


At-Large Presentation Tips

FACTS

1. **People cannot listen and read at the same time.**
Period. Both activities engage the language center of the brain. They will do only one and, more often than not, that's read. If they are reading the same slides you are, then why are you there?
2. **Slides should supplement the talk, not the other way around.**
The big joke is that during EVERY Zoom meeting, people ask if the slides will be available. It's funny first because the answer is ALWAYS yes but, more importantly, your slides should not be able to stand on their own.
3. **People CAN absorb pictures and listen at the same time**
Looking and listening engage different, complimentary, parts of the brain. The best analogy for a good presentation is a documentary film. They generally have narration and visuals. Imagine if Ken Burn's documentary about the American Civil War was a series of PowerPoints with titles and bullets!

ADVICE ON SLIDES

1. **Only pictures and punchlines**
2. **6 words or LESS**
3. **Bring People Back**
Ideally, people spend more time looking at you than your slides. This is harder in the virtual world, for sure, especially if there's no video, but consider a blank slide or a picture of yourself as you explain something. Tell people to close their eyes, even!
4. **Turn sentences into pictures and punchlines**
In other words, edit down sentences to the bare minimum to be understood, make numbers Arabic instead of text and make them bigger and different colors than the text. A sentence like "Research shows that ninety-five percent of applications for community priority evaluation failed to gain approval," could be represented on a slide as

5. **Notes in Notes Section**
If you wish to include explanations in your slide deck, do it in the notes section. Then they are there for you to use and EVEN available to share by making a PDF of the Notes View, instead of the slide view! Another benefit of putting what you plan to say in the Notes is that you can often share them with the interpreters in advance.
6. **Rehearse**
It's the only way you'll ever know how long your presentation is becoming or whether you're going to stumble over a particular phrase or simply be at a loss for words. You can use the "Rehearse Timing," feature under the Slide Show menu.