

Best Practices for Creating Accessible PowerPoints and Inclusive Presentations

Creating and delivering a presentation that takes into consideration the varied abilities of the audience will maximize participation for everyone. Use these simple guidelines to create a presentation that includes your entire audience and avoids issues during your presentation.

Diversity Awareness:

Be aware and open to the diversity in your audience. When planning your content understand that some of your audience might not be able to:

- See well or at all,
- Hear well or at all,
- Move well or at all,
- Speak well or at all,
- Process information in certain formats well or at all.

Your audience has both visible and invisible identities and accessibility needs.

Best practices for creating an accessible PowerPoint:

- Use a simple sans serif font (e.g. Ariel, Veranda, Helvetica)
- Use a 28 point or larger type. Here is a suggestion for formatting:
 - Title Text: Arial 40, bold, centered
 - Section Headings, (narrative text), Arial 36, bold, left-justified
 - Main text (narrative text), Arial 36, plain, left-justified
- On the intro slide provide a link to your presentation so participants can follow along on their personal devices. Consider using a QR code for fast access.
- Provide an outline of your presentation as an intro side and make it available as a handout. Refer to the outline as you begin each new section of the presentation. This will help summarize your points and also assist your audience with following the structure of your presentation.
- Each slide should have a title for screen reader navigation. Slide titles do not have to be visible on the slide.
- Minimize the amount of text on slides.
- Check your color contrast with a contrast checker if using color combinations other than black and white. We recommend [WebAIM's color contrast checker](#) with [usage guidance](#) provided by the Office of Disability Services.
- Use trusted [JMU color combinations](#) to avoid color contrast issues.

- Do not use color as the only method for distinguishing information, particularly on charts and graphs. Communicate data in both color and text.
- Make graphics as simple as possible.
- Provide alt-text for all images: [adding alt-text in PowerPoint](#).
- Caption all videos. Learn more about captioning at JMU with [Caption-On](#).
- Check your presentation for accessibility using the built-in PowerPoint Accessibility Checker.

Best practices for inclusive presentations:

- Speak clearly and slowly. Use a microphone if available.
- Be visible and in good light when you talk so participants can see your face.
- Have a printed version of your presentation available.
- Have a large print version of all materials and presentation available (at least 20 point).
- If there will be an ASL interpreter at your session, provide your content to them in advance. Explain acronyms, terms, names, etc. that you will use.
- Allow plenty of time for participants to read a slide. Cover all the visual information on the slide.
- Describe all images, graphs and charts.
- Provide a brief description of videos in advance of playing.
- Remember potential accessibility issues with participation activities including question and answer periods. Use a microphone if available and always repeat the question so everyone can hear.

Additional resources and tutorials:

[How to Make Presentations Accessible to All - Web Accessibility Initiative](#)

[PowerPoint Accessibility – WebAIM for Office 2016](#)

[Make your PowerPoint Presentations Accessible - Microsoft Support](#)

[Alternative Text – ODS guidelines and platform specific instructions](#)

[WebAIM Color Contrast Checker](#)