

# RSNA presentation best practices

RSNA is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) to provide continuing medical education for physicians. As a presenter, you have an important role in helping to comply with the ACCME Standards for Commercial Support. The RSNA requires that the content of its accredited CME activities provide balance, independence, objectivity and scientific rigor. Planning and development of the clinical content and format must be free of the influence or control of a commercial entity and must promote improvements or quality in health care and not a specific business interest of any commercial interest (e.g., no commercial bias).

Presentations must give a balanced view of therapeutic options by using generic names rather than trade names in order to maintain impartiality (e.g., use trade names from several companies, not just a single company). Educational materials that are part of a CME activity such as slides, abstracts and handouts cannot contain any advertising, trade names without generic names, or product-group advertising. Commercial logos are prohibited.

## In preparing your presentation:

- ***Be organized and concise:*** When developing your slides, make sure your presentation has a clear and logical flow to it, from introduction to conclusion. Establish your key points and clearly define their importance and impact in a concise, digestible manner.
- ***Disclosure/Non-disclosure:*** Include a slide which lists disclosures or a slide which indicates there are no relationships that require disclosure. The intent of this disclosure is not to prevent a presenter from being involved in the activity, but rather to provide participants with information on which they can make their own judgments. The first slide following the title slide of your presentation should list your name and disclosures.
- ***Learning objectives:*** Highlight the instructional content and/or expected learning outcomes of your presentation. Describe what the learner is expected to do differently, keeping in mind your identified practice gaps, needs and expected results.
- ***Intellectual property notice:*** Your decision to include borrowed materials (text, images, graphs, charts, etc.) in your presentation may fall within 'fair use' for educational purposes. However, such materials should never be presented as if they are your own. You must assure that sources of borrowed material are clearly labeled in your presentation, including full citations for any copyrighted material. It is also best practice to inform and/or seek the permission of the original creator of non-copyrighted content before using it in your lecture.
- ***HIPAA:*** Remember to remove all patient-identifying information from your slides. If your slides contain images or information about patients or other individuals, you are responsible for obtaining appropriate patient consent (including HIPAA authorization, if applicable) to include the material in your slides.

## **Presentation design best practices:**

### **Design tips:**

- Keep visuals clear and simple—abbreviate your message.
- Simple graphs, charts and diagrams are much more meaningful to an audience, rather than complex, cluttered ones. (Avoid the “Eye Chart”)
- Avoid slide transitions
- Avoid busy graphics or tables

### **Color usage:**

- Avoid the overuse of too many colors, patterns and graphics in one frame.
- Contrasting colors work best. A good rule of thumb is to use a dark background color with lighter color for text and graphics.
- Avoid intensely bright or saturated colors that compete with the text.
- Avoid red/green and red/blue combinations.
- Keep the color scheme consistent throughout your presentation. Changing colors and type styles can be very confusing and distract from your message.
- The most effective background colors are blue, turquoise, purple, magenta, etc. These colors appear to recede or draw away from the eye—allowing the text to appear more readable. In one study, it was found that the most effective background color for projection is blue.

### **Font usage:**

- Use a minimal number of words for text and title frames. Five to eight lines per frame and five to seven words per line are the maximum—less is better.
- Upper- and lower-case lettering is more legible compared to all capital letters.
- Vary the size of lettering to emphasize headings and subheadings—avoid using more than three font sizes per frame.
- A sans serif font is easier to read than serif.

- Example: “Calibri” is a modern sans-serif font that comes in several weights and is a good choice for the body text of a presentation.
- Try to maintain the same or similar font size from frame to frame, even if some frames have less copy. Avoid a “lonely” word on a slide.
- Use a font size of at least 24 points for body text and 36-40 points for headings.

### **Your live presentation**

- Arrive at your meeting room at least **20 minutes** before the start of your session. Take time to familiarize yourself with the setup at the lectern.
- ***Include an introduction:*** At the start of your presentation, introduce yourself by including your name, institution, the title of your presentation/abstract and your disclosure.
- ***Be engaging:*** Include content that will grab your audience’s attention early. Interesting facts or images, a reflective question asked to the audience, or even a short video clip can work well to hold your audience’s focus. Memorable moments within a presentation can help attendees recall your talk above others. Speak directly into the microphone in a normal voice and do not handle the microphone while speaking. If you turn away from the microphone, the audience may not hear your voice.
- ***Be yourself:*** Use your hands, gesture, smile while talking and demonstrate enthusiasm and respect. Be your most engaging self. Work to connect with the audience to whom you’re speaking—whether it’s one person or a room of 100 people or more. Be sure to avoid any off-the-cuff commentary that others could interpret as critical to any individual or group, as well as any personal opinions that could reflect poorly.
- ***Be prepared:*** The best presenters rehearse and are well-prepared.
- ***Questions:*** Prepare answers ahead of time to potential, challenging questions.

*Last updated: September 2021*