

Transcript: Creating Presentations with PowerPoint and Prezi

[00:00:00:00] Creating Presentations with PowerPoint and Prezi: A Digital Writing Tutorial from Bedford/St. Martin's.

[00:00:00:07] When you need to give a presentation, visual aids can help you communicate your message, persuade and engage your audience, and create a professional, lasting impression. But where to begin? The most important question is *how* you want to tell your story. Say you want to present step-by-step. You want a flat visual for different talking points, like flipping through notebook pages. This is well-suited to a traditional slide presentation, like PowerPoint.

[00:00:00:39] Start a new presentation from a blank document, a template, a theme, or an existing presentation. Templates are like blueprints for a document, prompting you with particular layouts, themes, and content. Themes are more about design and what things look like. They coordinate the colors, fonts, background, and effects so that your presentation has a consistent feel. It's important to select a theme that supports readability and doesn't distract from your message.

[00:00:01:09] The first slide asks for a title and subtitle. I add my title and—oh, wait, that's kind of weird to have the subtitle *above* my title. That's okay. I can just drag and drop the title above the subtitle, moving around elements on my slide until I achieve my preferred arrangement. A templated layout is great for getting started, but make the layout work best for your content.

[00:00:01:36] To add my name and school, I'll insert a text box, type in my content, and then choose the color based on a palette that matches my theme. That's a pretty sharp-looking title slide—it's easy to read, there's plenty of blank space, and my audience is going to know right away what I'm talking about.

[00:00:01:57] On the next slide, the layout prompts me to add a title and a huge block of text. So I do. Huh. Well, it's not the worst presentation slide, but it's pretty boring. A lot of text, and tough to read from far away.

[00:00:02:14] Adding images is a great way to make information visual. Import the photo into PowerPoint, and, voila, now it's on my slide.

[00:02:23] I'll make sure to acknowledge my sources at the end of the presentation. Images used in class presentations are covered by fair use, but always cite sources in workplace and professional presentations. But maybe I want to add some defined text here. We'll go with a bulleted list since that gives my voice room to fill in the details. Yep, even better.

[00:02:51] But what if you have a lot of hard data to present, like a complicated spreadsheet? One option is to insert the spreadsheet as an object. If you insert an object from an application, changes in the source automatically appear in the linked place.

[00:03:06] In PowerPoint, go to "Insert" and "Object" and then tell the program where to find the file—in this case, our Excel spreadsheet. And don't forget to check the link box. Back fully in PowerPoint, we now see all of the spreadsheet data at once. But what about keeping it simple? Even if I zoom-in during the presentation, the back of the room will never be able to see these details.

[00:03:31] A better idea is to transform the data into a visual chart. Both Excel and PowerPoint can make charts. Simply go to Insert and select your preferred chart type, specify which cells have the data you want to show, and copy/paste the chart onto your slide. At this point, my presentation is looking pretty good. Once I'm finished, I'll save it as a PowerPoint.

[00:03:56] Now, slide presentations are great, but what if all of your information is like that spreadsheet: complicated and interconnected? Instead of making a lot of smaller charts, you want to create one large

graphic and zoom in and out of points as you're talking about them. In that case, you might want to consider **Prezi**. Prezi is an online presentation tool that creates one giant spatial graphic.

[00:04:23] At prezi.com, we'll sign up, start a new Prezi, and choose a template. I like "explain a topic." Right away we see similarities with the traditional slide setup: different moments of the presentation on the left, tools on top, and the visual in the main frame. I type in the text boxes, adding content to the title and different circles.

[00:00:04:48] In this theme, there are circles within circles, a visual representation for how details are contained within larger ideas. This creates a memorable hierarchy for your audience, showing them how all the pieces of your presentation relate to one another.

[00:05:04] A few quick notes about functionality: On the left, each "moment" will be named with reference text, helping you see the presentation's structure at a glance. Up top, there are 3 types of commands: frames, insert, and theme. Add frames and borders to identify elements, then instead of specifying point values or pixels, just drag each element to the size and place you want. Under themes, you can try different schemes and see them in real-time.

[00:05:43] When my Prezi is complete, I can share or download it. If you will be online and presenting with a team, explore Prezi's collaboration features. While presenting, you can do things like "hand over" the presentation to another colleague elsewhere in the world. Prezi is less traditional, it's free and online, and it catches attention—just make sure you have a well-planned hierarchical outline before you begin.

[00:06:12] So now, you know slides and you know Prezi...you're a presentation genius! Break a leg.