Visual Aid: Do’s and Don’t’s

DO

* Use highly contrasting font colors for text and background: dark on light or light on dark.
  Dark on light works better for handouts.
  Light on dark works well for presentations.
* Use a 16 point font or larger on all slides.
* Keep text and graphics away from the edge of the screen.
* Use a maximum of six or seven words per bullet and 4 lines per slide.
* Use pictures, maps, diagrams, and charts to vary the presentation.
* Choose simple backgrounds.
* Use only one sans serif font. Arial is easy to read on presentation slides and can be used in either bold or italic to provide emphasis.
* Remember that most PowerPoint slides can be read by your audience in about eight seconds.
* Rehearse your slide show often.

DON’T

* Use a “cool” font that is hard to read. Change fonts or font sizes across slides.
* Use distracting backgrounds.
* Have more than four text slides in a row.
* Use wildly animated transition effects.
* Use sequential introduction of bullets. (Let the full slide appear when you transition from the previous slide.)
* Use a PowerPoint template that has an animation of any kind.
* Put too much information on a screen.
* Use more than three levels of “hierarchy” (a slide heading; one level subheading and a bullet list are sufficient).