

Tips for Avoiding “Powerpoint Poisoning”

**Student Seminars in Nanoscience
Chem 560D**

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Plan Your Presentation

What is the purpose of your talk?

**5 questions to answer *before* making your slides
(same as writing a paper)**

- **What is the problem?**
- **Why should people care?**
- **What is the approach?**
- **What is new?**
- **What is the impact?**

(don't forget to consider your audience and venue)

Limits of the Format: aka TIME

Plan to convey only ONE key idea
What is your 'thesis statement'?

Be concise

Plan for 1 *real* slide/minute

Don't give your advisor's talk

Age old advice:

"Tell them what you're going to tell them.

Tell them.

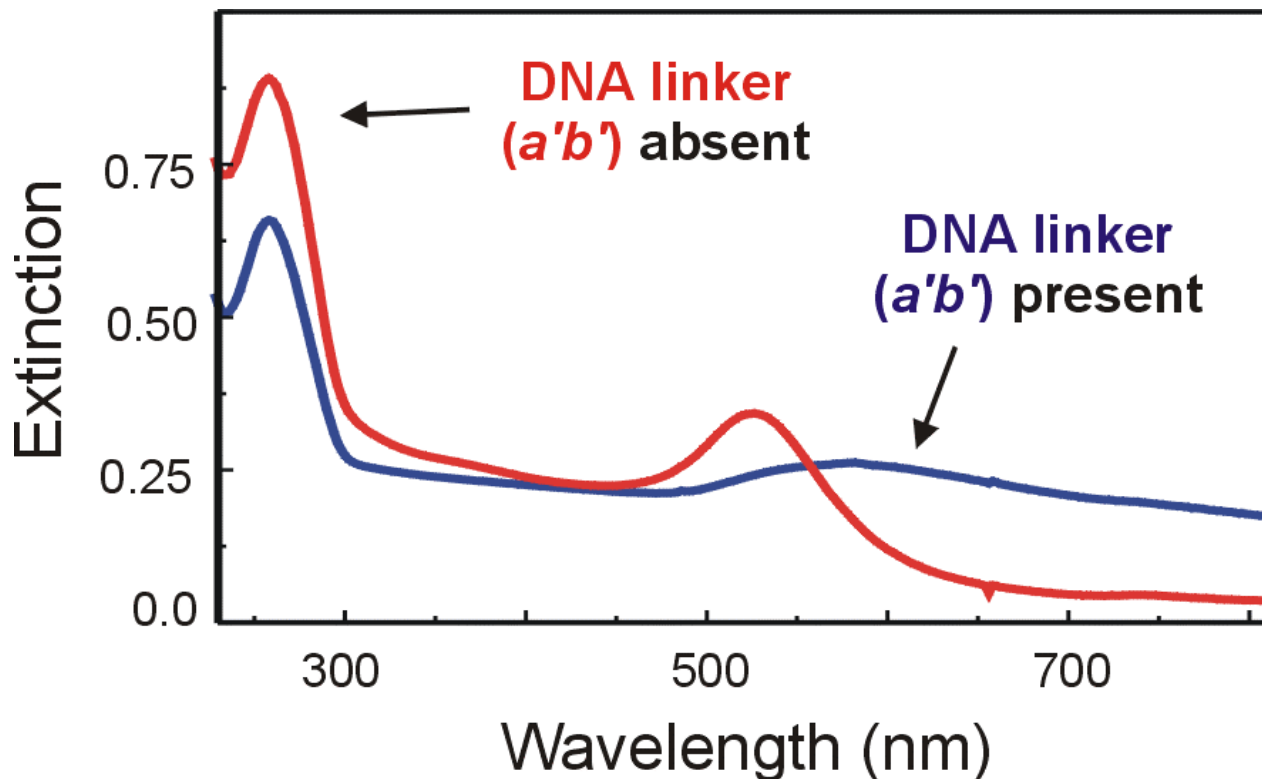
Tell them what you told them."

Preparing Slides

- **BIG** clean fonts (18 point Arial bold should as **SMALLEST**)
- **Don't clutter slides unnecessarily (use clean backgrounds)**
- **One idea per slide**
- **Animations and sound effects are **d i s t r a c t i n g****

Preparing Data

- 1) Thick lines and dark colors only (don't use Excel defaults)
- 2) LABEL all curves (instead of using a legend)
- 3) NEVER more than 2 graphs per slide
- 4) Always *introduce* the graph: 'Y vs. X acquired with a gizmo'



Practice Your Talk

- 1) Rehearse your talk *with a watch*
- 2) Think about your slide-to-slide *transitions*
- 3) Critically evaluate the role of each slide in the talk
(rehearsal tip: print out your slides)

Don't Give A Meaningless Overview

- 1) Introduction
- 2) Experimental Design
- 3) Results
- 4) Summary and Conclusion

Speaking Tips

- 1) Be excited about your work, but be yourself**
- 2) Do NOT memorize, use notecards or use powerpoint cues**
- 3) Talk to your audience, not the screen**
- 4) Use motion, but sparingly**
- 5) Bring water but don't use it unless you lose your voice**
- 6) Be excited about your work, but be yourself**

Questions

- 1) LEAVE TIME**
- 2) Don't get bogged down on 1 question**
- 3) Prepare a few 'just in case' slides**
- 4) "That's an interesting comment"**

Summary

- **Plan your presentation and your ‘message’**
- **Keep your slides simple and clean and your data BIG**
- **Rehearse and stay on time**
- **Don’t answer questions like Dogbert**
- **Visit www.imaging.org for more guidelines**

Hardware Advertising

- **ALWAYS** have a backup
- **Having your own pointer is nice**

Class Format

- **Two talks / week**
- **~18-20 minute talks**
- **5-7 minute question/comment period**
- **point is for everyone to improve—
the audience and the speakers, ask tough questions,
give constructive criticism as well as positive feedback**