

FIGURE 2

outside, and it is made of a dull grey concrete. Inside the building, however, the dome produces an amazing effect: it opens up a huge space within the building, unobstructed by interior supports. The sides of the dome are coffered, and those recessed rectangles both lessen the weight of the dome and add to its visual beauty. Most dramatically, the top of the dome is open to the sky, which allows sun or rain to pour into the building. This opening is called the oculus, meaning "eye" (to or of Heaven).

The Taj Mahal, which was built by a Muslim emperor of India as a tomb for his wife, is the complete opposite of the Parthenon—dazzling on the outside and plain on the inside. The large central dome is set up high on the base so that it can be seen from far away. It is made of white marble, which reflects light beautifully. The dome is surrounded by other structures that frame it and draw attention to its exterior—a long reflecting pond and four minarets. Arches and smaller domes on the outside of the building repeat the large dome's shape. Because the Taj Mahal's dome is tall and narrow, however, it does not produce the kind of vast interior space of the shorter, squatter Parthenon dome. Indeed, the inside of the Taj Mahal is not meant to be visited. Unlike the Parthenon, the dome of the Taj Mahal is intended to be admired from the outside.

Key points supported by details.

Uses specialized terms from course.

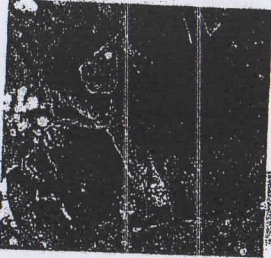
Sets up comparison.

Key point supported by details.

Overall comparison as brief conclusion.

10 Oral Presentations

Preparing an oral presentation, like preparing a paper, is a process. You will need to consider your audience and purpose as you choose the focus and level of your topic. You will need to gather information, decide on the main idea of your presentation, think through the organization, and choose visuals that support your points.



10a Planning and shaping your presentation

1. Considering the interests, background knowledge, and attitudes of your audience

If your audience is composed of your classmates, you will have the advantage of knowing how much background knowledge they have and what their intellectual interests are. Do you want to intensify your audience's commitment to what they already think, provide new and clarifying information, provoke more analysis and understanding of the issue, or change what the audience believes about something? If you are addressing an unfamiliar audience, ask the people who invited you to speak to fill you in on the audience's interests and expectations. It is also possible to make adjustments to your speech once you get in front of the actual audience, making your language more or less technical, for example, or offering additional examples to illustrate points.

2. Working within the time allotted to your presentation

Gauge how many words you speak per minute by reading a passage aloud at a conversational pace (about 120–150 words per minute is ideal). Be sure to time your presentation when you practice it.

10b Drafting your presentation

1. Making your opening interesting

A strong opening both sets the speaker at ease and gains the audience's confidence and attention. Try out several approaches to your introduction to see which gets the best reactions during rehearsal. Stories often make for an interesting beginning. Brief quotations, striking statistics, and surprising statements are also attention getters. Craft an introduction that lets your listeners know what they have to gain from your presentation—for example, new information or new perspectives on a subject of common interest.

10b oral

Writing > Propose/Essay

For more on crafting introductions, go to www.bhh.com/

2. Making the focus and organization of your presentation explicit

Select two or three ideas that you most want your audience to hear—and remember. Make these ideas the focus of your presentation, and let your audience know what to expect by previewing the content of your presentation—"I intend to make three points about fraternities on campus"—and then listing the three points.

The phrase "to make three points" signals a topical organization. Other common organizational patterns include chronological (*at first . . . later . . . in the end*), causal (*because of that . . . then this follows*), and problem-solution (*given the situation . . . then this set of proposals*). A question-answer format also works well, either as an overall strategy or as part of another organizational pattern.

3. Being direct

What your audience hears and remembers has as much to do with how you communicate your message as it does with what you say. Use a direct, simple style:

- Choose basic sentence structures.
- Repeat key terms.
- Pay attention to the rhythm of your speech.
- Don't be afraid to use the pronouns *I*, *you*, and *we*.

Notice how applying these principles transforms the following written sentence into a group of sentences appropriate for oral presentation:

WRITTEN

Although the claim that writing increases student learning has yet to be substantiated by either an ample body or an exemplary piece of empirical research, advocates of writing across the curriculum persist in pressing the claim.

ORAL

The more students write, the more they learn. So say advocates of writing across the curriculum. But what evidence do we have that writing improves learning? Do we have lots of empirical research or even one really good study? The answer is "Not yet."

4. Using visual aids

Slides, posters, objects, video clips, and music help make your focus explicit.

Presentation software such as PowerPoint can help you stay focused while you are speaking. The twelve PowerPoint slides in Figure 10.1 on pages 122–23 offer advice on how to design effective slides for a presentation. (*For more on using presentation software to incorporate multimedia elements into a presentation, see Chapter 11, pp. 127–29.*)

www.mhhe.com/bmhh

For an interactive tutorial on using PowerPoint, go to

Writing > PowerPoint Tutorial

5. Concluding memorably

Try to make your ending truly memorable: return to that surprising opener, play with the words of your opening quotation, look at the initial image from another angle, or reflect on the story you have told. Make sure your listeners are aware that you are about to end your presentation, using such signal phrases as "in conclusion" or "let me end by saying," if necessary. Keep your conclusion short to hold the audience's attention.

10c Preparing for your presentation

1. Deciding whether to use notes or a written script

To be an effective speaker, you need to make eye contact with your listeners to monitor their responses and adjust your message accordingly. For most occasions, it is inappropriate to write out everything you want to say and then read it word for word. Write out only those parts of your presentation where precise wording counts, such as quotations.

Sometimes, however, the setting for your presentation may be so formal or the audience may be so large that a script feels necessary. In such instances, do the following:

- Triple-space the typescript of your text.
- Avoid carrying sentences over from one page to another.
- Mark your manuscript for pauses, emphasis, and the pronunciation of proper names.

2. Rehearsing, revising, and polishing

Whether you are using an outline or a script, practice your presentation aloud. Adjust transitions that don't quite work, points that need further development, and sections that go on too long. After you have settled on the content of your speech and can project it comfortably, focus on polishing the style of your delivery. Check that your posture is straight but relaxed, that your voice is loud and clear, and that you are making eye contact around the room. Time your final rehearsals, adding and cutting material as necessary.

3. Accepting nervousness as normal

The adrenaline surge you feel before a presentation can actually invest your talk with positive energy. Other people cannot always tell that you are nervous. Practice and revise your presentation until it flows smoothly, and make sure that you have a strong opener to get you through the first, most difficult moments of the speech.

10c
oral

www.mhhe.com/bmhh

For more information on conclusions, go to

Writing > Paragraph/Essay Development > Conclusions

5 LISTENING

- a Have you ever had to make a speech or give a talk or presentation in front of a lot of people? When? Where? How did you feel? Was it a success?
- b Read part of an article about presentation disasters. Which tip from *Ten top tips* below should the speaker have remembered?

PRESENTATION DISASTERS!

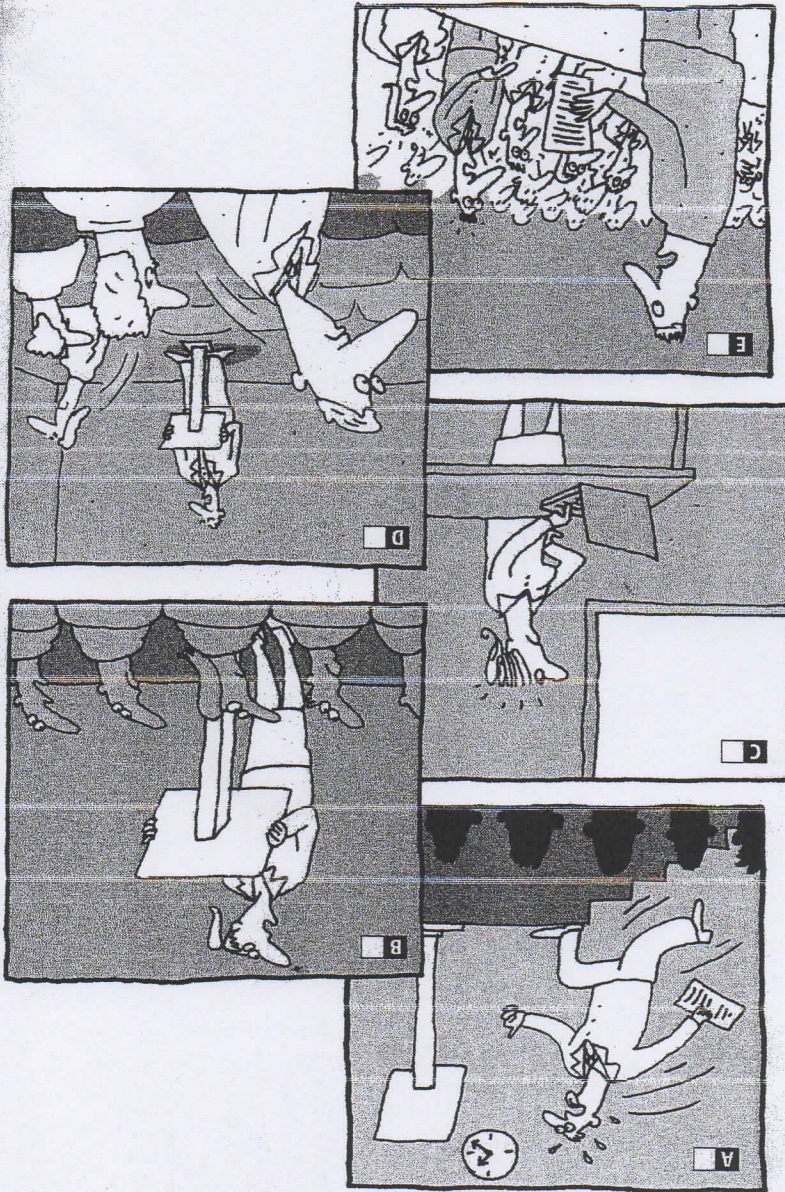
However bad you think your presentation has been, take some comfort from the fact that at least it probably wasn't as bad as these true stories...

A FEW YEARS AGO I had to give a presentation to the Belgian management team of an international company. Not wishing to be the typical 'Brit' presenting in English, I had carefully prepared my presentation in French. I intended it as a surprise so I didn't say anything beforehand. After speaking in French for 45 minutes I was halfway through my presentation and we had a break for coffee. At this point the manager of the company came up to me asked me if I would change to speaking in English. 'Is my French that bad?' I said. 'No,' he replied, 'it's just that we are all from the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium.'

Ten top tips for speaking in public

- 1 Don't make your presentation too long.
- 2 Don't have more than four or five main points.
- 3 Even if something distracting happens try not to lose your concentration.
- 4 Be careful about telling jokes - they may not be appropriate.
- 5 Always be punctual: start on time and try to finish on time.
- 6 Get to know as much as possible about your audience beforehand.
- 7 Try not to repeat yourself too much.
- 8 Be careful not to speak too fast.
- 9 Practise your presentation beforehand.
- 10 Make sure the equipment you need is working properly before you start.

- c You're going to hear five other people talking about a disastrous presentation. Before you listen, look at pictures A-E. What do you think the problem was?



- d 6.5 Listen and number the pictures in the correct order. Did you guess correctly?
- e Listen again and write 1-5 in the boxes. Which speaker...?
 - A couldn't understand why nobody found his / her talk amusing
 - B felt very relaxed before his / her presentation
 - C did the last part of his / her talk very quickly
 - D made the problem he / she had worse
 - E didn't find out he / she had a problem until the end of the talk
- f Talk to a partner.
 - 1 Would any of the 'Ten top tips' have helped some of the speakers?
 - 2 Which speaker do you think was the most embarrassed?
 - 3 Have you ever been to a talk or presentation where something went badly wrong?

PowerPoint™


The rules of design

The Six Rules of Design
are a matter of using ...

- good templates
- high-contrast colors
- sans serif fonts
- text efficiently
- images wisely
- visual balance to arrange slide elements

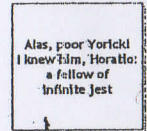
1 Choose the right template.

- You can also make your own template.
 - Begin with a blank presentation.
 - Place objects, shapes, etc. on slide master.
 - Change fonts, colors, other elements as needed.

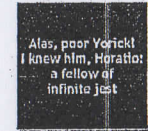


2 Use high-contrast colors.

- Dark text on a light field

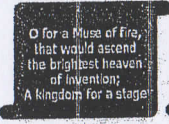


- Light text on a dark field

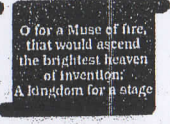


3 Use sans serif fonts.

- Sans serif: Tahoma, 24-pt



- Serif: Bookman, 24-pt



4 a Use keywords for bullets.

The Acme Grocery Pledge

- We offer the freshest produce.
- Your satisfaction is guaranteed.
- We will deliver anywhere, anytime.


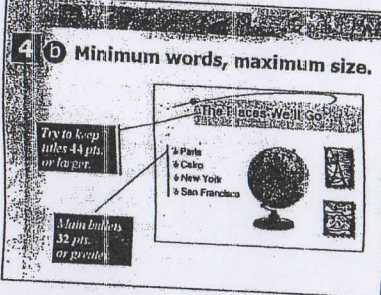
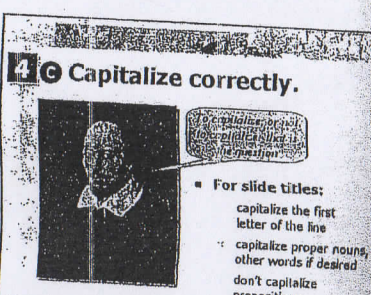


FIGURE 10.1 Guidelines for preparing effective PowerPoint slides.

4 b Minimum words, maximum size.



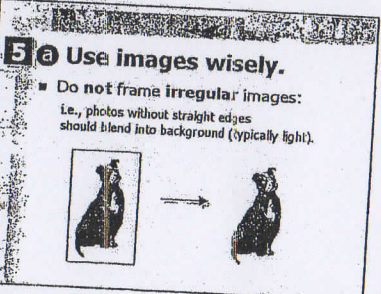
4 c Capitalize correctly.



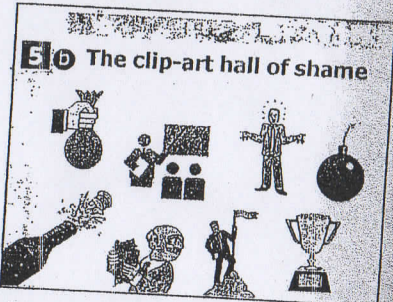
- For slide titles:
 - capitalize the first letter of the line
 - capitalize proper nouns, other words if desired
 - don't capitalize prepositions

5 a Use images wisely.

- Do not frame irregular images:
 - I.e., photos without straight edges should blend into background (typically light).

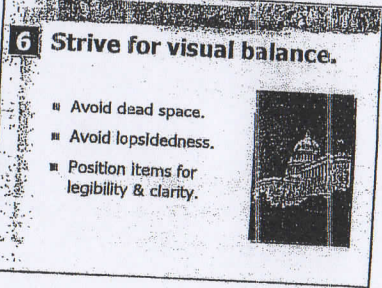


5 b The clip-art hall of shame



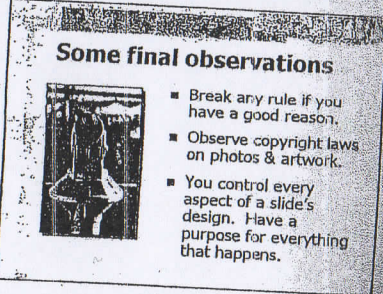
6 Strive for visual balance.

- Avoid dead space.
- Avoid lopsidedness.
- Position items for legibility & clarity.



Some final observations

- Break any rule if you have a good reason.
- Observe copyright laws on photos & artwork.
- You control every aspect of a slide's design. Have a purpose for everything that happens.



hear	
lead to	do can go
mind	
take time	
worth	
point (in)	

initive without	
	do come go
her	

ing or infinitive	
change in me	
	doing to do

HOW TO MAKE A PRESENTATION

How do I start?

- You could introduce your talk or presentation formally.
Today I'm going to talk about ...
In this presentation, I'd like to tell you a little bit about ...
- Alternatively, you could grab your audience's attention by starting with a question or a challenging statement. Use pictures or objects.
So, how much do you know about _____ ?
Have you ever asked yourself why ... ?
What I'm going to tell you about today will change the way you think about ...
Pass around the picture/object. What do you think it is?

How do I organize the presentation?

- Make it short. Write down the points you want to make, edit them down to, say, four, then decide which order you are going to make them in.
- Introduce each point with an expression from the list below.
The first/key thing to say about _____ is ...
The main point to make about _____ is ...
What you really need to know about _____ is ...
Now let's look at ...
Let's turn to/move on to ...
Another interesting thing to say about _____ is ...
Finally, I'd like to say a few words about ...

What do I say?

- After introducing the point, add information briefly in two, three, or, at the most, four sentences. Use markers like the ones below to construct long, well-balanced sentences.
Anyway, ... ; Naturally, ... ; Of course, ...
Similarly, ... ; Surprisingly, ... ; Remarkably, ...
Despite, ... ; However, ... ; Although, ... ; Whereas ...
Consequently, ... ; In addition, ... ; Moreover, ... ; Furthermore, ...
Incidentally, ... ; By the way, ... ; It's worth noting that ...

How do I finish?

- Conclude the presentation by briefly summarizing what you have said, or the points you have made. You could end by asking for comments or questions.
In conclusion, ... ; To sum up, ...
So, remember that _____ is all about _____ , _____ , and _____ .
So, there are three things to remember about _____ ...
Does anybody have any questions?