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Giving an Effective Oral Presentation

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INTRODUCTION

Pastors are rarely asked to write examinations, but are required to preach sermons frequently. Hence the ability to make effective oral presentations is very important in the Christian Church.

PREPARING AN ORAL PREPARATION

The preparation of the content of an oral presentation is the same as that for a written paper. It is important to practice your oral presentation. Practice the delivery of your presentation as if to an audience, including using any presentation aids. This will allow you to establish the time your presentation will take and make any required adjustments, as well as giving you an indication of how well you know your presentation.

MAKING YOUR PRESENTATION

Attention should be given to ensure that all oral presentations are suitably presented. How work is presented gives the audience an impression of the importance of the topic to you. Taking the time to ensure your presentation is presented well and provides a good impression. This includes:

Speaking: Presentations should be delivered orally in the local language (not English). You must speak clearly and audibly.

Body Language: You need to maintain eye contact and use appropriate gestures. Not knowing your content and needing to read from notes generally causes this area to deteriorate.

Time requirements: Presentations have a set time and it is important to meet this requirement. By practicing your presentation you will be able to establish how close you are to the time requirements.

Presentation Aids: Well-prepared aids are effective, but poorly prepared aids are often distracting and detract from the presentation. Make sure you know how to use your aids competently.

Organisation: You need to be organised and ready to deliver your presentation as required. This means organising that all equipment (such as a computer, data projector or audio equipment) is be available. You should also ensure that each audience member is given an A4 handout.

Questions: While rhetorical questions are fine in sermons, they should generally be avoided in a presentation. Questions should be “open questions” (i.e., not yes/no answers) to encourage participation and discussion. Questions such as, “What do you think?” or “Which position would you support?” should not be used if you have not presented enough information for the audience to form an informed opinion.

Also questions should not be used as a substitute for you clearly presenting what you think and which position you support.

Appearance: When speaking you should present yourself in a manner appropriate for someone delivering a presentation. You should present yourself in a manner similar to a lecturer/preacher.

PRESENTATIONS

What is expected from a presentation?

An oral presentation should be an engaging oral delivery of your research. Presentations are not the same as reading out a written paper, but should concisely represent your written notes. In an oral presentation you should:

Identify and summarise the major issues: Presentations are not expected to cover all the possible areas on a given topic. You should be selective in what is presented, identifying and focussing on the major issues.

Critically analyse the major issues: The presenter should demonstrate that they have been able to isolate the key issues related to the topic. This means you need to demonstrate your ability to identify between a source's 'surface' position/s and identify the key elements that support such a position.

Argue for a position/s related to the major issues: The presenter should demonstrate that they have thought critically about the major issues and have not simply adopted the viewpoint of a source. It is important that you not only present your position on a major issue but also demonstrate the reasoning and argument for the position you have taken. You should offer more than one position on major issues to allow you to demonstrate your decision for the position you have taken and why you have decided against other positions.

Consider the practical implications: The presenter should be able to demonstrate areas where the major issues will impact practically. The presentation should clearly demonstrate the connection of the theological or theoretical with the practical implications.

Present in an appropriate format: Each presenter must decide on a delivery style that will:

- 1 maximize the impact of the presentation;
- 2 help audience members think through the issues raised; and
- 3 encourage critical participation by all participants.

Incorporate appropriate aids: As far as possible, oral presentations should be supported by appropriate aids such as diagrams on the whiteboard, use of PowerPoint, video, music, etc.

Aids should be used to improve the impact of a presentation and you should be careful to not use aids that do not really improve your presentation. You should also ensure that you can competently operate any aids.

Involve and engage audience: Presenters should create a learning environment, which encourages the audience members to participate (where appropriate). This should include providing a number of thought-provoking questions to stimulate discussion on the topic. Such questions may help identify concerns, clarify issues, and/or stimulate further critical reflection.

Provide a summary handout: Presenters should prepare a carefully structured single-sided one-page, 12-point font size, A4 handout for each audience member to facilitate their understanding of the topic. You should be selective in what is included and use the most appropriate format for the greatest clarity and impact. This could be prose, tabulated notes, diagrammatic representation, etc. The handout must be appropriately referenced.

QUESTION TIME

As a presenter you should be prepared to answer questions related to your presentation. Your ability to answer questions will demonstrate how well you have researched or covered your topic beyond what you have presented.

PRESENTATION AIDS

Presentation aids are encouraged as they can greatly enhance a presentation. Presentation aids should be used to emphasise the presentation content. More details on using PowerPoint are included at the end of these notes.

ASIA COLLEGE OF MINISTRY
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ORAL PRESENTATION - EVALUATION FORM

NAME OF STUDENT: _____ LECTURER: _____ DATE DUE: _____.

SUBJECT: _____ PRESENTATION NAME & N^o: _____

(Please attach this Form to the front of your Written Paper)

CATEGORY						COMMENTS
	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	
<i>HANDOUT</i>						
Quality of handout (format, layout, etc.)						
Quality of content						
<i>CONTENT</i>						
Knowledge of content						
Critical analysis of salient issues						
Learning Outcomes clear						
<i>COMMUNICATION</i>						
Clear, expressive, verbal communication						
Non-verbal communication (gestures, etc.)						
Use of teaching aids, etc.						
<i>LEARNING CLIMATE</i>						
Established appropriate learning climate						
Interest in students and their learning						
<i>PROFESSIONALISM</i>						
Personal appearance						
Appropriate use of time (15-20 minutes)						
<i>DISCUSSION</i>						
Quality of questions						
Involvement of class members						

Comments: _____

Lecturer: _____ Grade: _____ % Date: ___ / ___ / ___

MAKING A POWER POINT PRESENTATION

INTRODUCTION

Microsoft PowerPoint is becoming very popular in worship leading, teaching and preaching, but audiences are becoming more demanding that PowerPoint presentations are done well. This session will help you improve the quality of your presentations.

SLIDE DESIGN

- 1 Title Slide (the first slide)** – Always put your name and presentation title on the first slide.
- 2 Layout** – Some people like to vary the layout of each slide by sometimes having the title at the top and at other times showing the title at the bottom of the slide. However it is important to keep a consistent style and only change it when it emphasises a change in your topic. You can add variety by changing where your image appears on the slide (sometimes on the right, sometimes on the left, etc.).
- 3 Background** - Many presentations use the slide master to make every slide background match the others, but variety in your presentation is important as it helps keep the viewer interested. The best time to vary the background is when you are moving to the next major section of your presentation. Whilst some variety is important do not overuse it.
- 4 Spelling** - Be sure to use the spelling and grammar checker in your Office software to avoid silly typing mistakes. Your credibility in presenting your material will decrease if you have several misspelled words. If ministering to people whose mother tongue is not English, always use their own language in all your slides.

PICTURES

- 1 Size** - Use *big* and *bold* images that fill the slide. Remember that PowerPoint is a visual medium more than a written medium of instruction. You should have an image on every slide or nearly every slide. Rather than describing a location, show it visually on a map. Rather than describing a process verbally, design it as a diagram with arrows going to the next step, etc.

2 Text - Don't put a lot of text that people must copy down. Include this in a handout instead. A general rule for text is a maximum of 6 lines per slide and 6 words per line. If you have fill-in blanks on your handout, highlight the fill-in words on the slide in an easier-to-read colour.

3 Quality - Colours and pictures look better on your computer screen than when projected, so get as high quality images as you can (though blurry ones are better than nothing especially if you have a dark background with text in front of the image). Most images copied from the Internet have a resolution of 70 pixels/inch. It is best to enhance these to about 200 pixels/inch; but limit of each picture to about 1.2 Megs.

4 Images

If you are not working in a Western setting, be sure that you do not regularly use pictures of westerners. Try to use pictures that your audience will identify with.

5 Importing images – You can import images from google.com. Type in the name of image you are looking for, and then click the image link. Try to get high-resolution images (about 1000 x 1500 pixels) that can be enlarged. When you enlarge them they will not be blurry on the screen. Be sure to copy these only in full-image mode. When copying pictures from the Internet make sure that there are no copyright issues with the pictures. Whilst “free” pictures can be found they do not always come with the required copyright freedom.

6 Find images first – Try to find the required images before creating the PowerPoint and save them to your local hard drive rather than try to find images while creating the PowerPoint presentation.

FONTS

1 Use Windows Fonts where possible - If you need to use your PowerPoint presentation on a computer other than the computer it was created on, you may find that special fonts may not be installed on the computer used to show the presentation. For example, if you use the computer in a church in which you want to use your presentation you may find that they do not have the necessary fonts installed and your presentation is useless. Another reason for using basic fonts is that this may require others who use your presentation in the future to find these non-standard fonts to show on their computers.

Instead, use the basic fonts (those supplied with Windows) such as Arial, Geneva, Helvetica, Verdana, etc., unless it is absolutely necessary. If, for some special reason you want to use an unusual font you must embed this in your presentation. To do this, select "Save As". Choose the drive, etc., and then go to "Tools" and down to the "Save Options". In "Save Options" tick the box "embed true type fonts" and then select "embed characters in use only". In this way any person using the presentation on any computer will be able to view it.

- 2 Minimise Variety** - Avoid using too many types of fonts in the presentation. This is difficult for your audience and a font change can sometimes mean a change of emphasis that is not meant by you. A common error made by people when first using PowerPoint is to try and use as many fonts as possible. Font changes should only be made for special effects and to emphasise a change for a specific reason. Be consistent with the use of the fonts. If possible keep to two fonts for your presentation. Use one for headings and another for text. If you have text for images then you may also want to use a different font for picture titles/footnotes. Use the same size font throughout the presentation. Do not vary the font size to try and fill up each slide if there is not a lot of text/content on the slide.
- 3 Sans Serif** – Generally Sans Serif fonts appear best (Arial, Helvetica, Verdana, etc.). These are clear fonts without "feet" on the bottom, such as in Times New Roman, etc.
- 4 Languages** - If Greek, Hebrew, or other special fonts are needed to view your presentation, embed the fonts into the presentation. *BibleWorks®* fonts work well and are available at <http://www.bibleworks.com/fonts.html>. Some fonts are copyright and cannot be installed on another computer unless the appropriate purchase price has been paid.
- 5 Size** - Never use smaller than 24-point fonts on a slide. Each word should be visible from the back of the classroom. It is far better to have five separate slides than to have viewers straining to see everything on a single slide. Extra slides are free! Larger fonts also keep you from the temptation to put too many words on a slide. Never put more than 50 words on a single slide. Be consistent in the size of the font that you use on each slide. Change the amount of text on a slide rather than change the size of the font to fill up a slide or add too much text to a slide.

TRANSITIONS

- 1 New Section** - Insert a transition slide when proceeding to the next section of your presentation. This should be a simple word title or phrase displayed across the screen with an appropriate picture or graphic.
- 2 Clicks** - When moving to the next slide, do not have the slide start completely blank so you must click to bring up the first image or text. Use as few clicks as possible per slide.
- 3 Variety** – Vary the types of transition from slide to slide, but again be careful of over-using this feature.
- 4 Numbers** - If the slide correlates to the class notes or textbook, put the page number of the notes on the slide. This saves you from having to announce which page you are presenting each time you change slides. It does not really matter where the page number appears. The important point is that it appears in the same place on each slide. Some people put it in the bottom right-hand corner but a lot of people use the bottom middle of the slide

COLOUR

- 1 Contrast** - Give as much contrast between fonts and backgrounds as possible; e.g., never put red on a purple or black background, grey on a white background, etc. The best way to test how easy the font is to read is to simply squint your eyes while looking at your computer screen. If it's hard to read then get more contrast between the font colour and the background colour. Years ago it was suggested that for low level lighting conditions a dark background and a light coloured text was easier to see. So most people used a black background and yellow text as it is the greatest contrast in the colour spectrum. Now days projectors have improved and most people now seem to do the opposite, i.e., use a light coloured background and dark text. The latter probably looks nicer but you do need to take into account the conditions under which the presentation will be made. It is best not to use a white background. A light shade of grey is preferred to white. The reason for this is that older projectors do not project white very well. This also applies when the globe is nearing the end of its life.
- 2 Shadows** - Use the shadow feature of PPT to put a dark shadow on the words. This enables them to be viewed over pictures that vary between lighter and darker backgrounds. However, do not overuse this feature and only use where it is needed to make the text readable.

- 3 Black and White** - Make some of your slides black and white only. This eases the eyestrain of the viewers and provides variety in the presentation.
- 4 Animation** - Animation on slides is interesting unless it is repetitive. However custom animation is best done after the presentation has been completed. Do not over use different animations just to show that you know there are lots of different animations available. Use a change of animation for a specific purpose rather than just because it is possible. Also avoid using icons that continually blink or flash, as these will distract more than add to your presentation.

GIVING THE PRESENTATION

- 1 Largeness** - Project as large an image as possible onto the screen or wall. Bigger is better.
- 2 Black slides** - When you want to give the audience a visual break, plan this in advance by inserting a black slide. If you decide to make the screen black over an existing visible slide then hit "B" on the keyboard when in "Slide Show" mode in the lower left corner of the screen. Hit "B" again to see the slide and continue the presentation.
- 3 Talking** - Do not feel that because you are presenting with PowerPoint that you must do all the talking. Class participation can be enhanced with a small group discussion question put on a slide and left there for groups to discuss or individuals to apply.
- 4 Evaluation** - Study the PowerPoint Grade Sheet on the next page to see other issues not noted in these notes. This sheet will help especially in the content area as these present notes focus more on presentation than with the actual content.
- 5 Use on different computers** – If you use Windows Vista or Windows 7, save your presentation as a “Powerpoint 2003” or even 1995 file. In this way it can be read on older machines.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

These notes are based primarily on:

Griffith, R. (2006). PowerPoint Tips. In *New Testament Survey* (Vol. 1, 18th ed.). Singapore: Singapore Bible College.

Richards, James. (2010). Personal letter to author.

ASIA COLLEGE OF MINISTRY
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POWER-POINT PRESENTATION - EVALUATION FORM

NAME OF STUDENT: _____ LECTURER: _____ DATE: _____

SUBJECT: _____ PRESENTATION NAME & N^o: _____

(Please attach a copy of this Form to the front of your Written Submission)

CATEGORY	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	COMMENTS
<i>INTRODUCTION</i>						
Attention (Grabs students' attention)						
<i>SLIDE DESIGN</i>						
Layout (Uses appropriate variety to keep interest)						
Format (Attractive, clear slides)						
Background (Background varied at appropriate times)						
<i>PICTURES</i>						
Size (big, bold images)						
Images (pictures relevant to culture)						
Quality (High quality images)						
<i>TEXT</i>						
Text (Clear font, 20+ point font size)						
Visuals (Good pictures, not too much text)						
Errors (No spelling, grammar, or typographical errors)						
Variety (Not too much variety used)						
<i>MISCELLANEOUS</i>						
Transitions (key texts/problems dealt with well)						
Problems (different views taught, own ideas well supported by evidence)						
Solution (issues raised in Intro. solved)						
Review (main points reviewed &/or restated)						
Application (exhorts life change in specific areas)						
Depth (No key questions unanswered)						
Interest (Interesting pictures, etc.)						
Handout (Related to PowerPoint)						
<i>FORMAT</i>						

Comments: _____

Lecturer: _____ Date: ___ / ___ / ___