

Taking Your Virtual Presentation from Ordinary to Extraordinary



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Congratulations on your opportunity to present virtually! As a presenter, you have the responsibility of ensuring that the time you are asking your audience to spend with you is valuable. The following 10-step process was put together to walk you through a virtual presentation creation process that will absolutely take your presentation from ordinary to extraordinary and create a valuable learning experience for your audience.

This 10-step process will take some focused time to complete... but as the saying goes, “Rome wasn’t built in a day.” Neither were any extraordinary presentations.

TIME TO COMPLETE:

- We recommend starting with **45 minutes to an hour of focused time** to go through the 10 steps in this document, then come back another time to any areas you feel need more attention.

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STEP #1: IDENTIFY PURPOSE/MAIN MESSAGE

The purpose of your presentation influences the content you will be sharing, your presentation style, and also affects the amount of audience interaction. By nailing down your purpose, you are building a strong foundation for your presentation.

1. Was the topic of your presentation given to you or did you choose it?
 - a. Do you need to tap into additional resources to gather more information on your topic if it was given to you? If so, who or what are possible resources?

2. Why are you giving this talk? (to inform, to analyze, to persuade, or to inspire)

3. What's in it for your audience to sit through your presentation?

4. What is the main message of your presentation that you want your audience to walk away knowing or doing differently as a result of your presentation?



STEP #3: LIST PRESENTATION CONTENT

EXPERT TIP: Your presentation should have a clear introduction, middle, and end while serving the purpose of proving the talk's main idea and its importance. Also, make sure your presentation is relevant to your audience. Is it relatable? As the presenter, always keep the audience, and what they might want or need to know, in mind while crafting your presentation.

Now that you have determined the purpose/main message of your presentation and have evaluated your audience, it's time to brainstorm all the content you would like to support the main message of your presentation. Use an outline, bullet points, or any other method that is most comfortable for you.



STEP #4: REFINE CONTENT

Did you know that no one can remember more than three main points in a presentation? Life is too busy and too confusing to really focus on much more. Plus, throw in the fact that your audience will be participating virtually, which comes with its own myriad of distractions.

An extraordinary presentation focuses on three points in the middle part of the presentation. These three points need to support the presentation main message you defined in step #1. (Three main points are based on a 20-minute presentation. Adjust according to the length of your presentation and type of presentation.)

EXPERT TIP: It is important to have a structure for your presentation. Each main point is a unit of thought.

Break down your content from step #3 into three main points... if you want it to be memorable for your audience. This will become the middle of your presentation. Each main message point should have identified subtopics. Avoid putting too much detail in your outline.

1. Main Point #1

- Subtopic
- Subtopic

2. Main Point #2

- Subtopic
- Subtopic

3. Main Point #3

- Subtopic
- Subtopic



STEP #5: CREATE POWERFUL INTRODUCTION

Extraordinary presentations grab the audience's attention right away with a powerful introduction. You have about 60 seconds to capture your audience's attention, establish credibility, orient them to your topic, and motivate them to listen. Here are some options for how to start your presentation in a way that will make your audience tune in!

- Tell a story
 - Storytelling can increase audience retention by up to 26%.
- Share a video clip (No more than 60 seconds.)
- Use humor (Humor should be well thought out. Know your audience and make sure it's appropriate.)
- Share a shocking statistic
- Share a captivating visual/gripping photo
- Quote an influential person
- Incite curiosity
- Ask a question
- Use a prop

Most of these presentation starters are successful because they appeal to human emotions such as curiosity, awe, surprise, or fear.

EXPERT TIP: Make sure your introduction mirrors the main message of your presentation you listed in step #1.

1. How will you grab your audience's attention during your virtual presentation introduction?
What will your first 60 seconds look and sound like?



STEP #6: INCORPORATE AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT

Imagine attending a virtual presentation and just listening to the presenter disseminate information. Boring! To engage your virtual audience, it's important to include audience interactions and visual design elements. Also, don't forget about the audience engagement you can influence through your voice inflection and body language as the presenter.

Audience engagement is a must for ensuring an extraordinary virtual presentation. The attention span of a typical audience lasts about 5 minutes before you run the risk of losing them.

EXPERT TIP: To create an extraordinary presentation, ask yourself throughout the creation of your presentation, "How can I present this information in a way that is interesting to my audience?" "Would I want to spend my valuable time listening to this presentation?" (If your answer is no, then what do you need to do to make your presentation more engaging.)

Here are some suggestions for engaging your audience throughout your presentation.

- Pick a theme for your presentation. Weave the theme throughout your presentation.
- Have an interesting or unique title for your presentation.
- Ask thought-provoking questions to your audience that are relevant to the main message of your presentation.
- Share stories to illustrate a list of information.
- Share a simplified diagram to represent a body of data.
- Make your presentation into a game for your audience.
- Have a downloadable handout for your audience to fill out as you present.
- Play music.
- Share appropriate humor.
- Change up your visual aesthetics. Don't use just one visual throughout your presentation. This will hold your audience's attention because they won't want to miss anything.
 - PowerPoint Slides
 - Props/Costume
 - Your Facial Expressions
 - Video Clip
 - Photographs

ZOOM PLATFORM – The Zoom virtual presentation platform has the following tools available for engaging your audience in your presentation. These tools work with all audience sizes too.

- **Chat** – You can use the "chat" tool to see if your audience has prior knowledge about a particular subject matter, answer a question, share their opinions, and much more. This gets your audience thinking and responding to the message you are sharing. You can also put a link to information in the "chat" tool for your audience.
- **Polling** – The "polling" tool allows you to have pre-set questions to share strategically throughout your presentation. These questions should serve a purpose as to why you are asking them. Don't use a polling question just to use one. Are you checking current knowledge, knowledge retention, or audience opinion? What are you going to do with the information you get from the polling question? This is extremely important because you need to show your



audience that their participation on the polling is valuable... the information is discussed and used during the presentation.

- **Reactions** – The “reactions” tool allows you to ask your audience a question and have them respond by giving you a “thumbs up” or “thumbs down” icon reaction.

Look back at your main points and subtopics in step #4.

1. Where can you add in audience engagement? Make sure each engagement makes sense and provides value to your audience.



STEP #7: CREATE MEMORABLE CONCLUSION

The ending of your presentation is extremely important because your audience will remember a presentation's beginning and ending most clearly. Here are some options for ending with a "BANG" instead of a "fizzle".

- Share an inspirational quote that emphasizes the main message of your presentation.
- Summarize two or three main points of your presentation.
- Echo the core message of your presentation. Repeating a theme of core message mentioned in your introduction can create a powerful conclusion. You can do this by:
 - Setting up a question in your introduction and finishing your presentation by answering it.
 - Concluding a story that you started during your presentation.
 - Give your presentation a memorable title, then share that title at the end of your presentation for your conclusion.
- Present a strong call-to-action.
- Share a brief story. Make sure the story is related to the main points of your presentation. The story should also be relatable to your audience and encourage empathy.
- Share a visual image.
- Ask a rhetorical question. This will ensure your audience will continue to think about your presentation long after it has concluded.

EXPERT TIP: Make sure your conclusion mirrors your main presentation message, introduction, and main points you listed in steps #1, #4, and #5. Also make sure to thank your audience.

1. How will you create a memorable conclusion for your audience to experience? What will your conclusion look and sound like?



STEP #8: ADD VISUAL DESIGN ELEMENTS

Visual design elements can include using a prop, sharing a video clip, or using PowerPoint slides to compliment the presentation message you are sharing with your audience.

EXPERT TIP: If you choose to use a visual design element, make sure it doesn't distract your audience. The visual design element needs to compliment the main message you are sharing.

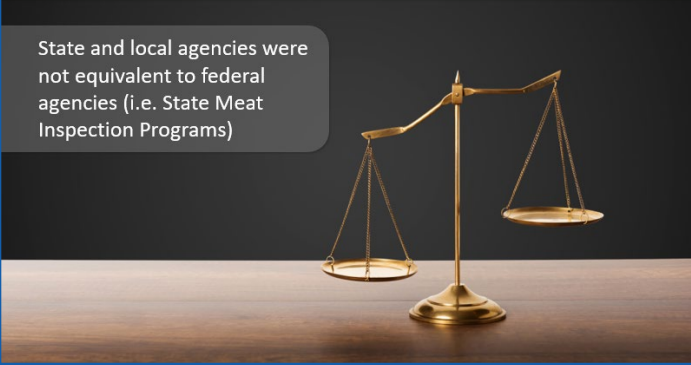
Here are some suggested visual design elements and tips for using them in the most appropriate way during your presentation.

- **Prop/Costume**
 - Props in a virtual setting need to be large enough for your virtual audience to see and understand. When used correctly they can send a powerful message.
 - Costume elements can help the audience visualize a character you are trying to represent or set a mood.
- **Video Clip**
 - The right video clip can grab the attention of your audience quickly and illustrate the message you are trying to share, or reinforce the presentation message.
- **PowerPoint**
 - PowerPoint slides should be used to compliment the verbal message you are sharing, not state everything you are saying. If your PowerPoint deck shares your whole presentation, then why are you wasting people's time with having them sit there and hear you read the slides? Just send your audience your slide deck and let them read it at their leisure.
 - Less is more when it comes to using PowerPoint slides. Limit the quantity. Ask yourself what value each slide brings to the presentation. Is each slide necessary?
 - Use a picture to illustrate a point instead of lines and lines of text on a slide. A quality photo adds aesthetic appeal, increases comprehension, engages the audience's imagination, and make your message more memorable.
 - Don't feel you need to have PowerPoint slides up the whole time you are presenting. If a slide won't compliment the message you are sharing, then you don't need it. This will also give your audience time to see you on the screen instead of your slides.
 - Don't use PowerPoint just to use PowerPoint. How will the information/graphics/images on each slide enhance/compliment the message you are sharing with your audience?
 - **PowerPoint Slide Tips:**
 - Focus on one idea per slide.
 - Use not more than two fonts and keep your font size no smaller than 24 pt.
 - Keep each slide to less than six lines of text. (Even better, can you represent the lines of text with a photograph or graphic instead?)
 - Stay away from bullet points. There are so many other more engaging and visually appealing ways to design your slides.
 - Use relevant modern photographs instead of clipart. Clipart implies "old-fashioned" and "out-of-date".



Equivalence

State and local agencies were not equivalent to federal agencies (i.e. State Meat Inspection Programs)



GOOD EXAMPLE:

- Modern, simple photograph.
- Limited text on the slide.


Conference Details

Conference Schedule

Monday through Thursday
12:30 to 4:30 p.m. Eastern

General session Monday and Tuesday

Breakout sessions Wednesday and Thursday



GOOD EXAMPLE:

- Shows an alternative to using bullet points for sharing information.
- Visually interesting.

Operational Support

- Implementation of a clearly defined national food protection plan
- Improved knowledge and skills of food protection officials
- Harmonization and alignment of food defense strategies
- Coordinated outbreak responses and investigations; and improved mechanisms for multi-state outbreak response and traceback
- Gaps in the food protection system are identified and addressed
- Clearly written, specific processes and procedures for work planning for inspections of all food facilities
- Increased and improved surveillance of imported foods
- Improved enforcement tools and joint actions for achieving compliance with food safety laws and regulations
- Adoption of a compliance assistance approach by encouraging inspectors to assist industry in finding solutions to violations
- Improved communication, coordination, education, and training among the nation's food and agriculture sectors

POOR EXAMPLE:

- Too much text on the slide.
- No visual design.
- Long sentences.



TIPS FOR IMPROVEMENT:

- Determine what message this slide is trying to convey?
- Pick out the main points.
- What can the presenter say and what should be represented on the slide?
- How can this slide be more visually interesting?

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Look back at your entire presentation – introduction, main message points, subtopics, and conclusion.

EXPERT TIP: Create a list of your content in order and then assign a visual element.

1. Where in your presentation can you use visual design elements to compliment the content you are sharing?



STEP #9: TIME OUT PRESENTATION

EXPERT TIP: Timing out your presentation is one of those final steps that is absolutely critical to ensuring an extraordinary presentation. To do this, go through each of the sections of your presentation and write down the planned time that it should take. Make sure to add in extra time for participant interactions.

1. How much time were you given for your presentation?
2. How much time will your introduction take?
3. How much time will the middle main message point sharing part of your presentation take?
4. How much time will your conclusion take?

If your final timing exceeds the amount of time you were given for your presentation, you will need to go back to your presentation and cut back your content, etc. to fit into the allotted time. Make sure what you cut out isn't negatively affecting the main message of your presentation or the audience's learning experience.

If your presentation is too long, ask yourself the following questions.

1. Do I have too much content in the introduction, middle, or conclusion of my presentation?
2. What content can I remove that is not directly related to my presentation main message I wrote in step #1?
3. Do I have too much audience interaction for the allotted time of my presentation? If yes, what can be removed?



STEP #10: PRACTICE OUT LOUD

We all sound brilliant in our minds but then the words come out... sometimes not the way we envisioned. Practicing out loud is a must to having an extraordinary virtual presentation.

Here are some tips to keep in mind while practicing out loud.

- Do not read from your notes while presenting virtually. Your audience will know you are reading from a script and all of the sudden your presentation becomes a lot more formal and distancing.
- Know your message points from step #4. Use these as a guide to sharing your presentation.
- Practice out loud at least three times prior to presenting. Do this in front of a mirror, so you can also evaluate your body language.
- Practice out loud at least once virtually using the virtual platform and virtual tools for audience interaction.
- Practice how you will introduce participant interactions and how you will respond to audience responses through “chat, “polling”, or “reactions”.

While practicing out loud, evaluate the following.

- Your background and how it translates on the virtual background.
- Is your camera looking up your nose or at the side of your head?
- Are you in the center of the screen?
- Is your head being cut off by your camera?
- Is your background distracting to your audience?
- Is your outfit appropriate for your presentation?

Evaluate how your body language is translating to your virtual audience.

- Are you smiling?
- Are you conveying enthusiasm for your topic?
- Are you using your hands while talking to draw your audience in?
- Are you using appropriate voice inflection? Do you sound conversational?
- How can you use your body language and voice inflection to create more impact while sharing messages?
- How can you use pausing to draw attention to information you are sharing?
- Are you making eye contact with your virtual audience?
- Are you using “umms” and “uhhs”?

EXPERT TIP: Remember to make your presentation your own. You know what is distinctive about you and your idea.



10-Step Virtual Presentation Creation Process

STEP #1: Identify Purpose/Main Message
STEP #2: Analyze Audience
STEP #3: List Presentation Content
STEP #4: Refine Content
STEP #5: Create Powerful Introduction
STEP #6: Incorporate Audience Engagement
STEP #7: Create Memorable Conclusion
STEP #8: Add Visual Design Elements
STEP #9: Time Out Presentation
STEP #10: Practice Out Loud

Congratulations!

Through focused effort and time, you have created an extraordinary virtual presentation that will be an impactful and memorable experience for your audience.

