Engineering Effective PowerPoint Presentations

Victoria Sage, MSc

This instructional document provides strategies for producing quality PowerPoint presentations including:

1. Using Slide Master View
2. Adding color to a presentation
3. Using minimalism
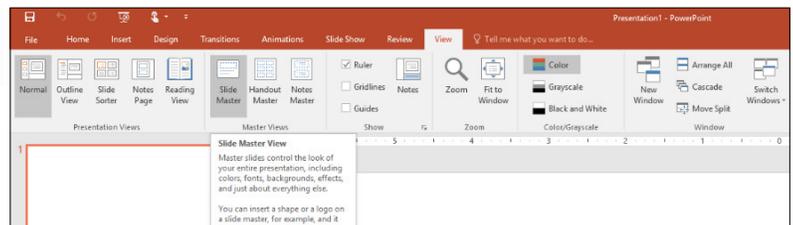4. Incorporating images into a presentation

1. Slide Master View

Slide Master View is a tool that can be used to apply global or section changes across an entire slide deck quickly. However, keep in mind that using slide layouts will still require a keen eye to adjust the layout to accommodate the material on each unique slide.

> **Slide Master**: A slide in the Slide Master View that stores information about the theme and the slide laouts for the entire PowerPoint file (including backgrounds, colors, fonts, and placeholders). The Slide Master applies changes universally in the PowerPoint file.
>
> **Slide Layouts**: Slide layouts are customizations based on an associated Slide Master.

To open Slide Master View after initial launch of MS PowerPoint:

1. Select **View** from the ribbon.
2. Select **Slide Master** from the *Master Views* group of the **View** menu.
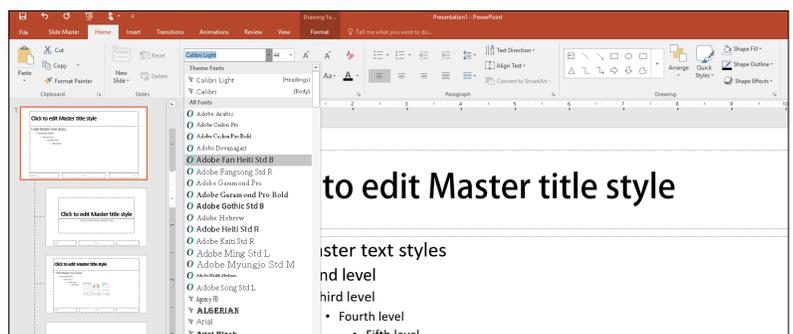

To delete Slide Layouts:

1. Right-click on formated slide in the Slide Master View sorter.
2. Select **Delete Layout**.

Note: This will not work if a slide in the *Normal* view is currently using the Layout.

To change the font on the Slide Master:

1. Select **Home** from the ribbon while working in the Slide Master View.
2. Highlight the text where a new font is desired.
3. Select the desired font from the font options dropdown list in the *Font* group of the *Home* ribbon.
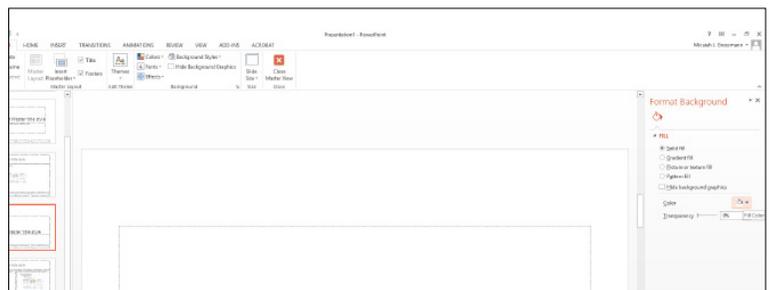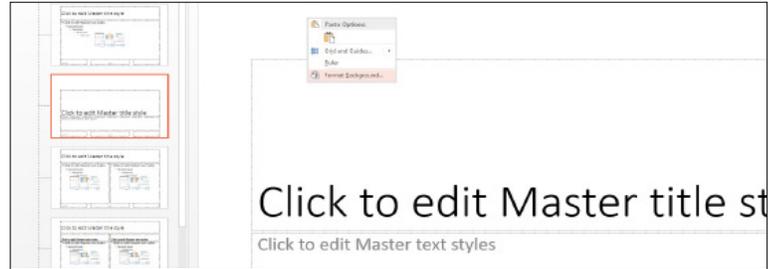
1. Slide Master View cont.

To change the background of a Slide Layout:

1. Select the Slide Layout from the slide sorter.

2. Right-click on the desired Slide Layout in the main window of the workspace.

3. Select **Format Background...** from the dropdown menu. A *Format Background* window will appear along the right side of the workspace.

4. Select the desired fill by changing the radio button.

OPTIONAL: Select the **Apply to All** button on the bottom of the *Format Background* window to apply changes across all Slide Layouts.

To rename a Slide Layout:

1. Right-click on the desired Slide Layout in the Slide Master View sorter.

2. Select **Rename Layout** from the drop-down menu.

3. Type in a new name in the *Layout Name* textbox of the *Rename Layout* dialogue box.
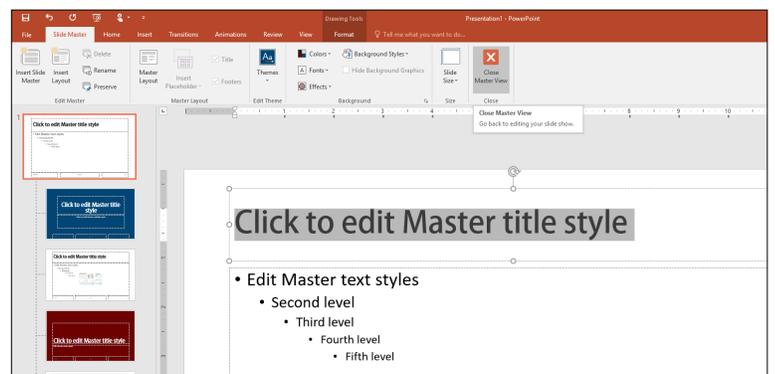
4. Select **Rename**.

To exit Slide Master View:

1. Select **Slide Master** from the ribbon.

2. Select **Close Master View** from the *Close* group of the *Slide Master* ribbon.

OR

1. Select **View** from the ribbon.

2. Select **Normal** from the *Presentation Views* group of the *View* ribbon.
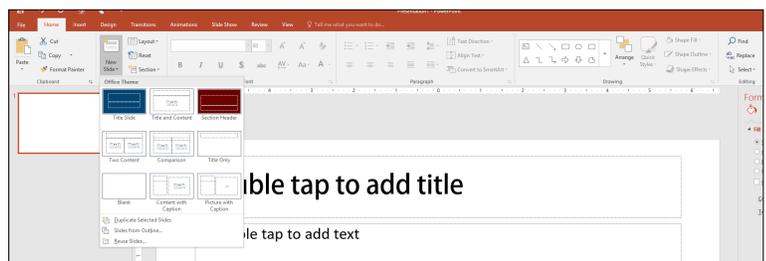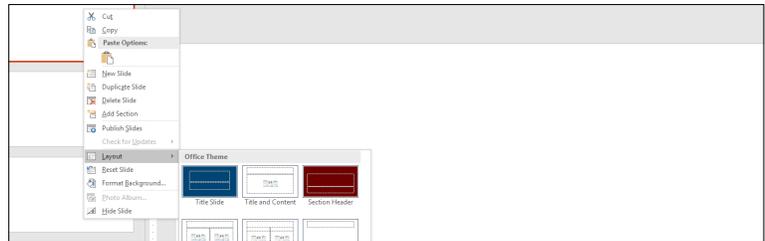
1. Slide Master View cont.

To apply a Slide Layout to a slide:

1. Right-click on a slide thumbnail in the slides pane while in *Normal* view.
2. Hover the cursor over **Layout** in the drop-down menu.
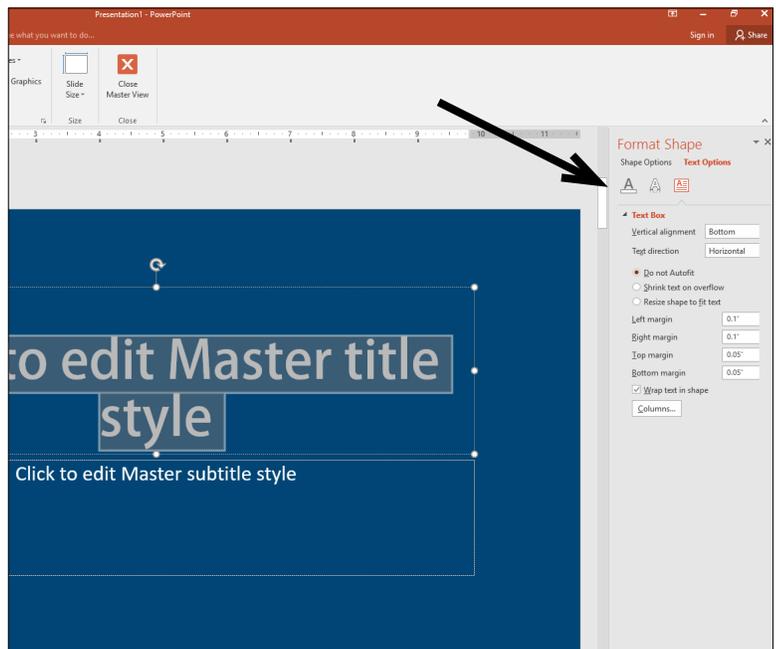3. Select the desired Slide Layout from the fly-out menu.

OR

1. Select the dropdown arrow associated with the **New Slide** button in the *Slides* group of the *Home* ribbon.
2. Select the desired Slide Layout.

To change the text fit option from Shrink text on overflow to Do not autofit:

1. Place cursor within the text that should be changed.
2. Right-click the cursor in the text. A drop-down menu will appear.
3. Select **Format Shape...** from the dropdown menu. A *Format Shape* window will appear on the right side of the PowerPoint interface.
4. In the *Format Shape* window, select **Text Options** (located immediately under the window's title "Format Shape" and beside the words "Shape Options"). Three icon options will appear under "Text Options":
   - Text Fill & Outline: an icon of an orange "A" with an orange bar beneath it,
   - Text Effects: an icon of a white "A" with an outline and a shadow, and
   - Textbox: an icon of an "A" with a box around it and paragraph lines beside it.
5. Select **Textbox.**
6. Select the **Do not Autofit** radio button from the *Text Box* options list.

Autofitting of text in a textbox, on occasion, create problems in MS PowerPoint.. If a textbox is set to autofit a title at 60-point font, it will begin decreasing the font size of the title to fit the text in the parameter of the textbox once the title has exceeded the space allotment for the title at 60-points. By default, MS PowerPoint sets its textboxes to autofit the text. When a PowerPoint file is transferred to another computer or is uploaded to a web-based application, autofit text might spill over the edge of the slide or might kick the last few words of a line down while integrating a hard return at the end of that line.
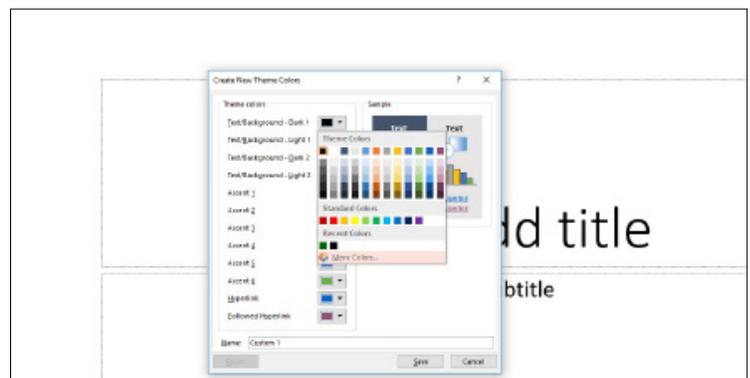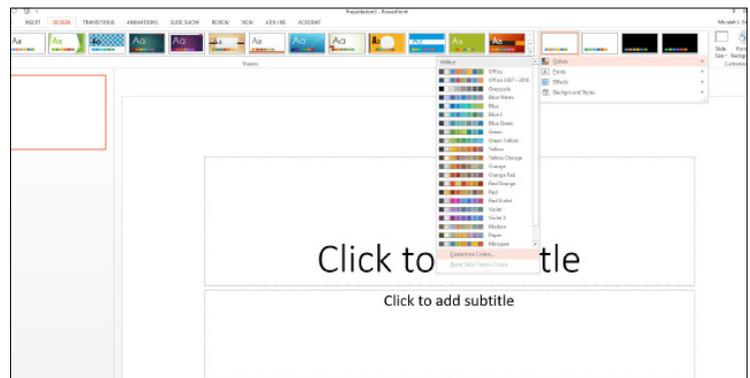
2.Choosing and Customizing Colors

Effective digital slides depends upon creating strong contrast between the slide background and the text on the slide. Strong contrast not only helps the audience read slides easily but also ensures that those who suffer color blindness (up to 8% of men and up to 1% of women are known to have color blindness) are able to read the slides. This strong contrast can be created by using black on white or white on black, or using navy on neutrals (like greys or tans) or neutrals on navy. After creating strong contrast between background and text, a color scheme can be used for accent elements on the slide. Adobe Color CC (https://color.adobe.com/create/color-wheel) is a free web-based tool that can aid in generating a custom color palette.

To access theme colors:

1. Select **Design** from the ribbon.
2. Select the *Variants* group dropdown menu.
3. Hover the cursor over **Colors**.
4. Select **Customize Colors...** at the bottom of the fly-out menu.

The *Create New Theme Colors* window will appear. This window has 12 customization options:

- 4 text/background colors, which are the primary colors for the presentation. One from each pair is used for text and the other for the background.
- 6 accent colors; these are used for bits and pieces of slides that complement the text and background colors.
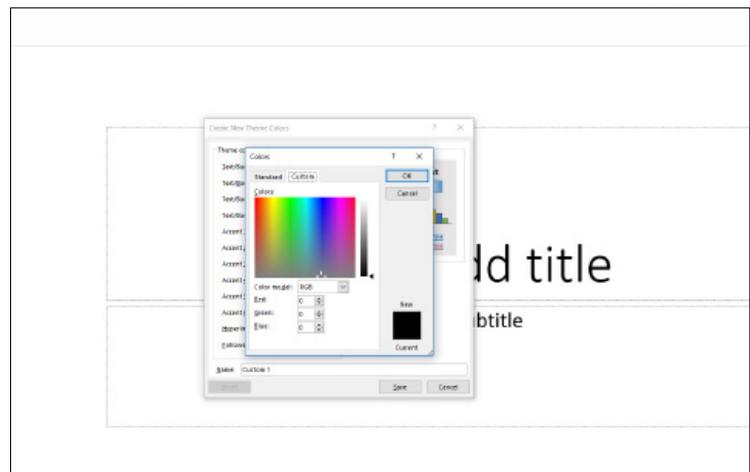- 2 hyperlink and followed-hyperlink colors.

To edit theme colors:

1. In the *Create New Theme Colors* window, select the dropdown arrow associated with a color.
2. Select one of the provided colors.

OPTIONAL:

2.1 Select **More Colors...** from the dropdown menu.

2.2 Use the *Standard* tab to select additional pre-defined colors or use the *Custom* tab to create a custom RGB color.

3. Using Minimalism

- Some strategies to reduce the amount of text include:
- Rewrite as a question and allow the narration to answer the question
- Think of your bullet points as mini headlines
- Shorten bullet points from full sentence to a phrase or even a single word
- Use one bullet point per slide
- Use an image, graphic, or animation in place of each bullet point

4. Incorporation of Images

The first principle of using online images should be don't right click! Images that are published online—whether on a blog, on Google or Bing, or on a company website—are subject to copyright laws. While a Google search does allow filtering of images by copyright permissions, the permissions tagged to images in Google are not always accurate. If you need images and your agency does not have a repository of images available, the Creative Commons has images that are available for use with or without attribution required. You can start a Creative Commons search at search.creativecommons.org. It contains a wealth of images, videos, and sound files that can be used with proper attribution.

Examples of other sites that contain repositories of images in the Createive Commons are:
- Flickr
- Photopin
- Unsplash
- Wikimedia
- Pixabay
- DesignerPics
- Skitterphoto
- Stock Up
- FreeRangeStock
- Travel Coffee Book

Fotor is an interesting site that has a decent web-based photo-editing tool.