

Comments on the sample PowerPoint presentations

Presentation 1

Slide 1

This is a clear introductory slide that shows the title of the presentation and the name of the presenter. One of the templates provided by PowerPoint has been used which gives a polished air to the presentation without too much fuss or colour to distract from the content.

Slide 2

It is a good idea to ensure that the second slide gives a breakdown of the points that will be covered in the presentation. This is like setting an agenda for the presentation that you outline for the audience in advance so that they know what to expect and makes it easier for them to follow the presentation. Notice the use of bullet points and a sub-list of embedded bullet points to outline the cases that will be discussed. This is clearer for the audience than an undifferentiated list. This is the only slide in this presentation that uses animation. It can be a really useful way to present a list of points as the presenter is able to make each item appear individually at the relevant time and this can ensure that the audience focuses its attention on the correct point rather than reading forward in the list.

Slides 3 and 4

These provide definition of a key term. Notice that the font is a reasonable size to be read by the audience (32 point font) and that this is generally consistent throughout the presentation. There is not too much information on the page and the key phrase of the statute is highlighted in a different colour to ensure that it stands out for the audience. Note the addition of a picture to Slide 3 to add interest to the page. Of course, the illustration is not necessary here – it is for decorative purposes only – but there is nothing wrong with taking simple steps to ensure that the presentation looks nice provided that this is not taken to extremes and does not distract from the content of the presentation.

Slide 5

This slide demonstrates a good approach to setting out a case. The case citation is provided and a clear differentiation has been made between the facts of the case and the legal principle. The addition of images may seem like an unnecessary embellishment but they do provide an instant visual depiction of the case that might help the facts to stick in the mind of the audience.

Slide 6

Image is used again in this slide but note that the picture is positioned on the other side to the preceding slide. It is important to strike a balance between variety and consistency in your slides. This presentation uses a uniform template that frames the slides nicely so creates a sense of continuity in the presentation that is furthered by use of a consistent font size and colour. Variety is added by varying the layout of the slides and incorporating some images.

Slide 7

It is important to give thought to the presentation of information on the slides. Here, two columns are used to present the conflicting cases side by side to emphasize the need for

comparison. Notice that the key phrases are highlighted in blue to help the audience to realize that these are the important aspects of the cases.

Slide 8

Again, an appropriate layout was selected for the information that is included on the slide. *Gomez* produces two points of importance so these are separated into bullet points for emphasis. Note that highlighting is used again to draw attention to the key points and that the colour used is consistent with the other highlighting. It is all too easy to get carried away by the colour, format and animation options offered by PowerPoint and this can create an overly busy feel that actually detracts from the presentation. Choose a limited range of colours for your presentation and be selective in the use of other features such as illustrations and animation.

Slide 9

This slide contains only an image. This is a very simple image and one that symbolizes the issue that is being presented to the audience. Do not make the mistake of thinking that the presentation must replicate the words used in the presentation. PowerPoint is a visual aid which means that it assists you with your presentation by providing a visual guide for the audience. This can just as easily take the form of images rather than words; indeed, a well-chosen image might have more of an impact on the audience. It is important not to include images that seem to serve no purpose. This slide should be displayed whilst the speaker explains the issue that arises with gifts as a result of the case law that has been outlined. It is important to leave the image in place whilst this topic is introduced: an image that is merely flashed on screen and then removed appears entirely gratuitous to the audience.

Slide 10

Again, there is consistency in approach as this slide presents the facts and principle of the case in the same way that was used for cases earlier in the presentation.

Slide 11

This slide again uses a different layout to create variety for the audience. The two bullet points are used to good effect; the first is the general rule that is the central message of the presentation and the second is an example of its operation. This message is made more memorable with the use of well-chosen images that symbolize the factual example given.

Slide 12

The final slide replicates the layout of the first slide. It is a good idea to ensure that the final slide differs from those used in the main body of the presentation as this helps the audience to appreciate that the presentation is at an end. It is usual to end the presentation by allowing the audience the opportunity to ask questions and this is communicated clearly to the audience with this final slide.

Presentation 2

Slide 1

This first slide uses the same template as the first presentation but it is used less effectively here. The audience is given no clues as to the particular topic of the presentation due to the unimaginative and uninformative title nor are they told the name of the person who is giving the presentation. First impressions count and, unfortunately, the impression given by this first slide is not a particularly good one.

Slide 2

The purpose of this slide is to give the audience a clear idea of what to expect in the presentation that follows but this example does not do that job at all well. The font used is too small and the list is cramped rather than spread across the slide. As you will realize as you look through the rest of the slides, the list of bullet points does not actually present an accurate list of the points included in the presentation.

Slide 3

This slide has been left blank. This is a very easy mistake to make, particularly if you are new to PowerPoint but it is one that should be identified and rectified prior to the presentation. PowerPoint has a 'view slideshow' option that displays the slides to you as they will appear to the audience and this can be a very effective way of checking to ensure that the slides appear in the right order and with the correct content. Errors such as this give the impression that insufficient care had been taken in the preparation of the presentation which is not the impression that you want the audience or, more importantly, the person marking the presentation, to take away with them.

Slide 4

There is too much information on this slide and it is crowded together in such a way that it is difficult to see what value this has for the audience. Inexperienced presenters sometimes make the mistake of including too many words on each slide and then they proceed to read them to the audience. Visual aids are supposed to complement not replicate the oral presentation so it is not necessary – or desirable – to crowd so much information onto a single slide.

Slide 5

By way of contrast, this slide contains very little information. This isn't necessarily a problem – better to have a little information rather than too much – but in this instance there is more detail that could reasonably have been included such as the case citations. Equally, if the PowerPoint slides are there to assist the audience, it might have been preferable to give each case a separate slide so that the material facts and legal principle could be provided for the audience. You also need to ask why the case names role up like the credits at the end of the film and the explanation is usually that the presenter has worked out how the animation feature of PowerPoint works and has included such features for the sake of it. This can be distracting.

Slide 6

This is an appalling slide. Its aim was good in terms of presenting the two conflicting cases side-by-side but the layout and confusion in fonts is disgraceful and the actual text is rambling and uninformative. Take care with the words used to express the information

on each slide and also be thoughtful in choosing an appropriate layout so that the slides look nice. This adds a sense of polish and professionalism to the presentation.

Slide 7

There is more animation on this slide and it is different in nature to that used previously. If you do want to use animation, it is probably a good idea to stick to one type throughout the presentation. You might think that the animation makes the presentation look impressive but it is actually very easy to do in PowerPoint and so it actually demonstrates nothing other than the ability to click on the animation menu. Apart from the animation, this is one of the better slides of the presentation although the images could be better presented as the bottom image has been stretched out of shape and there is no logic to their positioning on the page.

Slide 8

It is a good idea for the last slide to invite the audience to ask questions but the layout of this slide could be better as the text is in the title box and the slide itself is blank. It is always worth taking the time to experiment with different layouts for each slide to see what works best.