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Presentation Essentials

39 Ideas on Presentation Content, Design and Delivery



Idea 10: Starting Offline

When people want to start creating a presentation, what's the first thing they do? Open PowerPoint (or Keynote, for the Mac users) and they start typing in text into the slides (I was guilty of this as well). But this is very ineffective method. It's much better to start "offline", start away from the computer. Just turn off your computer, get some pieces of paper and a pen and start writing down your ideas. You might start by brainstorming about what you want to present and gathering all the thoughts you have on the subject. You can do this with sticky notes or use a whiteboard. Once you've got that, you can think about structuring the presentation and your ideas. After that you can write down the storyline. And only when the structure and the storyline of the presentation are set, you should start creating the slides. This sort of approach will most likely also greatly reduce the number of bullet points you use.

If you start with the slides, you might run into the risk of not seeing the big picture of the presentation, you don't have a bird's eye view of the presentation. Starting with the slides is comparable to driving a car, you start off at Point A and you just keep on driving to Point B, you're not sure yet how long it will take, you don't know exactly what the road looks like, but you just keep on driving until you arrive. On the other hand you can also take a (environmentally friendly, hybrid!) helicopter and look at the whole path first, analyze which way you want to take and plan ahead. This is similar to starting offline, you first take a look at the big picture, you analyze first, only then do you start.

Starting offline will give you a better overview of the “big picture“



Idea 17: Use images when possible



Images and photos - when used correctly - can be very effective in supporting your presentation. Personally, I would much prefer it if people used many more pictures in their presentations. It's cliché but true: A picture is worth a thousand words. So imagine you are trying to explain to people about why they should visit Indonesia. You don't tell them via bullet points: "Indonesia has 237 million inhabitants. Next: Indonesia has 17,500 islands. Next: On Bali there are many different excellent cultural events. In Jakarta you can enjoy life in one of Asia's metropolitan cities."

No, instead you should show pictures and make the audience "feel" Indonesia. Show them the beach, show them a picture of Jakarta's night life, and make them understand why Indonesia is so great.

Look at the following example, I have created one slide with some hard facts and as a contrast 2 images of Indonesia. As you are looking at them, assess what you're feeling and think about which of these (the hard facts or the images) will persuade you more about how great Indonesia is.

Why Indonesia is great

- 237 million inhabitants
- About 17,500 islands
- Capital: Jakarta has 13 million inhabitants
 - Urban metropolis in Asia
 - Many different communities
- Bali: Many exciting cultural events
- Thousand Islands and Volcanoes



This might be informative and have lots of facts and arguments why Indonesia is great, but...



... showing photos/images is more emotional and is more persuasive. Make them “feel” how great Indonesia is and...



... why a trip is more than worth it. So try to use as many of them as possible. The funny thing is, showing several pictures will probably not take any longer than going through some bullet points.