

How to Make an Effective Research Presentation

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Presentation software programs have advanced to the point where you no longer need to be an experienced designer [to put together](#) a compelling piece of collateral that conveys your findings about academic research in exactly the right way. With the right materials, the right presentation software, and a little bit of time, you can visualize any data that you have in the form of a terrific presentation that sells your research better than numbers alone ever could. However, this does not mean that you shouldn't keep in mind a few things. As both a marketing tool and a means to convey information, presentations are helpful because they are malleable—the format can essentially be anything you need it to be at any given time. The other side of this, however, is that there are certain traps that are all too easy for even experts to fall into that will harm your ultimate message, not help it. If you [wish to learn](#) how to make a professional research presentation as an author, or a researcher, then you should avoid some mistakes at all costs.

Mistakes to Avoid

As a researcher or a student, your number one goal isn't just to provide insight into a topic—it's to do so in a compelling way. It is important to communicate ideas in a way that is both easy to understand for people who haven't completed the work you have

and to do so in a compelling and engaging way. In many ways, it's a lot like telling a story—albeit one that is heavily research-oriented. Every story has a beginning, middle, and end and you need to ensure that the content in the presentation has a proper narrative flow.

In many ways, your presentation will operate exactly along the same lines. To that end, always remember to make sure that the information is presented not only in the right manner but also in the right order to complement intent and maximize impact. If you have three subtopics within a presentation, all of which are related but are still different ideas, don't mix and match the content. Don't jump from one topic to the other and back again—you're only going to lose focus and eventually, the attention of your reader.

If you start preparing your presentation and realize that you're actually kind of covering two distinct and different topics, don't be afraid to break one presentation into two. You'll be able to devote more attention to promoting each idea and you'll walk away with two great pieces of research presentations instead of one "okay" one.

Length of Your Presentation

Another element of your presentation that you need to pay extremely close attention to is the length. This goes back to another one of the old rules of storytelling: "Whatever you do, don't overstay your welcome." While it is true that presentations are naturally designed to be a longer form than something like an Infographic, it's important to recognize when you're asking too much of your reader/viewer. A presentation isn't just a visualized form of something like a white paper. It's a unique medium all unto itself.

When you start preparing your presentation for the first time, feel free to include as many slides or as much information as you want. Also, don't forget that there are three versions of your presentation that will exist—the initial outline, the "first draft" of the presentation and the final edited version that you release. Make an effort to only include information that A) is needed to understand your research topic, and B) is necessary to contextualize your findings or the points you're trying to make. Go through your presentation from start to finish and really try to experience it with fresh eyes—the same way your audience will.

Does it feel like the end of your presentation is getting a little sluggish? You feel that it should be over but there are ten slides to go still. Be precise in your [editing process](#)—rest assured that you'll thank yourself when the end result is much more powerful than it would be if it had remained bloated.

The Power of Presentations

In many ways, presentations provide a unified experience where you can have text, images, video, and more. Remember that human beings are visual learners—[visuals are processed](#) up to 60,000 times faster than text and people have a much easier time understanding complex information when it is paired with relevant images as opposed to just text. As an author, researcher, or student, your job is to take complicated ideas and

present them in a way that is appealing to a larger audience. Presentations are one of the most essential ways for you to do exactly that. The central message you are trying to convey—the thesis, if you will—needs to be strong enough to justify the creation of a presentation in the first place.

It needs to be a big enough topic to warrant a lengthy experience and a compelling enough story that demands to be told in this particular format above all others. If you start from that simple foundation and build outward, you'll be left with the best type of marketing tool—one that promotes your research for you and one that people can't wait to share with their friends and colleagues.

About the Author

Payman Taei is the founder of [Visme](#), an easy-to-use online tool to create engaging presentations, infographics, and other forms of visual content. He is also the founder of [HindSite Interactive](#), an award-winning Maryland based digital agency specializing in website design, user experience, and web app development.

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