

The Genard Method

PERFORMANCE-BASED
PUBLIC SPEAKING TRAINING

CHEAT SHEET

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5 Rules for Succeeding with PowerPoint

We've all sat through painful PowerPoint presentations...probably this morning. So don't "pretend that you are giving a real talk, so audiences can pretend that they're listening." (Tufte 2003).

Here are 5 rules to follow for giving a dynamic and influential PowerPoint presentation:

- 1. Your story matters most!** The PowerPoint slides you show should be *visual reinforcement* of what you're TALKING about. All visuals are seductive, for presenters as well as audience members. Don't allow PowerPoint to lead you, the way you need to lead your audience.
- 2. Create anticipation and interest:** "Introduce" slides, folding their significance into the overall narrative and point you're trying to make. Listeners will then be ready-and-willing to see the visual evidence you're about to show.
- 3. Use the "B" button: "B" for black!** "Step out" of the presentation from time to time, to lead a discussion, ask a question, or lead your audience in a round of jumping jacks. It doesn't matter what you do: audiences need a break from an endless march of slides. Every time you use the B button, you reestablish your position as the primary influencer of the presentation.
- 4. Remember that PowerPoint serves *you*:** Think carefully about how (and whether you need) to use PowerPoint. Remind yourself that it's your job to move your listeners to action. A simple slide show tool can never accomplish that.
- 5. Simplify.** Use fewer slides with less text on each of them. PowerPoint is visual, not verbal: why all the text? The less language you exhibit, the more you will need to tell, which is why you're there in the first place. If you hear yourself apologizing for "eye exam" charts or "too busy" slides, bring yourself up on charges immediately!



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