Visual Design for Presentations

George Michaels
Instructional Development
• We've drifted into this presentation mode without realizing the cost to the content and the audience in the process.

--Edward Tufte
Goals

• Tips and General Principles of Visual Design
• Simple
• Big
• Clear
• Consistent
Simple
Simple (Text)

- **Too many colors**
- **Too Many Fonts and Styles**
- The 6 x 7 rule
  - No more than 6 lines per slide
  - No more than 7 words per line
• Instructional Technology:
A complex integrated process involving
people, procedures, ideas, devices, and
organization, for analyzing problems and
devising, implementing, evaluating, and
managing solutions to those problems in
situations in which learning is purposive
and controlled
(HMRS 5th ed.)
Instructional Technology: A process involving people, procedures & tools for solutions to problems in learning (HMRS 5th ed.)
Simple (Graphs)

Too detailed!

Falling Leaves

- Christchurch
- Dunedin
- Wellington

January  February  March  April  May  June  July  August  September  October  November  December
Simple Graphs

Much Simpler

Falling Leaves

- Christchurch
- Dunedin
- Wellington

![Graph showing falling leaves in Christchurch, Dunedin, and Wellington over months from January to November.](image)
Simple (Pictures)

- Art work may distract your audience
- Artistry does not substitute for content
Simple

• Too Many and Too Fancy Transitions
  Distracting or Annoying
Big
Make It Big

- This is Arial 12
- This is Arial 18
- This is Arial 24
- This is Arial 32
- This is Arial 36
- This is Arial 44
Make It Big

• Check your work from about 6 feet away
Make It Clear
(Capitalisation)

• ALL CAPITAL LETTERS ARE DIFFICULT TO READ

• Upper and lower case letters are easier
Make It Clear (Fonts)

Sanserif $Z$

clear

Serif $Z$

busy
Make It Clear (Fonts)

• Serif fonts are difficult to read on screen
• Sanserif fonts are clearer
• *Italics are difficult to read on screen*
• Normal or **bold** fonts are clearer
• Underlines may signify hyperlinks
• Instead, use **colors** to emphasize
Make It Clear (Colors)

- Use contrasting colors
- Light on dark vs dark on light
- Use complementary colors
Make It Clear  
(Contrast)

- Use contrasting colors
- Light on dark vs dark on light
- Use complementary colors

This is dark on light
Make It Clear
(Complement)

- Use contrasting colors
- Light on dark vs dark on light
- Use complementary colors

These colors do not complement
Make It Clear (Complement)

• Use contrasting colors
• Light on dark vs dark on light
• Use complementary colors

These colors complement
Be Consistent
Be Consistent

- Use Themes
- Use Masters
Be Consistent

• Differences Imply Importance
• Unnecessary Differences Distract
Questions