



Best Practices and Tips for Developing Your Presentation for Online Delivery.

WSU Extension uses Adobe Presenter as the medium for online delivery of educational programs. The technology that nationwide eXtension has made available for online delivery and course management is Moodle. Use these best practices to develop and record a quality presentation .

Plan

Organize and plan the presentation in detail. Create a storyboard for the whole presentation, including key slide text, graphics and other visual elements, and notes.

Focus on the audience, not the technology. Start with quality information and a quality presentation.

Design

Connect with your audience. Include an instructor profile and a recent photo. Use the WSU Extension PowerPoint templates for a consistent look and feel. Stay consistent with the theme of the presentation. Use consistent colors and fonts as outlined in the Extension Identity Program (<http://ext.wsu.edu/identity/>).

Organize and Prepare. Before beginning narration, print out your slides and write a script or note cards for them. Write as if you were speaking in person with the viewer. Your narration should match the script as closely as possible because this becomes your transcript. Read your script out loud in advance, to be sure the words flow smoothly off the tongue. Edit your notes if they sound too formal or are difficult to understand. Post your script in the Notes area in PowerPoint. This will assist in making the presentation ADA accessible.

Slide Text. Use bullet points and phrases to illustrate key points. Too many words encourage viewers to read the slides rather than listen to your narration. Appropriate visuals often provide more memorable representations of content.

Use standard sans serif fonts that are large enough to be easily read. Use different sized fonts for main points and secondary points. Limit the number, size and color of fonts to no more than three per presentation. Capitalize only when necessary. Proofread your slides.

Image Design. Limit the use of animation. Integrate visual elements that help to clarify points. Graphics should add value, not clutter. Avoid cheesy clip art.

Background images are likely to conflict with other graphics. Avoid dating the presentation with outdated photos and graphics.

Start Strong. Your first slide should be your title slide, which you can use to introduce yourself and provide some preliminary information about the structure and scope of your presentation. Do not start by saying, "Um, well, I guess we should probably get started...". Instead, say "Hi! I'm Joe Smith, WSU Extension educator from XXX County. This program will focus on..."

Take Only One to Two Minutes Per Slide. If you have more to say, break it up into multiple slides.

Short presentations keep the audience's attention. If you are teaching a complex topic that will not allow the lesson to be completed in 20 minutes, divide your material into separate, discrete presentations.

Recording

Eliminate Extraneous Noise. Turn off your telephone and cell phone, post a "Do Not Disturb" sign on your door, move away from heating and air conditioning vents, etc.

Check Your Sound Quality. Use an external microphone or a headset to get clear, consistent sound. Keep the microphone a few inches from your mouth to avoid breathy noises. Record your introduction slide. Stop and play that slide to check the sound quality before continuing. Recheck your audio periodically.

Choose Your Narration Time. You don't have to record the narration for an entire presentation at once; you can do it slide-by-slide or complete it in sections.

Let Your Personality Show. Well done narration, especially when it provides a "picture" of you, can help facilitate a connection between you and the audience.

Don't Read—Talk! Your main goal is to keep your listeners interested and focused. Nothing is more boring than listening to someone read, in stilted diction, what you can read for yourself.

Pretend you are actually teaching a program. Make a conscious effort to slow your pace. If you find yourself speaking in monotone, try gesticulating while talking; you'll be surprised at how it adds inflection to your voice. Place a photograph of your family or a small group or even a family pet near your computer and pretend you are talking to them. You want the narration to sound conversational.

You may want to try using a clicker to advance the slides. It makes a huge difference by simulating a "live" presentation.

Stand up: Body posture influences the way your voice projects over the phone during an online presentation. If you're scrunched at your computer, your voice might not come across with authority and you could be perceived to be unprepared.

Burst the content: Create such visually rich presentations that viewers won't cover your webinar screen with their e-mail window. Raising and lowering your voice creates auditory bursts that are effective and creates auditory emphasis within your content. Humor also creates interest. If you sound like you're having a good time, they'll want to hang out with the cool crowd.

Present with two: When two people share responsibility for presenting, the audience will tune in each time the presenters change. They will feel like there's a new topic being introduced and the first few seconds will pique their interest. Plan those moments out and take advantage of their engagement.

Preview Your Presentation. Record your narration for the entire presentation as if you were presenting it live. Then, run your presentation while you sit back and listen with a critical ear. You gain an entirely different perspective when you are your own audience.

Listening to your presentation enables you to pick up on awkward moments, unclear passages, and boring spots much more easily. You can edit the narration or re-record narration for any given slide.

Engage your audience

Be creative. Add short clips of recorded interviews, testimonials, or other activities that will add impact and value to your content. Embed a video demonstration. Use hyperlinking or file attachments to share documents that support the presentation and engage the audience in further information sharing and learning. The **Print Handouts** option creates a PDF file containing slide thumbnails and fields for taking notes. Students can download and print the file to write their own comments and keep as a record of the presentation.

Make it interactive: Collect feedback and interact with your audience about the presentation. Consider using a wiki or blog to engage the audience in discussion as a hybrid or mixed methodology program. An example would be to use a wiki to report main points of the presentation and recruit further feedback by the program participants.

Engage the Learner. Ask questions and pause for the learner to think about the answer. Give examples or tell a relevant story. When you say something important, leave a gap afterward. Let it hang there for a few seconds. Here's an example: "You know what I think?" (Pause... two... three...) "I think the only way this is going to work is if we do it this way." (Pause... two... three...) "Here's why..."