



**MOST PRESENTATIONS FAIL
BECAUSE PEOPLE DON'T
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Take a moment to Google the term 'Death by PowerPoint'. You'll find literally millions of articles, YouTube clips and well-meaning blogs all offering a wide range of solutions to this ever present danger.

Equally take a moment to research 'How To Create a Killer Presentation' and you'll be greeted with an endless stream of opinion, ranging from tips on the coolest tech to use through to how to stand/breathe/use your hands.

What this completely unscientific poll demonstrates is that people care enough about presentations to write and, we can only assume, read the mountain of sage advice and opinion surrounding the topic. Why, then, are most presentations sub-par? Actually, scrub that – why are the vast majority of presentations plain rubbish?

After immersing myself in this field for over a decade, even creating my own presentation design company, I've come to a conclusion that many may find a little uncomfortable – people just don't care enough.

Rubbish, I hear you cry! I sweat profusely before any presentation, paranoid about what I'm going to wear and what to do with my hands. Surely the lack of sleep the night before the presentation shows that I REALLY care!?

Sorry, but a last minute panic does not demonstrate that you care; it simply shows that you've realised the magnitude of the presentation just a little too late.

Few presentation articles are complete without the inclusion of a Mark Twain quote so here's mine:

"It usually takes me more than three weeks to prepare a good impromptu speech"

This echoes my own sentiment – presentations can never be rushed, yet most are. The reason that people are so panicked

about Death by PowerPoint is that they have not dedicated enough time to the getting the basics right in the first place. The net result is that so-called-preparation for a presentation will often be a combination of the following:

Delving into PowerPoint presentation designs of old to see what can be reused
Putting a general call for help out to colleagues for any cool slides they may have hidden away on the hard drives
Wondering if a new template/font/video might jazz the presentation up at all
Being filled with an almost religious fervour about getting a particularly tricky animation to work (time flies when you're knee deep in PowerPoint)
Searching countless stock libraries for a particular image...and never finding quite the right thing
It's no wonder that the majority of people end up seeing presentations as a TASK they need to complete by the end of the day (along with their expenses and tidying their desks) rather than an opportunity to share a valuable message. It's sad but true.

All of this wasted energy and opportunity could be saved if everyone got their heads around a basic truth – presentations are a privilege.

They are a privilege for the simple reason that as a presenter, you are asking your audience to give you something they can never get back – time. The simple act of booking time out of a diary to listen to you will have an impact on their lives. They may need to work late to make up the time, perhaps take work home over the weekend or, heaven forbid, miss time with family or friends as a result of the time you've taken out of their diary.

With this blindingly obvious but rarely considered thought foremost in your mind, how could you NOT book sufficient time out of your own diary to prepare properly for your next presentation?