TIPS FOR CREATING AND PRESENTING CLEAR AND CONCISE PRESENTATIONS

The following tips will assist you in creating clear and concise presentations that will help to keep the audience's attention.

Tips for Creating a Presentation

- Know as much as possible about the audience before you start creating the presentation.
- Each slide should convey only one main idea.
- The main idea should be able to be interpreted at a glance.
- Tailor the tone, graphics, and words to meet the needs of the audience.
- Use an overall theme that can be reinforced throughout the presentation. You should not use one theme on some of the slides and another one on the other slides.
  - Make slide backgrounds subtle and keep them consistent.
  - Choose an appealing, consistent template or theme that is not too eye-catching.
  - You don't want the background or design to detract from your message.
- Every presentation should have a title slide that relates to the theme of the presentation.
- Maintain a consistent color scheme throughout the presentation.
  - You should not use one color scheme on some of the slides and another one on the other slides.
  - The same color should be used for the font, graphics, charts, and other elements throughout the presentation.
- Avoid using small text. Text should be no smaller than 24 points; some publications say 32 points.
- Six-by-Six Rule or Eight-by-Eight Rule
  - Six-by-Six: Never have more than six bulleted items on a single slide and no more than six words per bullet.
  - Eight-by-Eight: Never have more than eight bulleted items on a single slide and no more than eight words per bullet.
- Don't mix complete and partial sentences on any one slide.
  - Complete sentences should be avoided as much as possible. Remember, the six-by-six rule or eight-by-eight rule.
  - Bullet points with partial sentences are the best option.
- Make sure that your punctuation and capitalization are consistent throughout the whole presentation.
- Use consistent wording in bulleted text.
- Check the spelling and grammar.
  - Don't rely totally on the spell checker or grammar checker.
  - They are not always accurate.
  - Make sure you proof carefully. Spelling or grammar errors can be distracting to your audience.
- Use images that relate to the content of the presentation; don't use images that will distract from the presentation.
- Keep graphs simple.
  - The most effective graphs are pie charts and column charts with three or four columns or slices.
  - Make labels for charts and graphs understandable.
  - Use only enough text to make label elements in a chart or graph comprehensible.

- ☩ Provide some form of handout so the audience can keep track of the presentation. Several different handouts are provided, such as 2 slides per page, 3 slides per page, 4 slides per page, 6 slides per page, 9 slides per page, outline, and notes page.
- ☩ The final slide should provide a recommendation, conclusion, or a summary of the presentation.

Delivering Effective Presentations

- ☩ Show up early and verify that your equipment works properly.
- ☩ Do not assume that your presentation will work fine on another computer.
  - ✦ Disk failures, software version mismatches, lack of disk space, low memory, and many other factors can ruin a presentation.
  - ✦ If the computer that you plan to give your presentation on does not belong to you, make sure that it has adequate disk space so that you do not have to present from a memory stick.
  - ✦ Turn off screen savers, and make sure that you have the appropriate files and versions of software that you need, including Microsoft Office PowerPoint.
- ☩ Verify that the projector's resolution is the same as the computer on which you created your presentation.
  - ✦ If the resolutions do not match, your slides may be cropped, or other display problems can occur.
- ☩ Check all colors on a projection screen before giving the actual presentation.
  - ✦ The colors may project differently than what appears on your monitor.
- ☩ Avoid moving the pointer unconsciously.
  - ✦ When you are not using the pointer, remove your hand from the mouse.
  - ✦ This helps to stop you from moving the pointer unconsciously, which can be distracting.
- ☩ Do not read the presentation.
  - ✦ Practice the presentation so that you can speak from bullet points.
  - ✦ The text should be a cue for the presenter rather than the full message for the audience.
- ☩ Stay on time.
  - ✦ If you plan a certain amount of time for your presentation, do not go over.
  - ✦ If there is no time limit, take less time rather than more to ensure that people stay engaged.