I am a sea aggie, which means I went to Texas A&M Galveston
Where I studied Marine Biology. And a lot of good it did me too! To this day I can identify any number of species of fish and invertebrates that live absolutely nowhere near where I do.
I currently work at Dell
Where I am a creative design project manager
I help to provide sales with the tools they need
To have valuable conversations with decision makers in both the Public and Large Enterprise sectors
I’ve also created a lot of presentations in my day. Among the folks I’ve helped create impactful presentations for are Dell’s current and former executive leadership team.
And even Michael Dell himself
Before Dell I worked in San Antonio
Where I was director of Marketing for a small IT Security firm called Digital Defense
And in the early 2000s I was director of marketing and sales for Garrison Technologies, another IT security firm based in
Austin TX, which is where I still live today
With my wife and 1 year old baby boy.
Today we are also going to talk about how to Move beyond PowerPoint Fatigue through cognitive guidance. Whew!

So, now I am out of slides!

Just kidding, but I do want you to make note of the pacing I used in that opening section because we’ll be talking more about pacing later in the presentation.
First off, I want to point out that I will discussing making PPTs for spoken presentations. This isn’t a technical session where we go into how to fit your entire spreadsheet onto one slide and have it still look good. In fact, this is just the opposite.

In this session, I’ll be giving you all some tips on how to effectively communicate a lasting message to your audience through simplifying your message and focusing on the main points you want the audience to walk away with.

As educational psychologist Richard E. Mayer points out, PPT presenting can be one of two worldviews. The dominant worldview is information presentation.
**Information presentation** focuses only on the display of data and has little or no regard for the audience’s ability to process and retain the information presented. From this perspective, understanding is simply not a criterion for success: you drive the data across the slides, and you’re done.

This is a perfect example of that information presentation ideology. This presenter is saying to the audience “here’s the data, now it’s your responsibility to figure it all out and remember it.

Not only that, but this slide will take at least 5-10 minutes to explain. So, we stare at this one slide for that entire time.
The result is this. Sleepy, bored, checking their blackberry, checking their watch.
Here’s another example that is not quite as hectic and is actually probably a pretty typical PowerPoint slide for most folks. It has the bullet points and a quote to illustrate the point.

To the presenter’s credit, I sure he or she was talking through all of the information on the page. But, the audience’s attention is divided between what the presenter is saying and trying to read all of the text on the slide. The result is that the audience isn’t able to do either very well. Their divided attention, that conflict between spoken word and written text, obscures your message and impairs the audience’s ability to absorb the information.
Death by PowerPoint! We’ve all sat through presentations like that. And once the lights come up and the audience starts to come back to life, you ask hopefully, “Any questions?!“
And this is the response. Head scratching, at least from those folks who are still awake.
But wait a second, PowerPoint is essentially just slides with bullets on them. It’s limited. There is only so much you can do with it.”

But wait a second, PowerPoint is essentially just slides with bullets on them. It’s limited.

What else am I supposed to do?

Here’s an example of what you can do with PowerPoint, if you have enough time.
Microsoft Office

Whether you deal more time with your customers or to respond more quickly to their needs, Office Professional 2007 helps professionals with today's challenging tasks. It simplifies the way you manage contacts and customer information in one place. Visualize data more effectively, format, track, and manage projects and collaborate, and create professional quality marketing materials on the go. Discover the quickest way to more easily find, organize, analyze, and use all the information you need to succeed.

Microsoft Office PowerPoint 2007 makes it easy to quickly create high impact, dynamic presentations. From the Microsoft Office Fluent user interface to the new graphics and formatting capabilities. Office PowerPoint 2007 puts the control in your hands to create great looking presentations.

As Microsoft continues to be inspired and inspired every day by how our customers use our software to find creative solutions to business problems, develop breakthrough ideas, and stay connected to what's most important to them.
A presentation program, such as OpenOffice.org Impress, Apple Keynote or Microsoft PowerPoint, is often used to generate the presentation content.

Presentation is the process of showing and explaining the content of a topic to an audience.

Microsoft Office PowerPoint 2007 enables users to quickly create high-impact, dynamic presentations, while integrating various tools and ways to easily share information. From the Microsoft Office Fluent user interface to the new graphics and formatting capabilities, Office PowerPoint 2007 puts the control in your hands to create great-looking presentations.
Luckily we don’t have to create flashy presentations with cognitive guidance. In fact, those slides were just for fun. Too much animation actually distracts from the message you are trying to communicate.
Luckily we don’t have to create flashy presentations with **cognitive guidance**. Let’s begin by making it easy for the audience to understand our message.

This second presentation ideology produces radically different PowerPoint results because you focus on your message, which is broken down into simpler chunks, illustrated, and explained in a way that supports short-term and long-term memory. The cognitive approach provides real understanding that someone can apply in the workplace.” Cliff Atkinson, Author *Beyond Bullet Points*
Focus
According to Olivia Mitchell, the audience will likely only remember one thing from your presentation. And not even that if not presented correctly.
So, keep your message simple and stay focused on what you REALLY want to communicate.

“Simplicity is the nature of great souls”
-Unknown
According to Cliff Atkinson, well respected business consultant and author of several books on PowerPoint (Beyond Bullet Points), removing unnecessary text from a slide improves the audience’s ability to retain information by 28% and their ability to apply information by 79%. So, if there is a lot of technical data you need to communicate, either just provide a quick summary, spread it over several slides or leave them a white paper or brochure to read after the presentation. Make sure not to give them the handout until after the presentation is over or they will just flip through the handout and not pay attention to what you are saying.
That’s why Cliff Atkinson believes that each bullet point should have its own slide. When combined with the idea of keeping only critical text on the slide, this forces us to distill the information down to its basic components. Chances are you’ve already done this, whether you knew it or not. If you have bullet points on your slides, you’ve already begun the process of breaking the information down into manageable bits.

Also, make sure you use complete sentences as your slide titles. It helps for a more complete and memorable thought.
Even complex ideas and concepts are comprised of many smaller, simpler concepts. Break them down for the audience.
Think about a hamburger. Do you eat the whole thing in one big bite? Do you want to shove the entire hamburger down your audience’s throat? Just like you eat a hamburger bite by bite, concepts are more easily digested by our brains when taken bit by bit. The more complex a concept, the more it needs to be taken one bite at a time.
On this slide, the presenter wants us to eat the entire hamburger in one bite. We just simply can’t handle this much information all at once.
The custom deployment services process for life sciences firms explained

**ASSET DISCOVERY**

Electronic or on-site inventory of hardware and software assets
APPLICATION PACKAGING

Software preparation for customized, automatic installation
IMAGE MANAGEMENT

Cross-platform image builds, patch management and image maintenance
THE RESULT

Less cost and quicker turn-around time on new systems deployment
Images help the mind relax and absorb information quickly. That’s because the mind isn’t struggling to decipher complex textual communications, it can open up to your message more easily.

One popular method of remembering people’s names is to convert their name into an image or by correlating their name to an image of their face. Images are the language of memory and can have a lot of information attached to them. Communication is based on attaching meaning to symbols and sharing symbols which have a broadly understood meaning. If you can find images that correlate to your message, it helps to drive your message home.

Recently a S Korean presidential candidate released a perfume called “Great Korea” into the air at each of their campaign rallies. Then when it came time to vote, they released the same scent outside of the polling places. That candidate won.
We’ve talked about how each slide should be able to stand alone as an explanation of a single concept or idea. They say an image is worth a thousand words. This slide certainly tells its story, even taken out of context, and it implies even more than it is saying. It also implies trust and relationships. It does all of this with two words.
Keep the audience focused on you and you should also focus on the audience. If they are nodding off, or have a puzzled look on their face, stop and ask if there are questions. The more interactive you are, the more engaged your audience will be. Verbally explain your ideas so that the presentation is augmenting what YOU are talking about.
Dell’s history in a nutshell

• It all began with one simple idea and 23 years later...
  – The same simple idea powers the World’s data centers
  – It powers virtually every government on Earth
  – Millions of small businesses
  – And people at home and school everywhere

The power to do more

Let’s take a look at an example. This slide tells its story, but could it be better? Is there anything particularly exciting about this slide?
Let’s look at some examples of this idea applied. These slides really illustrate the point of spreading messages across several slides. Also, notice how the images are just as important as the text. These first slides tell the story of Dell.

It all started as one simple idea...
23 years later
the same simple idea powers the world’s data centers..
.. it powers virtually every government on earth
... and millions of small businesses
I like this image because it portrays such enthusiasm. Whatever you say while this image is on the screen is going to sound cool.
I currently work at Dell
Today’s audiences have shorter attention spans than in the past. They want the meat of the matter, and they want it quick. They’ll become bored when a single slide is displayed for too long. Some edits in today’s media last less than 3 seconds. Put just the main message on the screen, and break up your point over several slides.
So, “What’s the secret of a successful PowerPoint presentation?” Let’s start with the basics.
If you think about it, each slide is like a frame of a story board. Except with PowerPoint, you get to be the director!
Luckily we don’t have to re-invent the wheel here. If you want to make a “show-biz” quality presentation, let’s take some hints from the masters in Hollywood. They’ve been telling stories in a visual format for over 100 years. Start by creating a basic script, so just brainstorm the topics and ideas you want to cover. Even more importantly, as you brainstorm, remember that your audience is going to forget most of what you’ve said, so think about what you most want the audience to walk away with. Maybe even highlight or draw a star by the important topics. This will help you later to distill the information down to your main points.
Begin to organize your topics
(Hint: outlines help!)

Chronological, cause & effect, topical, spatial. Keep thinking about the message and the story you want to tell about it
Start creating slides! Just include one main thought per slide to start.
So, “What’s the secret of a successful PowerPoint presentation?” Let’s start with the basics.

Here are some more helpful hints

1. Get their attention early
2. Keep it simple, take things one step at a time
3. Illustrate your ideas with compelling imagery
4. Tell a story, use complete sentences
5. Present facts to back up your assertions, but don’t get bogged down in the details
6. Avoid Clip Art and distracting animations
7. Only present information when ready to talk about it
8. Find consistent fonts and color schemes to use
Resources and Inspiration

- Cliff Atkinson – Beyond Bullets (Blog)
  - [http://www.beyondbullets.com/](http://www.beyondbullets.com/)

- Olivia Mitchell – Speaking About Presenting (Blog)
  - [http://www.speakingaboutpresenting.com](http://www.speakingaboutpresenting.com)

- Good Resources for Images
  - [http://www.flickr.com/creativecommons/](http://www.flickr.com/creativecommons/)
    - Great source for inexpensive, but professional images and illustrations

- Garr Reynolds blog with lots of tips for making professional, impactful presentations

- Nancy Duarte – Industry expert, recommended
  - [http://blog.duarte.com/](http://blog.duarte.com/)

- Presentation design methods
  - [http://www.presentationadvisors.com/powerpoint-design-methods](http://www.presentationadvisors.com/powerpoint-design-methods)
Thank you!