



Visual Design Essentials **for Teaching or Presenting via Interactive Television**

Welcome to the world of Interactive Television, or ITV for short. ITV is a distance learning technology that allows full interactive participation by students not physically in the same room as the instructor. At MAHEC, health and human service professionals in our 16-county region are able to obtain continuing education without leaving their communities, thus saving them valuable time away from work. In order to make ITV work effectively for you, MAHEC's Center for e-Learning and Telehealth staff put together a list of essential concepts and directions.

PowerPoint ~ Overheads ~ 35mm Slides ~ Documents

Your lecture and/or presentation will be experienced entirely on a 32" TV monitor from as far as 40 feet away. There will be a loss of sharpness and resolution due to the video conversion process. Therefore, it is necessary that you make your text and graphics much larger than you would normally make them, otherwise participants will not be able to read them. These design principles apply to all 2-dimensional media whether it is PowerPoint, Overheads, and/or traditional 35mm slides.

Please adhere to the following design principles:

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| <u>SIZE:</u> | Use nothing smaller than a 30 point font. |
| <u>STYLE:</u> | Make all text bold and select a sans serif font (Arial Works well). |
| <u>COLORS:</u> | Use a dark background (blue works well) with white or very light letters for maximum contrast. Avoid yellow, green and red and bright colors. |
| <u>LAYOUT:</u> | Create everything in landscape orientation to match the shape and Size of the TV screen. Use at least 1-inch margins all around. |



Effective Use of Interactive Video

Many of the guidelines are aimed at overcoming our natural tendency to view anything related to television technology as a passive entertainment activity. Our systems allow full two-way audio and video communication. However, do not expect participants and/or students to take advantage of this unless you help them get used to talking to you on the TV screen. While there are no absolute requirements, consider these suggestions as you plan your presentation.

- Realistically assess the amount of content that can be effectively delivered. Because of the logistics involved, presenting content at a distance is more time consuming than presenting the same content in a traditional classroom. Allow some additional time for interaction from the video sites.
- Arrive at least 30 minutes early so you can become oriented to the room set-up and any equipment you will be using.
- Organize all presentation materials and visuals before the start of the presentation.
- Understand the capabilities and limits of A/V equipment before the start of the your presentation.
- Take time to introduce yourself to the remote sites, and introduce the participating sites one at a time. Acknowledge those at the far end to the local audience as full and equal participants. At the start of the program, get ITV participants used to “talking to their TV screens” early – even if you have to make up a short ice-breaking exercise to do so.
- Deliver no more than 15-20 minutes of lecture before pausing to encourage interaction and questions.
- Establish a protocol for commenting and asking questions. Individuals should preface comments and questions with their name and location. The protocol is up to you, but should be structured and understood by all sites.
- Provide periodic opportunities for the far end sites to participate with comments and/or questions. Call their site by name and give them 15-20 seconds to respond before moving to the next site. Remember that transferring compressed video through a network is not instantaneous. There is a slight delay, so give the person on the other end a chance to respond to your questions and comments. They can’t get your attention by raising their hand, since their site may not be currently displayed on the monitor.
- Repeat questions from the local audience for the benefit of the remote audience. Ask if the far end participants can hear questions from the local participants, especially if you are in a large room. If there is a discussion under way involving your local group, or questions are being asked after a lecture for example, check whether the remote site(s) can hear what is being said.
- Address each site by name when responding or asking questions.