Designing a good PowerPoint presentation
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1. **Context matters -** appropriate or inappropriate. That is, is it appropriate or inappropriate for a particular context?

2. **Simple but not simplistic -** The best visuals are often ones designed with an eye toward simplicity. For example, even the best visuals used in support of a presentation for one audience on, say, quantum mechanics, may appear complicated and confusing to a different audience.

   However, simplicity can also be viewed as a consequence. A consequence, that is, of our careful efforts to craft a story and create supporting visuals that focus on our audience's needs in a clear and meaningful way.

3. **A visual makeover**
   An example.

   BEFORE

   Above (left) is the original slide. The problem with the slide on the left is that the clip-art used does not reinforce the statistic, nor does it even fit the theme of women in the Japanese labor market. The background is a tired, overused PowerPoint template. The text is difficult to read. And as one trainee commented: "it's ugly."

   The slide on the right (above) was an effort to display the same information in a pie chart. Besides using an overused template, the visual displays the pie chart in a distorted and inelegant fashion. For the sake of clarity, it is usually best to avoid 3-D effects. Also, rather than giving the slide a title, a declarative sentence that states the point directly may be more appropriate.

   AFTER:

All the slides were redesigned to match the theme above. The slide on the left was the one used for the presentations. But the one on the right could also be used effectively. Notice that either slide (especially the slide without any text) would be virtually meaningless without the presenter's narration. The handout that followed the presentation expanded on the relevance of the statistic and gave it context. The five-page handout proved to be a good reference for those who attended the presentation and for those who did not.

Another AFTER

Using a pie chart is also a good way to represent this simple statistic. Here (left) the large text at the top can be easily seen. The text reads more like a headline — a declarative sentence — rather than just a title or category. The slide on the right is another possible way to support the message. In this case a completely different template was used.

- If your presentation is on a less technical topic such as leadership, HRM, marketing, etc. then simple slides like these may be very effective. If you are giving a very technical presentation to a technical audience hungry for data, then your slides may look quite different. But even for a very technical presentation, embracing simplicity of design and striving for the greatest clarity possible should still be the objective.

Good PowerPoint Design for Business Presenters
Adapted from Alex Osterwalder: http://www.slideshare.net/Alex.Osterwalder/good-powerpoint-design-for-business-presenters-presentation

1. Design from your audience's perspective.
   a. Who is your audience, and what do you want from them?
   b. Select the three most important audience segments.
   c. Profile your audience: What's really on their mind (what keeps them up at night, what do they want, what are their ambitions?); What do they see (their environment, friends, what does life have to offer them?); What do they say and do (what are their actions, their attitude in public, what will they tell people?); and what do they hear (what influences them, what does their surrounding environment say about them, what would significant others' in their lives say about them).

2. Limit the content and structure to the core message and story.
   a. Define your current status, your goal, and the action necessary to achieve your goal:
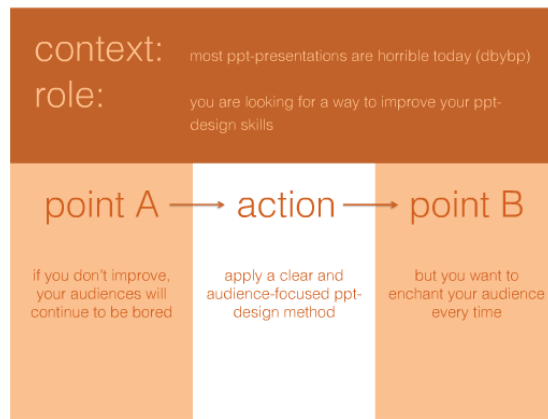
b. Make your message stick: simplicity, unexpectedness, concreteness, credibility, emotions, stories.

3. Keep visual design simple and stick to the essentials.
    a. Simple design rules: zero tolerance for clutter, don't mix fonts (maximum of 2), if you use bullet points, three levels is too much.

    A bad example:
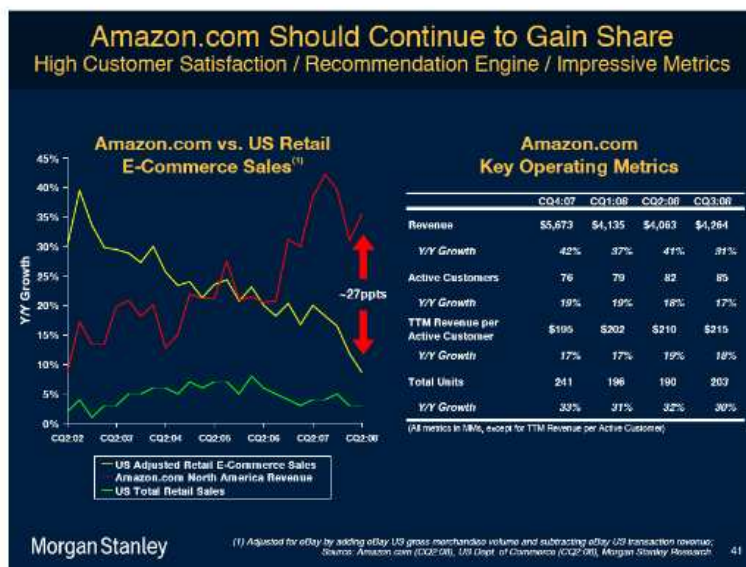
    b. Vision trumps all other senses.
    c. Use pictures (e.g. iStock) but ensure it's relevant to the core message, and elminiate unnecessary elements! E.g.
       From:

To:

      d. Use white space generously.

4. Entertain your audience and involve them to keep their attention.
   a. People don't pay attention to boring things!
   b. Don't use endless bullet points… Mix it up.
   c. Use emotionally competent stimuli – e.g. in terms of what your audience thinks: will it benefit me, or harm me? Will it make me happy, sad, or make life easier or harder? Does it relate to me, have I seen it before?
   d. Treat your presentation as a performance, and your audience as guests.
      i. Ask questions during your presentations (should be rhetorical in this case).
      ii. Don't' just stick to the podium.
      iii. Rehearse, rehearse, rehears.