PREPARING A SLIDESHOW TO ACCOMPANY YOUR ORAL PRESENTATION

In general:
Generally, when you give oral presentations, you accompany your speaking with a visual aid. This can take the form of a poster, related objects, or most often, a slideshow presentation. Here, the primary focus is on Microsoft PowerPoint, a program that is simple and commonly used in professional presentations.

Visual aids are helpful to your audience: they keep the audience tuned in during the presentation; they allow the audience members to follow your presentation with *both* their ears *and* their eyes. But, the benefit is not only for the audience: slideshow presentations can help you!

Before we begin:
It is important to remember a few things when preparing a visual presentation:
1. This is an <u>aid</u> to the presentation, <u>not</u> the presentation itself.
2. Visual aids serve to highlight the most important aspects of your speaking.
3. The visual presentation can reflect your care and preparation more explicitly than your spoken words.

How to construct your presentation:
Keeping in mind the points above, here are some steps to construct your presentation:

Step 1—Create an outline
Just like in your spoken presentation, you have a list of topics which you are going to discuss. If you are struggling, check out the handout on outlines.

Step 2—Dedicate one or more slides to each of your topics
From your outline, pull the main topics. Dedicate one or more slides to serve as support for each topic. A topic could fit on one slide or could be broken up on multiple slides. Often, the most impactful presentations have sparse wording dedicated to each point of each topic (Theriaut).

> Quick Tip: You want your slides to have impact! Fewer words per slide with an effective image or graphic can do this for you.

Step 3—Briefly outline on the slide your talking points for each topic
IMPORTANT The points that you make on your slide are <u>BRIEF</u>. You want to emphasize quality over quantity on your slides. Too many words can be distracting for the audience. If the audience is distracted by the words on the slide, they cannot focus on the words you say. Limit the content of your slides to the <u>most important</u> aspects of each topic.

Personalize:
Personalizing your slideshow might involve changing the background of the slides, adding pictures and perhaps animations to the text. But keep in mind the following:
1. The presentation and its appearance should correspond to the topic and the setting. A discussion of genocide most likely does not warrant a picture of dolphins.
2. Slides should be readable. If your font color is too close to the background color, the words cannot be read. White text on a light blue background, for example, would be

very difficult to read. Stick with colors that contrast each other like white text on a black background (Hall).
3. If the setting is professional, your slides should be professional. Remember, this presentation reflects your care and preparation. Similarly to the presentation of images, font styles should reflect the setting of the presentation. This is not the best font for a business presentation. Times New Roman and Arial are two recommended fonts for professional settings (Texas Tech).
4. In PowerPoint you have the option of adding animation to your slides and text. In other words, you can make the slides and words enter and exit the screen. This is a nice way to smoothly transition between slides and point. But, just like with your font and image selection, the animations should match the tone of the setting. Fewer and more subtle animations are often your best options (Microsoft).
5. For technical help on how to use the PowerPoint software, check Microsoft's PowerPoint support page, https://support.office.com/.

> Quick tip: Graphics and animations are strictly optional. Add these elements only if you are comfortable doing so. Adding them inappropriately can possibly hurt more than help.

How does a slideshow help you?
Visual presentations such as PowerPoint help your audience pay attention. They satisfy the watching eyes while you work with the ears. But how do these visual aids help you?
1. They show how much you care. It is obvious how much work you put into your visuals: images, graphics, and succinct slides all indicate a care and passion about your work.
2. If you are a weak speaker, visuals can bring up your overall presentation.
3. We all get pre-speech jitters. Visual presentations can restore your confidence. Aside from the confidence boost of an eye-pleasing display, a slideshow can also remind you of the points you wish to make. You can always take a peek at your slides for reassurance.
4. Slideshows reflect who you are and your enthusiasm for the material. Visuals are a way to incorporate personality into the otherwise overwhelming task of giving an oral presentation.

Works Referenced/Cited
Gosse, Paul. "TECHNOLOGY TIPS." *The Mathematics Teacher* 95.6 (2002): 458-62. Web.
Hall, Richard H. "Color Combinations and Readability." *Color Combinations and Readability*. Missouri University of Science and Technology, n.d. Web. 21 Oct. 2014.
"Identity Guidelines." *Texas Tech*. N.p., n.d. Web. 09 Oct. 2014.
Microsoft PowerPoint 2010 Efficient Presentation Techniques For The Haas School of Business, University of California. San Rafael: Dash Designs Consulting, 2011. Web. 20 Oct. 2014. <http://groups.haas.berkeley.edu/HCS/training/office2010/project/UC%20PowerPoint%202010%20Session%201.pdf>.
Theriault, Michel. "5 Principles For Making PowerPoint Slides With Impact." *Forbes*. Forbes Magazine, 25 Nov. 2013. Web. 07 Oct. 2014.