finishing abruptly without a summary.

6. Final Tips

Your presentation is a short story – let it have a beginning, middle and end.

Start confidently, end clearly, and always thank your audience.

Rehearse with a friend or record yourself once - it will make you calmer on the day.

Confidence grows from preparation – give it some practise, you'll sound natural.