

DESERT TORTOISE COUNCIL
Requirements and Guidelines for Speakers, Presentations, and Session Chairs
Las Vegas, Nevada. February 2018

Most of you will be planning a computerized PowerPoint presentation. We will have a computer (PC) and LCD projector. Presentations should be brought to the meeting either on a USB drive (**preferred drives without preloaded software – presentation only**) or a compact disc (i.e., CD-ROM). All other formats (e.g., DVD, Blu-ray) will not be accepted. Plan to bring your presentation to the AV Chair no later than the start of the break (including lunch) immediately before your session. The projectionist would greatly appreciate receiving them before the beginning of each session, if not earlier during the symposium. As time allows, the projectionist will review the presentation to verify it is properly formatted. The projectionist will not accept a presentation when provided as the speaker walks to the podium.

Requirements for Speakers and Presentations

The Desert Tortoise Council **does not permit inappropriate images** as part of presentations in the program or as any part of symposia. Inappropriate photos include, but are not limited to: vulgar, lewd, or suggestive images of people; people in awkward positions or scanty attire; and people engaged in personal and private activities. The Desert Tortoise Council expects all participants and speakers to maintain a high level of professionalism.

General Information for Speakers:

1. We will be using **OUR** computers for all presentations. **You will not have the option of using your laptop for your presentation**; there is no time between speakers to unplug one laptop and plug in another. We strongly discourage the use of a personal computer at the podium; we do not plan to accommodate. Your eyes should be on the audience, engaging them in your presentation.
2. We are expecting presentations in **Microsoft Office PowerPoint 2007, 2010 or 2013 release**.
3. We will NOT have Internet access for the speakers at the podium. Any websites you wish to show must be static images in your PowerPoint presentation.
4. Although we expect to have a fully functional remote control, we suggest that you NOT utilize the various “auto-build” functions (such as clicking the mouse for every bullet to fly in); these often add unnecessary complications and potential delays.
5. Large graphic and video files are generally discouraged. If you have video that is critical for the entire audience to see, advise the Program Chair immediately. Otherwise, we may be able to set up a DVD/Blu-ray player and television at breaks and the various social functions for viewing by interested individuals.
7. Use of acronyms. Please don't use acronyms. You may think that most know your common acronym, but many listeners will not and will be irritated or lost with such use. **The most frequent complaint is about use of acronyms.** Exceptions include DNA and a very few others that are widely understood.

Here are guidelines to keep in mind as you prepare your presentation:

1. To keep file sizes small in PowerPoint, add pictures by clicking *Insert>Picture>From File* as opposed to copying and pasting images into your presentation.
2. Compress images for presentation/screen.
3. Do not put important information on the bottom 1/3 of the slide. It will be difficult to see from the back of the room.
4. The projection screen is large and so is the room. We recommend using only 2 font sizes on slides. 36-48 or larger for titles, and 28-30 or larger for text. For emphasis, select bold or italics, color or shadows. In graphics with one or two words, use of “art fonts” for emphasis will work if separated from quantities of body of text. Complex font body style may cause loss of the “punch” you intended. You cannot go wrong with the selection of Arial or Times for body of text. Font size should be sufficiently large to be visible for approximately 40 feet (to the last row of seats in the room).
5. As you have probably seen at previous meetings, complex charts, tables and graphs are rarely effective for a large audience.

Other recommendations about images:

1. A good guide is no more than 6 lines of text per slide...8 maximum.
2. Line spacing on slides should be at least 0.85
3. Use upper and lower case mix for body text, large amounts of all upper case text are difficult to read.
4. There should be a good contrast between background and text or graphics. Using a picture as the entire background can be problematic. If using a picture as a slide background, watch for split areas of light and dark. For example, sky and dark ground areas in the same photo. This presents a problem for arranging text. If using a solid color background, most of these problems will not exist for you. The background color gray is one of the most difficult colors to contrast with. We will still have a fair amount of light in the room during the presentation for note taking. With this in mind, like-on-like colors will be difficult to see, such as white lettering on light blue background or yellow on green. Light colors such as soft yellows and pinks used as text, points, or lines on graphs do not project well when enlarged and on screen. In fact, they usually do not show up unless on top of a dark background. Line weights and direction arrows need to be heavy enough to be seen without overpowering the image.
5. Red text: Do not use it. Bright red is difficult for the eye to read for any period of time. An appropriate alternative is a hot pink. 10% of your audience will have some degree of color perception impairment. The following combinations should be avoided:
 - a. Red text on blue and vice versa
 - b. Red text on brown and vice versa
 - c. Red text on green and vice versa

6. Practice your presentation in advance. Most people speak faster when they are nervous. If your presentation takes 13-16 minutes in practice, but not more than that, it will be appropriate. However, practice it with a coworker or friend, too – some people tend to add extra information when they're nervous, making a well-rehearsed 12 minute presentation take 16 or more minutes.
7. Don't use too many slides (one every 15 seconds) or too few (3-5 in a 15 minute presentation). A good rule of thumb is to use about one slide for every minute of your presentation. It's also good to vary the length that you project each slide.
8. Again, "Auto-build" slides (with each bullet point flying in or similar) can be problematic, depending upon the computer on which the presentation was created and the one used at the meeting.
9. Think twice about using video or sound effects in your presentation. Incompatibility between your computer and the session computer is unfortunately rather common. If sound is critical to your presentation, bring a MP3 (e.g., iPod) or CD player. If video is critical, ask the program chair if a separate DVD/blu-ray player may be available.

Guidance to Speakers while at the Lectern

Pacing. Some speakers like to move away from the lectern and, with or without microphone in hand, and pace up and back on the podium or adjacent floor. This behavior is distracting to the audience, inappropriate, and likely to cost points in the Student Award process for any student so engaged. Speakers will be most effective in conveying information by remaining at the lectern, speaking into the microphone, and scanning the audience while making the presentation.

Sessions will be kept on a tight schedule. Most presentations are scheduled to take 15 minutes (unless an invited presentation or arranged well in advance and unless stated otherwise in the program). You should provide the Session Chair about 20–30 seconds for a speaker biography (which you will be asked to provide), and then ideally allow for 2–3 minutes at the end of your presentation for Questions and Answers (there will be scheduled Q&A for the session at the conclusion of most sessions). Thus your presentation in rehearsal should take between 12 and 14 minutes. If your presentation takes more than the allocated time, **change it now**. And if your presentation will take substantially less than 15 minutes (you will only speak for 9 minutes, please advise the session chair well in advance).

The Meeting Chairs will provide silent time cues, typically at 5, 3 and 1 minutes before the speaker's time has expired. Meeting chairs will use an audible, often loud cue when time is expired. If you've reached the 14th minute and still haven't said "and in conclusion" (or words to that effect), you are highly likely to be in trouble. Meeting Chairs are ruthless—and the audience wants all sessions on time and the full extent of each break for refreshments.

Duties of Session Chairs and Individuals Introducing Featured Speakers and Honored Guests

Speakers should provide Session Chairs with no more than 3 to 4 sentences of introductory material well in advance of the session. The Session Chair should consume 30 to 45 seconds or less in the introduction. Lengthy introductions are inappropriate and undesirable because they detract from the time allocated for the presentation.

The exceptions are for honored guests, featured speakers, and winners of an award or awards. In such cases, the introductory material should be appropriate for the situation and may be longer. In the case of a person receiving an award, the material may be extensive.