

KNOW 1 YOUR AUDIENCE

This is an oft overlooked tip from Nancy Duarte, author of *slide:ology*, a wonderful book on the art and science of creating great presentations. Duarte suggests seven questions to ask before developing any presentation:

- What are they like?
- Why are they here?
- What keeps them up at night?
- How can you solve their problem?
- What do you want them to do?
- How can you best reach them?
- How might they resist?

It's easy to see how these questions would be important to answer in a business or sales presentation. However, amongst evaluators, they are often overlooked when designing a client briefing or conference presentation. I'm especially drawn to question 5, which reminds me that every presentation should be a call to action.

3 TIPS to better slide presentations

John Nash | Iowa State University
Educational Leadership and Policy Studies | HCI

✉ jnash@iastate.edu

 <http://edventureso.me>

 twitter.com/jnash

LET GO 2 OF TEXT

Text can be a crutch for the time-pressed and insecure presenter. Duarte suggests three strategies to excising text as a crutch on your slides:

REDUCE: Practice presenting your slides a few times, then highlight one keyword per bullet point. Deliver your slides from only the keywords, using the rest as notes. Eventually, consider replacing the keyword with an image.

RECORD: Read your presentation out loud and record the audio. Play it back. Once you get over the horror of hearing your own voice, you'll be able to concentrate on your content and not focus on the slides.

REPEAT: Practice, make note cards, draw a mind map, do anything that helps you visualize or create a cheat sheet. Then, look at your slides and delete as much as possible that's covered already on your cheat sheet.

EMULATE 3 THE GOOD STUFF

BOOKS If I could recommend only two books on this topic they would be:

Presentation Zen: Simple Ideas on Presentation Design and Delivery (<http://bit.ly/cOPSUJ>)
Garr Reynolds

slide:ology: The Art and Science of Creating Great Presentations (<http://bit.ly/c7KIGt>)
Nancy Duarte



GET TO KNOW IGNITE Ignite-style presentations are exactly five minutes long using 20 slides that auto-advance every 15 seconds. Using Ignite means delivering the most salient content, from a point of passion, while remaining story-focused (and thus, I argue, more audience focused). For example, watch Molly Wright Steenson's presentation on the otherwise arcane topic of pneumatic tube networks (<http://bit.ly/9C5hMK>). Did you adsorb more information than in any other five minutes of your day? Notice how she uses minimal text, good images, and a great story to grab your attention.