

Using Graphics in an IT classroom or DE classroom

Below are some general guidelines for visual presentations. These guidelines apply whether you are using hand written graphics or computer -generated graphics.

SCREEN ASPECT RATIO:

Pay attention to the screen's aspect ratio. A TV monitor has a different shape than 8.5 x 11 paper or overhead transparencies, so make sure printed visuals fit within a 3 x 4 ratio, to do this print in landscape portrait format. It is recommended that you test your presentation on the monitor to ensure all information is viewable.

TEXT AND FONTS:

Use large, bold text for instructional overheads. Large bold letters are easier to read than small, thin letters whether hand written or computer generated. Above all, text must be legible on the TV monitor.

Use paper hardcopy, not plastic transparencies (flat blue color paper works well)

Viewers will also appreciate simple fonts and concise, bulleted information. Use key words and phrases only.

Use a minimum of a 26-point font, however a 32-36 point font is usually easier to read. Fonts should be chosen for readability. Limit the number of different fonts to two per visual.

Avoid using all upper case letters. Typically you should use upper case and lower case letters. Words are often recognized by their shape as much by their letters. By presenting data in all upper case, the recognition factor is deteriorated.

Keep the text and fonts consistent in a presentation. Use the same background and colors through the lesson. Text should typically be "left aligned".

Use no more than eight lines per page and no more than 30 characters per line.

Consider using word pictures to depict ideas instead of words. A word picture is a graphical representation of a concept or information.

Highlight important data using bold or color. Use boxes or lines to separate ideas. Avoid underlining as it makes text difficult to read.

Providing students with a handout of your PowerPoint presentation with blank spaces for the students to write notes.

Allow time for viewing graphics. Display text materials (i.e., chart or list) long enough for a slower reader to read. Non-text material often requires less time (3-4 seconds).

COLOR:

Use colors in the middle of the color spectrum. Use colors that provide a contrast. A dark background and light letters works well. For example: Blue background with yellow letters. Red and green are colors to avoid.

Check your color choice on the monitor. Some colors will look different on the monitors and no two monitors will show exactly the same color.