

The ToolBox

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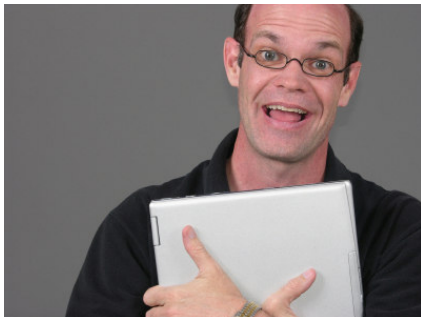
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A Teaching and Learning Resource for the Faculty of Indiana Wesleyan University



TRUE CONFESSIONS of a PowerPoint Enthusiast

To the regular readers of *The ToolBox*, let me begin with a sincere apology. I have discovered a serious flaw in my character: I am totally committed (perhaps even addicted) to the use of PowerPoint. In the spirit of being truthful, I must admit that I am enthralled, enamored, charmed, captivated, fond of, irresistibly attracted to, keen on, partial to ...I admit it ... I love PowerPoint. This weakness has led me to totally center my classroom presentations around font sizes, background colors, slide transitions, custom animations and all of the other bells and whistles that available through this most delightful piece of computer software. So please excuse me as I use this issue of *The ToolBox* as a forum for sharing my recently discovered frailty in hopes of helping others who may be similarly challenged.



Admitting that you have a problem is the first step toward change. The next step is engaging yourself in an organized course of treatment designed to free yourself of a bad habit or debilitating condition. On page 2 of *The ToolBox* you will find some practical tips for applying PowerPoint technology in a responsible manner. According to the American Association on Multimedia Presentations (AAMP): "The use of PowerPoint technology should be limited to improving presentations, not controlling and overpowering them. Use this technology with care and good judgment."

Common Signs of PowerPoint Dependency

According to the MSN-IV, the official diagnostic tool for diagnosing "PowerPoint Dependency," answering "Yes" to any of the following questions should be considered as a clinically significant indicator of the need to seek professional treatment for overreliance on PowerPoint:

- Do you find yourself aimlessly surfing the internet in search of new and unusual clip art?
- Do the words "End of Slide Show" found at the back of a PowerPoint presentation bring a tear to your eye (and fear to your heart)?
- Do you have recurring nightmares about a malfunctioning LCD projector?
- Do you look at overhead projectors with disdain and disgust and think less of those who use them?
- Do you find it hard to maintain a conversation without backup from PowerPoint slides?
- Do you carry a picture of your favorite PowerPoint slide in your purse or wallet?
- Do you dream of the time that you can teach for an entire week without the support of a PowerPoint presentation but feel that dream is out of reach?

If these symptoms are familiar, do not hesitate. Seek professional help. Admit that you have a problem. Gain control of your life. Call this toll-free number today. Operators are on-line 24 hours a day.



Call 1 - 800 - POWERPT Today to Receive Help!

Ten Suggestions for the Judicious Use of PowerPoint

1 Use PowerPoint technology only as a way of enhancing and clarifying the content of your presentation. Quite often, this technology becomes an end in itself. Don't ever believe that a PowerPoint presentation is a substitute for insightful, well organized content.

2 Resist the strong temptation to read the entire content of your slides to the audience. If it is important enough to read, then provide the audience with a copy. Assume that the audience has the ability to read the materials that you are using in your presentation.

3 Make sure that the font size that you have chosen can be read from the furthest point in the room. If the audience needs to squint in order to read the fine print in your presentation, they will quickly lose interest in the content.

4 As good as you think your PowerPoint presentation might be, remember that members of your audience have probably seen hundreds of presentations ... this is not new technology. The use of PowerPoint technology has become commonplace. It is an effective way to enhance presentations. Never assume that your audience will be dazzled and amazed by your slides as much as by the content that you are sharing.

5 Check your slides for an adequate amount of white space. Cluttered slides detract the overall effectiveness of the presentation. Ask yourself if the slides you have prepared are pleasing to the eye and draw the audience's attention to the points that you wish to emphasize.

6 Make sure that any graphics that you choose are clear and concise. On occasion, graphics lose their clarity on the screen as they are increased in size. If a graphic is unclear on your computer screen, that lack of clarity will only be magnified 10,000 times when it is projected on the screen. That is a scary thought!

7 Use your PowerPoint slides as a jumping off point for discussion and dialogue. For example, ask the audience to respond to a picture or question, pose a provocative question on the screen, or have them discuss an issue and then share the results of a survey related to their discussion.

8 Slide animations are eye-catching and clever ... if they work in a timely manner. Animations and fancy slide transitions often eat up memory and can be impacted by the power of your computer. Make sure that your remote has a fully functioning battery and your computer can deliver your animations at a reasonable speed that will not interfere with the pace and flow of your presentation.

9 Talk to the audience ... not to the screen. Take the time to become thoroughly familiar with your presentation and only use the slides as a backdrop to what you have to share. Talk with the audience and make your interactions with them the centerpiece of your presentation.

10 Don't get caught up in the cleverness of your own work.

Treat the work you have done in a matter-of-fact way. If you are waiting for laughter or "oohs and aahs" for the slides that you have prepared ... don't. Prepare your best work and use it as a tool.



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