

Pecha Kucha Tips

General information about Pecha Kucha

<http://www.pechakucha.org/>

Tips for great slide selection, sequencing, and editing

<http://www.pechakucha.org/presentations/how-to-create-slides>

Crowd-sourced tips and tools

<https://globaldigitalcitizen.org/how-to-make-great-presentations-with-pecha-kucha>

Wisdom from folks at Indiezine: <http://blog.indezine.com/2012/05/10-tips-to-create-and-present-pecha.html>

1. Choose a simple topic

Many times, presenters get tempted to choose complicated topics that need so many facts to be explained even before you get to the topic. Let's face it – not everything in this world is simple enough to be explained in less than 7 minutes. But you can simplify your topic, or you can choose another topic that is simple enough to be explained within that time frame.

Once you have chosen a topic, leave out the un-required and focus on your message – you should be able to condense the gist of your entire message in one, simple line. Then elaborate as required.

2. Start with an outline

As with generic presentations that are not limited to Pecha Kucha's 20x20 rule, you should start with an outline. You can call your outline a structure, a story, etc. Charles Greene III prefers to call the outline an "analog". He uses 3 x 5 inch note cards for his main ideas. He restricts to one idea per card, thus each card represents a potential slide. Under each main idea, he jots 3 quick sentences about that idea.

Using cards is a great idea – but if you want, you can even use some paper sheets, PostIt notes, an iPad or tablet, or even Microsoft Word, Evernote, or OneNote. Work with whichever medium makes you feel comfortable, as long as you end up with a rough outline.

3. Tweak your outline

It's now time to reorder the content in your outline. Then remove what is not required – you may also want to combine some parts of the outline into one slide, or divide others as required. Whatever you do, think about your audience – you must include what they would like to hear rather than what you want to say.

Charles Greene III adds about how he works with his note cards: "The cards were sorted, shifted and removed until I had my final 20 slides that told my story. Strong visual images were selected to go with each topic. I developed my story flow from the note cards".

4. Make your slides

You are now ready to import your outline into PowerPoint or any other slide program. PowerPoint can import outlines to create slides, but even if you do not want to import your outline, you can still create slides from your text content.

Most often, your text content will be restricted to your slide titles. You should end up with 20 slides -- play and watch them. Do the slides build up well with your message, one after the other? If the answer is no, then go back and redo them until you are happy – there's no sense in moving beyond this step unless you are happy with the content and sequencing of your slides.

5. Add pictures

Add pictures to your slides that are relevant to what you will speak about. Ric Bretschneider, formerly Senior Program Manager for PowerPoint at Microsoft advises: "Pictures! Graphics! Even black slides! Text used sparingly. The most successful Pecha Kuchas don't use much, if any text."

6. Practice

Then practice as much as you can. And practice again.

Charles adds: "I found that even with the little information that I had chosen to say, it was too much. In actual performance, the flow is very quick. To not have the sense that I was racing toward the 6minute 40 second mark, I had to take out some words. I also

had three slides towards the end that covered one topic. This gave me a place where I could "hover" to adjust my timing and flow. I highly suggest a "hover" space."

Ric adds: "Do practice so you know one or two points that each slide brings to your story naturally. You can perform free-form easy if you know what you absolutely need to include to support your upcoming points."

7. To animate or not?

You'll have to make a decision about this one -- whether you should animate objects on your slide, or not. Also do you want to use slide transitions? Animation is movement, and movement pulls the eye of the audience away from you to the slides. 20 seconds is too short a time for them to refocus on you during that particular slide, and that explains why you must decide whether animation will add value to your slide, or otherwise.

Ric adds: "Do not animate. Aside from potentially messing your timings up, animations are an unanticipated pause in your presentation while another point is disclosed. Your slides are bite sized enough, use them exclusively for disclosure. OK, that said you can break that rule if you aren't using the animation to break out talking points, more ambient animation. But even so, challenge the assumption that you need to do that, because you do lose the audience a little each time they have to analyze a change to your visual."

8. Practice again

Yes, it is time to practice again. With less than 7 minutes to present, you can afford to practice more often. Even if you end up using 2 or 3 minutes more in a Pecha Kucha presentation, that won't be acceptable or even possible using the format -- so you must have time on your side, right down to the minutest level. That sort of sync with your slides can only be achieved with repeated practice.

Charles adds: "Afterthoughts -- Practice, practice, practice! That's the only way to get the presentation to flow like a conversation. Give some "performance" to the presentation. Be a bit dramatic. Add your own personal flair. Hopefully, you are

presenting a topic that you care about as your personal love for the subject will make a difference. Oh, did I mention practice?"

9. Love your audience

Ric raised a very significant issue, about being human with your audience.

He added: "With all this focus on the mechanical and your presence it's easy to forget to really talk to the audience. Make contact, converse, be warm, and be human. It's one of the more intimate presentation styles if you let it be."

10. Everything else

You already heard about the benefits of practicing but remember to let your free flow work as well -- depend 80% on practice and a script, but let the other 20% of being free within a framework also work for you! So in effect you will know your slides like the back of your hand, but you should be able to move your hands as you like.

Ric adds one last thing: "Find out if your start and end slides are considered part of the pres. Just something to know." Also, there are lots of videos from Ric's Pecha Kucha events on the [San Jose site](#). Ric mentioned that Indezine readers in the Silicon Valley are welcome to contact him if they want to try out Pecha Kucha in an upcoming event.