

# What the audience remembers is decided long before the first slide is shown.

*Seven modules on two pages — the core of the course in compressed form.*

This isn't a presentation about you. It's a presentation for the audience. The question that governs everything: what should they think, feel or do when you've stopped talking? Everything else — slides, voice, body, words — is a means, not an end. Skim this page before your next presentation and come back to the depth of the course when you have time.

## 1 Start with why, not what

The car is bought when someone connects facts to a feeling — and the feeling is rooted in a why, not a what. The same logic applies in the classroom, at the staff meeting, in front of the council chamber. Before you open Keynote: why does this topic matter, why should anyone care, what are you yourself burning for? That's the audience's way into all the rest. If you go on autopilot, the audience will feel it and stop listening.

## 2 One slide carries one message

Three rules do most of the work. They aren't aesthetic — they follow from how the brain works when someone has to listen and look at the same time.

### 1

#### One message

One slide, one thing. If you need to say two things, make two slides. The new slide costs nothing; divided attention costs everything.

### 2

#### Six objects max

Count everything: heading, text, images, icons, logos. Six or fewer. Beyond that the audience loses the overview and stops processing what you're saying.

### 3

#### Large type, high contrast

The person in the back row is your target. If they can't read it, the slide isn't built for the room. Large type forces you to choose what matters.

## 3 What you do instead of text

Most slides collide with the presenter. The audience can't read and listen in parallel — and if forced to choose, they choose to read. The three most common traps and what you do instead:

#### • WALL OF TEXT

*The whole paragraph projected on the slide — the audience stops listening and starts reading.*

#### • BETTER

*Quote the key sentence, point to the source, talk about the implications.*

#### • BEST

*An image that reinforces the message, one word on the slide, everything else in your voice.*

## 4 Presence — the eyes, the pause, the ending

**Stand up if you can.** The energy in the room drops when you sit. Take up space. Plant your feet.

**Look at one person at a time.** Three seconds per person — not searching across a sea of heads.

**Pause when it matters.** Two seconds of silence after a key sentence is more powerful than three minutes of rhetoric.

**Don't end with "any questions?"** End with what you want the audience to be thinking about as they leave the room.

**Tell rather than report.** One concrete story sticks better than five abstract arguments.

**Cut the filler sounds.** "Um", "like", "you know" — train them out by hearing yourself.

# The rest is detail. But the detail decides.

*The digital meeting, voice and body — and the course in seven sentences.*

## 5 The digital meeting — compensate deliberately

The screen takes away most of the signals you usually rely on. You need to compensate with much else — the audio, the camera, the gaze — to fill the gap.

**Good audio before good picture.** Headset or external microphone. The built-in laptop mic isn't enough.

**Camera at eye level.** Lift the laptop on a book. Otherwise the audience looks up your nose all meeting.

**Look at the lens, not the faces.** It feels unnatural — but that's where the audience experiences eye contact.

**Pause deliberately and longer.** Digital eats silences. Two seconds live = four digital.

## 6 Voice, body and language — where the leverage is

Slides you can change in five minutes. Voice, body and language are where most presenters have the greatest room to grow — and that only changes through deliberate practice outside the presentation itself.

### B

#### Body

Posture, gesture, where your feet land. Record yourself once — you'll spot three things you didn't know you were doing.

### V

#### Voice

Tempo, volume, pause, emphasis. Variation is everything — a monotone voice can't be saved by strong arguments.

### L

#### Language

Short sentences. Concrete words. Images and stories instead of abstractions. You don't have 40 minutes — you have 40 individual sentences.

## 7 The course in seven sentences

### 1 Why

What should the audience think, feel or do afterwards? That's where the presentation rests.

### 3 Slide vs you

Text-heavy slides collide with you. The audience can't read and listen in parallel.

### 5 Digital

Good audio, camera at eye level, eye contact with the lens, longer pauses.

### 7 The most important thing

Not what you now know — but what you actually do differently in your next presentation.

### 2 Slides — the basics

One message, six objects max, few colours, large type — the rules do the work.

### 4 The delivery

Stand up, look at the audience, pause when it matters, end strong.

### 6 Body, voice, language

Leverage — only deliberate practice outside the presentation itself produces change.

#### • ONE THING NOT TO DO

Don't end with "any questions?". It's the worst possible last image in the audience's mind — a vague opening that invites silence. End instead with a sentence that sums up what you want them to take with them. Questions can come in the next breath.

*Ready for the depth? The full course in seven modules — with exercises you can try right away — is at [choosewise.education / presentation-skills](https://choosewise.education/presentation-skills).*

**FULL COURSE  
ONLINE**

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