1. Use the slide master feature to create a consistent and simple design template. It is fine to vary the content presentation (i.e. bulleted list, 2-column text, text and image), but be relatively consistent with other elements such as font, colors, and background.

2. Simplify and limit the number of words on each screen. Use key phrases and include only essential information.

3. Limit punctuation and avoid putting words in all capital letters. Empty space on the slide will enhance readability.

4. Use contrasting colors for text and background. Dark text on a light background is best. Patterned backgrounds can reduce readability of text.

5. Avoid the use of flashy transitions such as text fly-ins. These features may seem impressive at first, but are distracting and get old quickly.

6. Overuse of special effects such as animation and sounds may make your presentation "cutesy" and could negatively impact your credibility.

7. Use good quality images that reinforce and complement your message. Ensure that your images maintain their impact and resolution when projected on a larger screen.

8. If you use builds, have content appear on the screen in a consistent, simple manner; from the top or left is best. Only "build" screens when necessary to make your point because they can slow your presentation.

9. Limit the number of slides. Presenters who constantly "flip" to the next slide are likely to lose their audience. A good rule of thumb is one slide per minute.

10. Learn to navigate your presentation in a non-linear fashion. PowerPoint allows the presenter to jump ahead or back without having to page through all the interim slides.

11. Know how to and practice moving forward AND backward within your presentation. Audiences often ask to see the previous screen again.

12. If possible, view your slides on the screen you'll be using for your presentation. Make sure they are readable from the back row seats. Text and graphics should be large enough to read, but not so large as to appear "loud."

13. Have a Plan B in the event of technical difficulties. Remember that transparencies and handouts will not show animation or other special effects.

14. Practice with someone who has never seen your presentation. Ask them for honest feedback about colors, content, and any effects or graphics you've included.
15. Do not read from your slides. The content of your slides is for the audience, not for the presenter.

16. Do not speak to your slides. Many presenters face the direction of their presentation rather than their audience.

17. Do not apologize for anything in your presentation. If you believe something will be hard to read or understand, don't use it.

18. When possible, run your presentation from the hard disk rather than a floppy disk. Running from a floppy disk may slow your presentation.

**Opening:**

- Jump right in and get to the point.
- Give your rehearsed opening statement; don’t improvise at the last moment.
- Use the opening to catch the interest and attention of the audience.
- Briefly state the problem or topic you will be discussing.
- Briefly summarize your main theme for an idea or solution.

**Speaking:**

- Talk at a natural, moderate rate of speech
- Project your voice.
- Speak clearly and distinctly.
- Repeat critical information.
- Pause briefly to give your audience time to digest the information on each new slide.
- Don’t read the slides aloud. Your audience can read them far faster than you can talk.

**Body Language:**

- Keep your eyes on the audience
- Use natural gestures.
- Don’t turn your back to the audience.
- Don’t hide behind the lectern.
- Avoid looking at your notes. Only use them as reference points to keep you on track.
- Talk, don’t read.

**Questions** (this section will not apply to your presentations):

- Always leave time for a few questions at the end of the talk.
- If you allow questions during the talk, the presentation time will be about 25% more than the practice time.
- You can jump directly to a slide by typing its number or by right-clicking during the presentation and choosing from the slide titles.
- Relax. If you’ve done the research you can easily answer most questions.
• Some questions are too specific or personal. Politely refuse to answer.
• If you can’t answer a question, say so. Don’t apologize. “I don’t have that information. I’ll try to find out for you.”