

Course Name: Technical Communication for Engineers

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Lecture 14- Power Point Presentations 1/3

Hello everyone and welcome to a series of discussion which we are going to have on PowerPoint presentations. So, this is first part and we will have continued discussion on second and third part on the same topic. You know that nowadays this has become one of the best ways to communicate. And you know most of the time we have to make presentations and when we are asked to do the presentations then one of the tool which we are having is PowerPoint presentation. or maybe some other software that is indifferent. So, in general terms, we are using this thing that PowerPoint presentations.

Because we know that when we do or try to convey things in visual form then it is more convincing. And as happened you know during COVID pandemic, we have learnt lot of new things how to present things using PowerPoint presentation and online things while people were you know compulsory in their houses during lockdown period. So, that became basically I would say rescue software or rescue technique by which we could continue our academic and other work even from home using PowerPoint presentation. So, we know that these are very effective way of communicating.

And also it is very quick to produce, relatively quick to produce because it is in digital form. We can easily create, we can easily update and we can create a very effective or inoculate visual interest into the presentation. That is very-2 important. So, again many things which we have discussed while discussing the maps will also come here. that whenever we are going to make presentations, our presentation should be very impactful presentation.

The point which we wanted to convey should go very nicely. And that kind of skill or expertise one has to develop because in today's world, you cannot avoid PowerPoint presentation, you have to do it. So, sometimes if we are not well prepared then the disasters can occur. If our performance goes very bad then obviously if I am asking for some funding or job or and that will go really very bad. And also if I am taking classes online then if my slides are not good, not visible and my overall presentation is also not good then that does not leave a good impression. So, the key to the success is to make

this slideshow or powerpoint presentation in a very good way using this visual aid rather than visual distraction. And this is another important thing. Too fancy, too much colored slides should not be there. So, what we are going to create a visual impact rather than visual distraction. That point should keep in mind. Another very important thing is that like I have given the example except in NPTEL courses because there are transcripts are available or PPTs are available. Otherwise, generally there is no complete written record of the audience. So, what you are talking, it is just communicating directly without any written record. And sometimes it may be useful, sometimes maybe it is distraction. So, suppose if I distribute my slides written to the audience before my presentation then audience might start reading the things or turning the pages rather than listening me.

So, that should also be avoided. Maybe just after the presentation, one can give these printouts or write-up to the audience but not before that. This is otherwise you are risking to lose the audience's attention or interest. Another important thing because the audience might feel that you have already given whatever you are going to talk in your presentation. So, you may even now leave also. So, that is not the purpose. Your purpose of presentation that everyone should listen with full of attention. full of interest. So, that is what is very important here. And another important thing is you do not just present to your audience but also you guide audience through your presentations.

So, basically what meaning here is that you are having complete control over audience and that is only possible if you are having good content and the content is nicely prepared through these PowerPoint presentations. Now you know that whoever is going to make a presentation becomes the center of attention. And everyone might be looking you, you know the board or power projector wherever it is being projected. And therefore, one has to be very careful. The audience which is in front, that is the purpose that they should listen you. whatever you are trying to say and whenever you want that they should see a figure or map or something on the board or on the screen then they should look there also. Now while preparing these power point presentations or slides, one should be very-2 careful. So, these are the points that slides and this time management. Slides should be neat as discussed in case of maps, should have all key elements. But the same time it should not be cluttered with information because then you might create a distraction for the audience and that is not good. So, keep these slides as simple as possible but again impactful. This is another very-2 important point while making a presentation or while preparing a presentation is the time management. Because generally what happens that you are going for some international conference, initially they might have a schedule that your presentation will have 20 minutes. But sometimes the whole schedule or whole program is running by half an hour, 1 hour late. Then the chairman of the session will come and he will say that okay gentlemen, you have to make presentation within 10 minutes.

And there one may have a big problem. of reducing your 20 minutes presentation to 10 minutes. But what I would suggest that one should always be prepared in a manner or should have a preparation of your powerpoint presentation that within even that 10 minutes, you should be able to deliver things nicely. Or the point which you wanted to convey the research, development or innovation which you wanted to convey should do it in 10 minutes also. Rather than the chairman is ringing bell or asking your time is over and so on, that is nothing but the distraction. So, do not allow anybody to distract you and therefore whatever the time is allocated, one should try to finish. A good suggestion I can give is from my own experience that if I am given 15 minutes, I should keep maximum 15 slides in my PPT. and even less so that I spend more time while displaying my slides and detailing or giving description of the things which are inside my slide rather than just going and not managing everything in time. So, if 15 minutes are given, just keep 15 slides. If 30 minutes are given, maybe 25 slides would be.

Because you must keep some time for discussion or question answers and that is very-2 important. So, if you have consumed the entire 20 minutes or 15 minutes or 10 minutes of your presentation, only for presentation. Then there will not be any questions and going for a conference or the chairman is not allowing for any questions. Basically, then you are not getting the feedback from the audience and that is also not good. The voice has to be very clear and use of eye contact. Do not look all the time towards one person or two persons. Keep looking the entire audience all the time. that will make a very impactful presentation and that also shows your confidence. Some people will keep looking only to one person that means they are having lack of confidence. So, that has to be developed that can also be done. Another important thing is that the positioning, where you would be located in the room, hall or whatever during the presentation. So, one of the best practice which I do when I am going for a big conference, big meeting and other thing, before it starts, I will go and see how the arrangements are and even try to run my PowerPoint presentation. before my time comes. So that I would know that how it would be projected, where I would be standing and other things. These are important points and they will give you more confidence if you are already have become conversant even 5 minutes or 10 minutes before. And the body language has to be very positive. Too much moving of hands or too much your movement on the stage or in the room is also not good. But without any movement is also very bad. That somebody just holding the podium and that shows lack of confidence. So, the body language Since it is a completely different kind of discussion, so we will not go in that detail.

But it has to be very positive and you should have full of enthusiasm because you are going to present your work, project or some innovations which you have done. So, these gestures, face, hand and other things should be in a very mild manner rather than too

much is not good. Now dress, it should be formal always better. And you know in conference and other things, it is always required one should be a nice dress, nice formal dress and be enthusiastic. All the time you have to be very enthusiastic.

Because if you are not enthusiastic, imagine what would be going in the minds of the audience. So, one has to be very-very. Now, the slide should not be cluttered with too much text and figures as I have already covered this point. Keep just few key points within a single slide. Fonts and their sizes also too much emphasis, too large, too small should not be there. Now, background of slide, this should also be very simple. And like here in these slides you are seeing here and they are very simple. The background here is just white because if background is having too many details then the points which I wanted to display through slides will disappear or will get de-emphasized. And therefore, the background should be very-2 simple. And because after all you are not going to earn on the background or layout of PPT, the content And therefore, the audience should not lose attention, it should not be destructive in that sense.

Another important point that will come little later but I thought that I can discuss here that whatever the content within a slide should not come in one go. Like you are seeing here that point by point are coming here. And that is the best way and use these simple animations. Like here just one simple animation that each point is coming from the bottom. Because if you bring the point from the top then it will be overcoming the other points and then it will go. So, it is not a good practice. And coming in a fancy swirled manner that is also distraction to the audience. So, our purpose is to keep the entire attention of the audience towards the point which I am trying to convey through my presentation. And therefore, one should not allow that thing should happen. And this point that utilize full space available in a slide which is same thing with the map which we have also discussed. Take care about the margins. Yes, this is very-2 important point here because sometimes these powerpoint projectors, they might be having some zoom factor also. So, if I do not leave the margins like here on the sides and if it is zoomed then the text might cut there. And the full slide will not be visible and if that power point projector is hanging above, nobody is going to change for you. So, it is while preparing the slides, one should leave the margins on all sides maybe 10 percent, 15 percent on all sides. So, that even if it has been zoomed or it will fit very well within the screen or board which is being used for display. So, this is very much required. Take care about the margins or boundary. Keep supporting slide after thanks slides. This is another very good practice. It will help to answer the questions of the audience which might come. And if you do not have the slide then you cannot quickly convey your answers to that question.

So, after the thanks slide, one can keep you more supporting slides and whenever it is required during discussion, you can just pull up. And also when time is less, your

presentation should be in a manner that if instead of 30 minutes, now 20 minutes have been given. So, I will move this thanks slide somewhere which is 20 or 25 after 25 slides so that I will be able to manage within time. Timing is important. We have already discussed this point that timing is important and always keep some time available for question and discussions. And you know in many conferences, meetings that time is reduced all the time. I have been experiencing this is true all the time. Even if you are seeking fund for say 50 lakhs or 1 crore from some organization, some agency, government agency. And they will say that okay, initially they will write that you would be given 20 minutes. Once the meeting starts then they will say no, you finish please in 10 minutes and 5 minutes we will have question and discussion.

Now, you should not become very shaky or nervous. What you should do? You should manage within that time and also allow time for question and discussion. So, one should learn how to adopt quickly to reduce time and still able to convey the point or the work or innovations findings very impactfully. This is very-2 important. Time management is becoming very-2 important because many times suddenly the time is reduced.

And of course, speak clearly, do not slur words together, pronounce all parts of the word especially the beginning and the end. And because there might be large audience and the people who are sitting in the back may not get your voice clearly. Therefore, it is very much required that things should be spelled or things should be spoken in a manner that they are heard everywhere within the back side of the room also. And you know at the large room is there, you should adopt to those conditions and you know may use little louder voice and a small room may practice for you know less louder voice. But even in a small room, one should not resort to mics. Within that whatever is there, we should be able to make an impactful presentation. So, if it is loudly, distinctly your voice will project much better. And of course, avoid monotonous presentation because that shows that lack of confidence. If somebody is just speaking in a monotonous voice or monotonous presentation is there, that is boring and you are completely losing the attention of your audience. That should be always avoid. And we should keep the attention of the audience all the time alive. And how one can gain this attention? There are two important points here. One is the pausing can be very effective. you know avoiding a monotonous presentation and how to avoid just you know maybe between sentences or words one can pause and can show that which are the points which are important and which are not. Overall when you are going to make a presentation always it has to be very interesting with full of enthusiasm and one should not lose the attention of the audience. And sometimes these gestures can also be used, good morning, afternoon or evening. It depends. If less time is given, do not spend too much time on these things, just start. Now, another thing is the speed of speaking. Many things we can learn about these presentations or speaking and keeping attention audience alive while reading.

If you watch the news readers on television or even on radio and they speak very nicely and not a very high speed, not a very slow speed. And that is the best way of speaking while making presentations. Maybe a number can be given here 80 to 100 words per minute but these are just tentative numbers, it is not fixed yet. But the speed of speaking should not be very fast and neither should be slow. Otherwise, one is going to lose or the audience may not understand if I speak very fast. And if I do not speak fast, I am suppose slowly then again it might create problem. So, one has to be very-2 careful about while making oral presentations because this is another indication of the nervousness of a person who speaks very slowly or sometimes very loudly also is not good. And avoid negative aspects or verbal gestures are there that you know many times people use a lot in between words or some you know expressions which are repeated several times. I can give you one example. I know one professor and after each and every sentence, he used to say you no say. And basically that you no say does not fit anywhere but he was saying all the time you no say, you no say like that. Another thing I have observed with many people that they keep saying after few sentences they will say right. And sometimes somebody says right you know in a normal way somebody speaks right word in a completely instructive way in a very loud and sharp manner say right. So, these are not good things because it is the audience is not all the time your cadets or subordinates but the audience may be of altogether a different kind. So, using these words or these expressions are not good. And that can only be avoided or one can learn how to avoid these things that if you listen your own recordings, maybe audio recording or video recording and there you would realize that what kind of these expressions you have been using. eye contact, look at the audience as much as possible and then not to fix on one individual or a few individuals but keep looking the entire audience. Also, and never you know read all the time the text which is being displayed on the screen. You are using those points to explain a point or whatever the work which you are doing.

So, reading all the time should be avoided. And like whenever we are seeing the presentations or going through the presentations of students, we always tell them that please do not read, please explain to us. So, if you read and you are reading the screen, you are keeping your back towards the audience which is again not good. Your face should be all the time towards the audience. And that point comes here is the positioning, position of yourself. Audience would like to see your person speaking rather than seeing your back. So, this should be avoided all the time. And another thing is that if there are some movements or other things, the movements on the stage or in classroom or wherever the hall should be not very fast. And fixing your position on one point is also not good. Dress is a non-verbal message. So, nicely or formal dress is always required for formal presentations. This is not the presentation you are making to your friend or your family members. You are doing a formal presentation. If I am going to seek funds from

some organization, I should wear the formal dress or dress appropriately can also be good. Now many times like Americans like very much casual dress but we do not prefer or we do not like I would say in official meetings we do not like casual dress that somebody is coming in Bermuda and slippers that kind of thing does not look nice. That shows your casualness towards the things or towards the expert committee front of whom you are going to make presentation. So, while making presentation you should be having full control, enjoy and one should be happy also full of enthusiasm and try to make presentation sometimes special or it is different from all other presentations. And that can only be done once you are having full confidence and control over your presentation and through your presentation of the audience also. Now jokes, telling jokes is a skill also that everyone tells the jokes can create sometimes problems. So, if you are very comfortable and you are having a stand-up comic qualities then one can try jokes. But if time permits and the audience if I am going for funding or some other thing that is not good place for jokes. But if I am going for presentations where time is enough And the audience can hear everything nicely and I am good on you know about this telling jokes then I can try. But you know it can be very disappointing to the audience or to yourself and may show your unprofessional attitude if you are unnecessarily bringing a joke.

So, the joke has to be very relevant if at all and one should be very comfortable, confident sharing a joke with the audience. So, finally we are coming to the main points of these effective PowerPoint presentation template. Sometimes you know it is asked to have a template like here in NPTEL. So, under this program this template is fixed. Some institutes are having their own templates but template design has to be very-2 simple.

Use the entire space of your slide which is available. So, if you are designing your template then you should not have that information or a template should not be cluttered with information. Just having a common information in the template otherwise it is not required. Sometimes you have to deviate from template because the figure is larger and if you try to fit within the template, you may create problem for yourself. Now, pattern background can reduce readability of the text as I have already discussed that the background of a slide should not be too complicated. It should be very simple or just have a simple colour or no colour like white which is in default that also will not be destructive.

But in every slide if the background is changing It is really destructive and sometimes the colour combination can be also destructive. So, this is not good otherwise you are going to lose attention of the audience. One can have a logo but the best thing is to just present the logo in the beginning of the first slide where you will have title and who is going to present your organisation and logo. These things can be presented there itself in very first slide and in remaining slide need not to put all the time logo. This point I have

already covered that maximum space available within each slide should be utilized and leave at least 10 to 15% margins on each slide. So, because if there is a zoom factor which has been added to your projector then you should not lose the content of your slide. Text again should not be too large, too small and neither like you know font type like Times New Roman where the thickness of the character changes within the text or body of that font or the you know character. So, that should be avoided. Colours can be used, too much colours can be again destructive. You can also use the bullets as you are seeing in these slides also. Simple bullets, not too fancy bullets. Again, this can be destructive. And each slide should not have a new kind of bullet either. So, the entire presentation should have the same bullet and try to have the same size and same font throughout your PowerPoint presentation. Otherwise, each slide if it is unique by design and everything, this is distractive for the audience. So, that thing should be there. Another important thing is the number of words on each screen and the best thing is to keep bring if it helps to be brought then points bring one by one using simple animations as we have just discussed. Now, this is the poor slide, bad example. Too much text and the audience cannot even if they want to read, cannot read. Basically, entire paragraphs have been pasted here. This is how initially when somebody starts learning PowerPoint presentation, these are the mistakes they do. that like students also, they will put too much text in one slide. You know the time is fixed, time might be fixed, number of slides might not be fixed. So, why to keep too much text or too much material in one slide? The same could have been kept in 4 slides or 5 slides. So, that the text is clearly visible, the font size should not be too small and the audience if they would like to read like they should be. Now, why it is poor slide? See the background.

unnecessary a very bright and colourful background has been added here. And this though it is related with motor car but sometimes irrelevant backgrounds are also kept in PowerPoint. And the reading of this text becomes a big hindrance because of this background. So, again these things should be avoided. And the background has to be very simple otherwise this is what going to happen to the audience. If your presentation is poor, you are not gaining attention of the audience and if hall is dark, lights have been switched off. Once the light would be on, you would see this kind of scenario. or see the face of this person. The gesture, body language is that he has not enjoyed your presentation neither enjoying. You have completely bored the audience including this fellow. So, such things should not be there. So, again these points just to wind up this thing that slide should be you know that is a good medium for making a visual presentation.

And therefore, the solely project and outline of your presentation and if poor slides are made, you are losing the tension and maybe losing the project either or you may not create a good impression about the things like that. So, the text has to be very nicely

presented and good for projections. What are the fonts which I am just to help you that like Arial fonts 28 is good, Calibri is good, Times Roman is not good. Courier again might not be good, does not look very impactful. tahoma, bardhana all these points are good and the font size should not be I would say should not be less than 24 anyway in the powerpoint presentation. Animation should be very simple, not very complicated means the text things which are coming and avoid the use of flashy transitions from one slide to another. Whenever button is pressed or arrow is pressed for the next slide, it should come very simple way rather than in a very fancy or a flying kind of thing. or rolling and you know twisting, whirling. Those things are completely distracting to the audience. And overuse of special effects for example, animations, sounds may make your presentation sugary.

If at all you have to share some audio clips or video clips, make sure Before your presentation starts then whenever you would start at least this would run and these audio or video should run properly one. And once they are started then the volume or you know the voice which is being or narration which is going through that audio or video should reach to the entire audience. So, this requires a complete preparation there. Good line spacing can be used to facilitate. Using some aids like this one power or you know pointer power point presenters can be used. They are very convenient. You can also use their laser points. And so, you can bring the attention or guide the attention of the audience through these things. There is no problem. They are very simple devices, very useful devices and one should always try to use them as far as possible.

Because whenever you want to go to previous screen or in backward mode you can go, in the forward mode you can go and laser point and other things can be. So, these are the power point presenters are available in market and I would suggest that those who are doing power point presentation on regular basis should carry their own with the extra battery and backup and other things. So, that you know nothing should go bad during your presentation. Remember you are losing your time and one should not lose the time neither the attention of the audience. So, that should be very-2 important. The point should be kept all the time in important. While changing the slide there should not be any sound effect that this transition from one slide to another should be very simple and these gimmicks if you keep very fancy things will not go the main thing is your content. Not these fancy things. These fade in, fade out, wipes, blind, dissolves, checkerboards, covers. They are all distracting techniques and they are not good.

The facilities are there but that does not mean that we should all the time use. And always use good quality figures, maps if they are being used within your PowerPoint presentation. And the resolution and other things should be also kept in mind that the poor quality figures or maps when they are projected, the quality will further reduce and

may not be visible to the audience. So, that is another very bad thing. And another important thing about the figures and images that Whatever is being done or whatever being projected either in oral form or print form should have all key elements as well as when it is presented or projected, the quality should not deteriorate.

So, that is very-2 important. Visual impact should be very high in all cases. So, typically these images as I have also mentioned earlier that too small or too detailed. A balance has to be there. That is the important point here. Another important point about the font size depending on where you are going to present what kind of things.

Large audience do not use 12-point font size. Use a larger one 24-28 like that. But if it is a small audience, people are sitting just around your screen then not a big issue. So, here the size really does matters. Faith in technology, this is another important thing. Be prepared for any kind of malfunctioning in compatible interfaces.

I have seen several times in several meetings, presentations, people will bring their own laptop. Say for example, they will bring this Macintosh or Apple and then they will try to connect with the projector and it does not work very well. And what is happening? You are losing the time of the audience or experts. That should not happen. So, always carry a backup pen drive also. So, immediately you can put that one. And if you really want to use your laptop then before your presentation starts you must check everything whatever the setup is available there. So, that this incompatibility issue or malfunctioning issue should not come. If you are using power point presenter like this then you should also carry a backup batteries also. So, whenever it goes you do not have to look here and there just change by yourself and go ahead. So, keeping in a CD-ROM it is better to keep in a pen drive and it works quite well in almost or flash memory card which works very well in most of the cases. But if it is possible to carry your PowerPoint presentation in pen drive that is the best thing. Another problem which I have seen with many students and many times with important meetings also, the person is not carrying neither his laptop nor pen drive. Then they will try to connect with net. Now the connectivity may not be good at that moment or in that venue and then they are unable to download their power. So, what is the problem if I have to carry in a pen drive? No problem. Now this point which I have been already telling many times that before your presentation, become familiar yourself with the hall, the equipments, everything. You should spend some time before that and you should do it. Because otherwise you are losing your time, your impression and also professionalism. So, if these things can be avoided then nice impactful presentation can be done. So, with this I thank you all. Namaskar!