Some Guidelines for PowerPoint Presentations

• Remember this general rule–6x6x6--no more than six word slides in a row, no more than 6 bullets on a slide and 6 words to each bullet. A long list can overwhelm an audience.

• All text should be 18 to 20 points or larger.

• Fonts should be easy to read. Try Arial, Helvetica or Tahoma. They work well.

• Choose one font and font size for headlines and another font and font size for body text. Headline fonts should be san serif and body copy should be serif type. Remember, serif is with feet. San serif without feet.

• Do not use more than 3 fonts.

• Use no more than two levels of bullets (Level 1 headings for main topics and Level 2 headings for subtopics).

• Organize the elements of the slides in advance. Decide which elements are the most important and the least important and organize them accordingly.

• Write phrases, not sentences.

• Less is more. Keep the line length of text to no more than 45 to 55 characters, including spaces. Longer lines are difficult for the audience to read.

• Emphasize text with bold, size, color, and spacing formatting. Be careful with italic, it can be hard to read. Avoid underlining text.

• Consider creating a visual theme by selecting colors and graphics related to the topic of the presentation.

• For slides containing a lot of text, choose simple backgrounds.

• Use bright colors in small areas for emphasis.

• Avoid using all caps. (ALL CAPS ARE MORE DIFFICULT TO READ THAN UPPER AND LOWER CASE TYPE.) Research shows that it takes 57 percent longer to read all caps.

• After designing the slides, stand back and examine them. Make any needed adjustments. Do the drop test to see if you can read the slide. Print out a copy. Drop the paper to the floor. Stand and see if you can read the material. If you can't, you need to start over.