African Footprints Lodge and Conference Centre: Presentation Tips and Guidelines

- You will need to bring your own laptop with you in order to present.
- You need a laptop with an HDMI port to connect to our projector (see figure 1).

Figure 1

- You should always have a copy of your presentation on an external storage device/USB as a back-up (see figure 2).

Figure 2

- Please note that all presentation slides should have a 16:9 aspect ratio:
    - Our presentation screens are 16:9, thus your presentation will look its best at the same ratio.
    - To change your aspect ratio in PowerPoint 2010 and 2013, choose the 'Design' tab then choose 'Slide Size' and select 'Widescreen (16:9)' from the options.
    - Older 4: 3 slides will work for most projectors, but when projected onto a widescreen LCD, these slides will not fill the screen and there will be black bars on the sides (see Figure 3), or your content will be stretched and distorted (see Figure 4).

Figure 3

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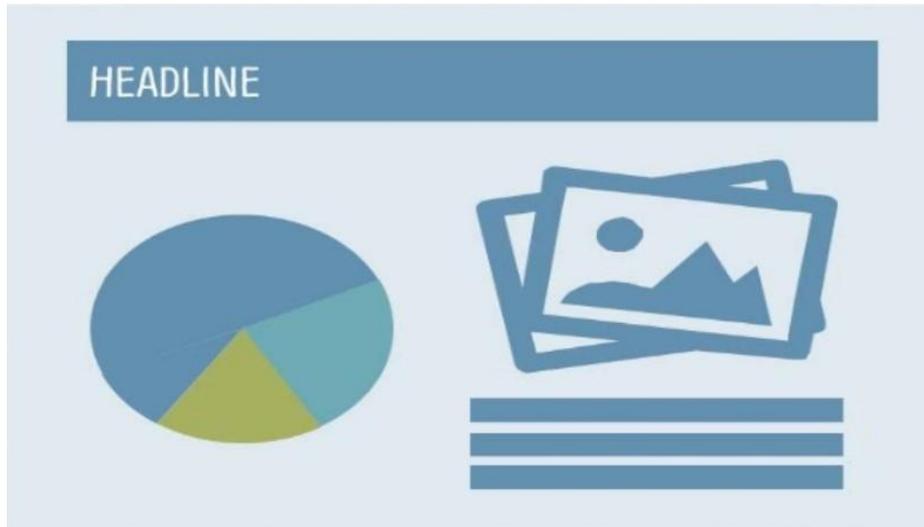VAT No. 4670166679

Figure 4

- Tips regarding slide design:
- Your slides are the illustrations for your presentation, not the presentation itself. They should emphasise and reinforce your verbal presentation. Avoid using a 'wall of text' on slides.
- Limit content to material directly relevant to your presentation.
- Action or animated text and graphics can detract from content. Limit animations to those that will aid understanding.
- Your slides should have plenty of white space or 'negative' space to have the most impact.
- If you believe something will be hard to read or understand, don't use it.

- Tips regarding fonts:
- We strongly recommend using 24-point font for body text. Smaller text may be illegible.
- Sans-serif fonts for body text are the most legible on presentation screens. Examples include Arial, Helvetica and Tahoma.
- Limit font colours to 1 or 2 for the best legibility. Choose either a very light font on a very dark background or a very dark font on a very light background.
- Italics, underlining, shadows, outlines etc are not legible from a distance. Bold can be effective if used consistently and simply.
- Save any 'special' fonts that are not standard. If you're using and presenting on a PC save your PowerPoint file by clicking 'Save Options' in in the 'Save As…' dialog window. Then select the 'Embed TrueType Fonts' check box and press 'OK'. Now your presentation will keep the font file and your fonts won't change if you use a different computer.

- Tips regarding images:
- Use high quality images that will look good on screen (see Figure 5)

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- Small images should not be stretched to make them larger. As a rule of thumb, if a picture looks fuzzy on your monitor (see Figure 6), it will look far worse from further away.
- If you take an image from the internet, make sure it does not have copyright restrictions.

Figure 5   Figure 6

- Tips regarding tables and charts:
- Tables are good for organisation, but any table larger than five columns by five rows becomes crowded and illegible on a presentation slide.
- Audiences appreciate charts that illustrate main points and are easy to read. Avoid using small charts with many crisscrossing lines and small fonts, as the audience will not be able to read them.

- Tips regarding video and audio:
- Audiences love videos.
- Audio clips (such as interviews) are also appreciated.
- Wi-Fi can never be guaranteed, so linking to a video clip on the web is discouraged; links to sites like YouTube can also be broken or sometimes the videos you intended to use may have been removed.
- To avoid Wi-Fi or broken link problems, it is best to have a copy of the video saved on your computer. Programmes like ClipGrab are very useful to download YouTube videos (please ensure that the creator of the video has provided authorisation for the video to be copied or try to attain their permission directly).
- For presentation purposes, you can embed any video or audio within your PowerPoint presentation instead of switching to a different programme on your computer to play it. To embed a video clip, click on the 'Insert' Tab and then 'Embed Video' (as advised above, have a copy of the video elsewhere on your computer in order to avoid problems)
- Make sure that videos and audio clips are clear and easy to hear. Short clips are better than extended samples.

- Tips regarding speaking to an audience:
- You are the focus during your presentation, no matter how interesting your slides. Give some thought to your presentation manner - how you hold yourself, what you wear, how you move around.
- Speak as though talking to a colleague, not reading off a display.
- Plan your presentation so just one new point is displayed at any given moment. If the next four points you plan to make are onscreen, the audience will read them immediately instead of listening to you speak.
- Slide content is for your audience, not you. Avoid reading from your slides.
- Face your audience, not your presentation.
- PowerPoint can display notes on the presenter's screen that are not displayed to the audience. This is the place to put text to prompt your speaking.

African Footprints Lodge and Conference Centre would be happy to assist you in checking your laptop and slides on our projector and screen, to ensure that your presenting experience is as hassle-free as possible. Please contact Elizabeth at conference@africanfootprints.co.za or 079 115 0196 to arrange a time-slot where she can assist you in checking your presentation.