

# Handy guide for effective EPFL PowerPoint presentations

*Hi, I'm Pascal. I'll be giving  
you helpful tips throughout this  
guide.*



16:9

4:3

*My first tip is to use a 16:9 format for your slides, not 4:3. 16:9 is more elegant and modern – people stopped using tube TVs decades ago.*



# Effective PowerPoint presentations



## Your audience:

- can **hear** faster than they can **read**
- can **see** faster than they can **hear**
- can grasp a **simple image** better than written words
- reads from left to right, up to down and clockwise (in western cultures)

# Effective PowerPoint presentations



## Three golden rules:

- 1.** Your message should **captivate** your audience, so it has to be **targeted** and **clear**
- 2.** Your slides should be designed to help get your message across, so it's easier to **remember**
- 3.** The success of your presentation hinges on how well you **present** your information orally



# Effective PowerPoint presentations



## Use slides to support your message

A slideshow should be designed to tell a visual story, like a storyboard or movie. Don't use more than 50% of the space on each slide – white space can help focus your audience's attention and facilitate comprehension.

# Effective PowerPoint presentations



## **Each slide should contain only one message**

Even if that means using more slides and going through them faster, like you're telling a story.

# Effective PowerPoint presentations



## All slides should be consistent

Use the **same font size** throughout, for both titles and body text.

But you can vary:

**Full-screen images, the background on slides introducing new sections, visual elements, etc.**

# Effective PowerPoint presentations



## But don't add useless distractions

To keep your audience focused, don't use:

- Sounds and images that aren't really necessary
- Complicated backgrounds
- Too many logos or titles
- Bulleted lists with several levels
- A hodge-podge of animations
- A mix of transitions
- Too many different colors
- Too much shadowing
- Too much text

# KISS

(Keep It Simple, Stupid)

# Click to add title (**Impact**, body 24)



## ***Titles that grab***

*Use verbs in the titles of each of your slides, to make your presentation action-oriented. For example, “Give VIPs a better welcome.”*

# Sign your EPFL presentation

*For instance, you could put the title of your talk, your lab, your name and the date.*

*People won't remember your name if you only say it. A footer with this info should appear on all your slides.*

*To change the footer, go to Insert > Footer, Arial body 7.5*



# Stick to these fonts

## Impact

Arial Narrow Regular  
*Arial Narrow Italic*  
Arial Normal

Arial Narrow Bold  
*Arial Narrow Bold Italic*  
Arial Bold

**Arial Narrow Bold**  
***Arial Narrow Bold Italic***



- **Impact** for titles (body 24)
- Arial Narrow for text (body 18-24)
- **Arial** for quotes and tips (56+)

***Don't use any other fonts!***

*Using the same font throughout makes it easier for your audience to follow your presentation and associate a given font with a given type of content – letting them focus exclusively on your message.*



# Don't use a lot of text

Studies have shown that people read text boxes before they look at images.

Reading is a reflex; people can't help themselves when text is in front of them.

Source: [www.lergonome.org](http://www.lergonome.org)



## *Keep words to a strict minimum*

*People spontaneously read what's in front of them. Use too much text and you'll lose your audience's attention. And you'll be tempted to read from your slides instead of explaining your points.*

# Make reading easy

Studies have shown that people read text boxes before they look at images.

Reading is a reflex; **people can't help themselves when text is in front of them.**

Source: [www.lergonome.org](http://www.lergonome.org)



*To make sure your slides can be read easily, use a large font and keep the text to eight lines max.*

*Do not use ALL CAPS (e.g., Philosophy, not PHILOSOPHY)*

*Do not use shadowing or underlining; rather, use **bold** (red or black) for emphasis*

*Use italics for sources and examples*

# Forget bulleted lists

Studies have shown that people read text boxes before they look at images.

**Reading is a reflex.**

**People can't help themselves when text is in front of them.**

Source: [www.lergonome.org](http://www.lergonome.org)



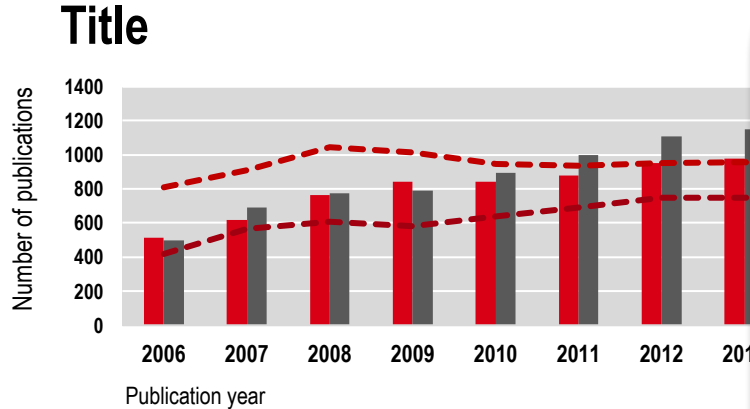
*Use bulleted lists sparingly. Don't overload your slides with endless bulleted lists containing several levels each.*

*If you must use a bulleted list, do so selectively and limit each bullet point to a single line. Get straight to the point!*

# Less is more

The fewer things on your slides, the better.  
That will let your audience focus on one point at a time, retain that point better and not get information-overload.

# Use graphs, not tables



*The title of a graph should tell people what to look for – a trend, a relationship between two variables, etc.*

*Use the right type of graph for your message – pie charts for percentages and line graphs for trends over time, for example.*

*Get rid of any information that doesn't help your audience grasp the key message – legends, grids, etc.*

*Put the main information in larger font and use thicker lines. You can also draw attention to a key point with an arrow.*

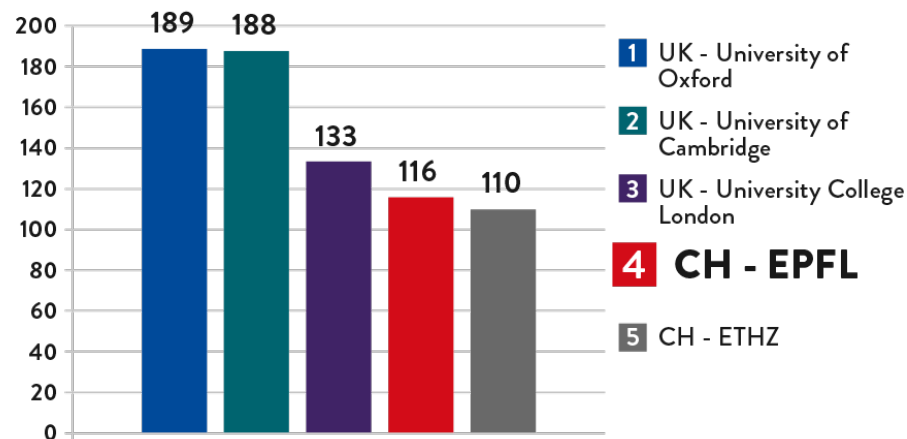


# Use graphs, not tables

Country	Higher-Education Institution	No	StG	CoG	AdG	Total	LS	PE	SH
UK	University of Oxford	1	78	36	75	189	52	76	61
UK	University of Cambridge	2	83	34	71	188	66	88	34
UK	University College London	3	65	27	41	133	53	39	41
CH	Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne (EPFL)	4	53	15	48	116	33	81	2
CH	Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich (ETH Zurich)	5	45	7	58	110	34	72	4
IL	Weizmann Institute	6	55	23	32	110	64	44	2
IL	Hebrew University of Jerusalem	7	55	15	34	104	45	42	17
UK	Imperial College	8	49	14	23	86	30	54	2
UK	University of Edinburgh	9	34	14	35	83	28	32	23
NL	University of Amsterdam	10	32	21	19	71	7	24	40
DK	University of Copenhagen	11	32	21	16	69	29	24	16
IL	Tel Aviv University	12	40	10	16	66	29	31	6
BE	University of Leuven	13	34	11	20	65	18	33	14
DE	University of Munich (LMU)	14	28	4	29	61	25	21	15
NL	Radboud University Nijmegen	15	32	10	14	56	21	12	23
NL	Delft University of Technology	16	26	14	15	56	6	44	6
NL	Utrecht University	17	26	17	13	56	10	25	21
UK	University of Bristol	18	22	9	26	55	9	36	10
CH	University of Zurich	19	22	9	20	51	31	9	11
NL	Leiden University	20	25	9	16	50	21	21	29
FI	University of Helsinki	21	25	8	15	48	32	11	5
IL	Technion - Israel Institute of Technology	22	32	6	10	48	16	31	1

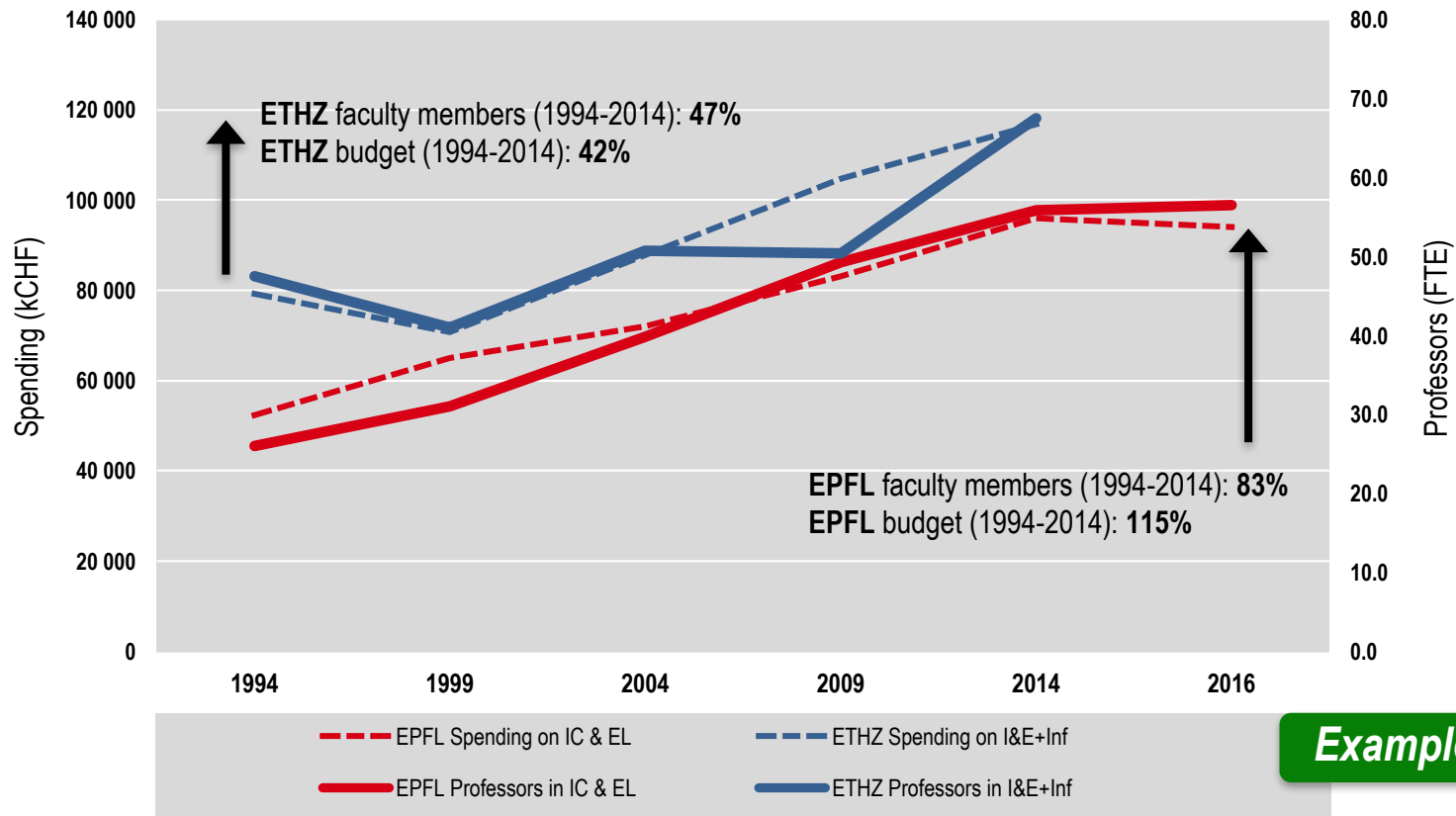
## Universités / Hautes Ecoles

Total 2007-2015 + les Starting et Consolidator grants 2016



Tables are too hard to read

# EPFL has a strong digital science group

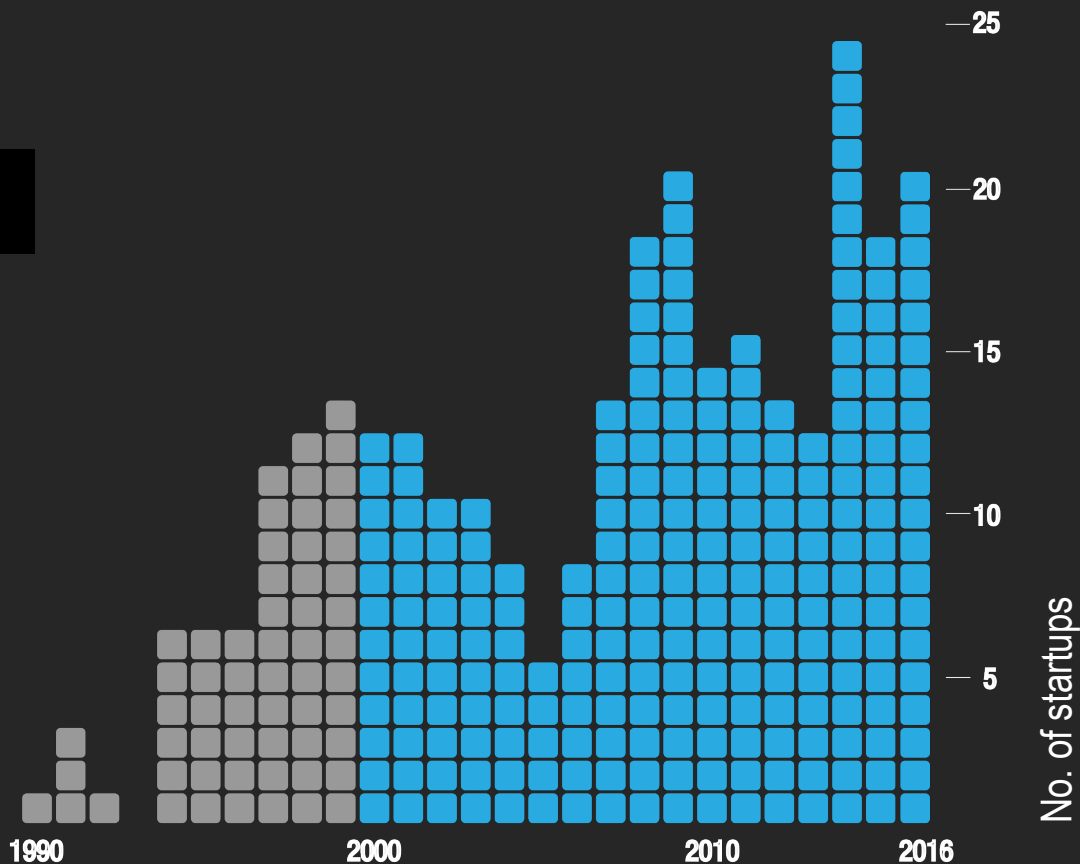


**Example**



# 230 startups created between 2000 and 2016

**CHF 261m** raised in 2016





# Use color to liven up your slides

But don't use more than

**three colors,**

otherwise you'll confuse your audience



*Fashion experts say you shouldn't wear more than three colors at a time. The same holds true for PowerPoint slides.*

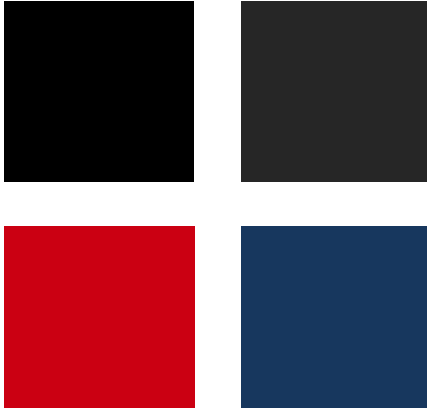
*Use a uniform (not gradient) background color, another color to draw attention to your main point, and a third color for all other content on the slide.*

# Use EPFL colors in your slide (slide master)

## Positive



## Negative

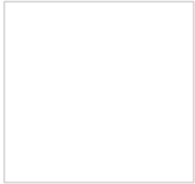


*Present your information in a lively way, to keep your audience attentive and engaged.*

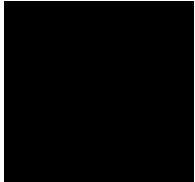
*For instance, occasionally switch from a positive to negative background, and from text slides to a full-screen image. You could also sneak in a funny image once in a while, to lighten things up.*



# Use EPFL colors in your slide (slide master)



Arial Narrow Regular  
*Arial Narrow Italic*  
Arial Normal



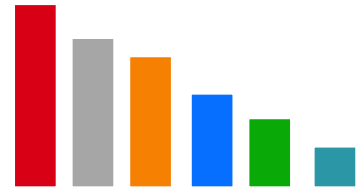
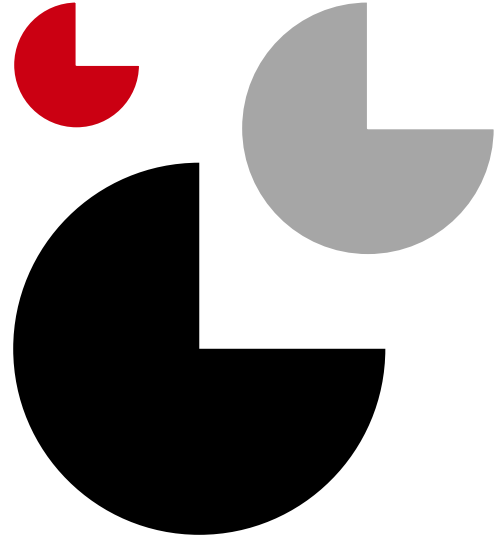
Arial Narrow Bold  
*Arial Narrow Bold Italic*  
Arial Bold



Arial Narrow Bold  
*Arial Narrow Bold Italic*



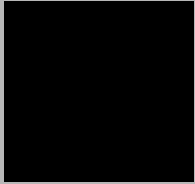
White example



# Use EPFL colors in your slide (slide master)



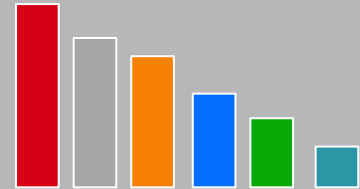
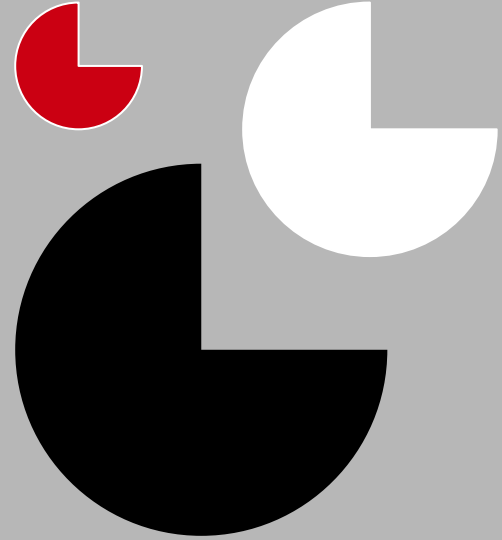
Arial Narrow Regular  
*Arial Narrow Italic*  
Arial Normal



Arial Narrow Bold  
*Arial Narrow Bold Italic*  
Arial Bold

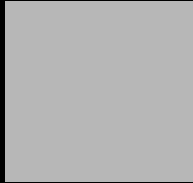


Arial Narrow Bold  
*Arial Narrow Bold Italic*

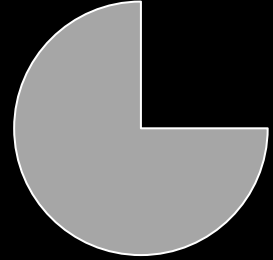


Light grey example

# Use EPFL colors in your slide (slide master)



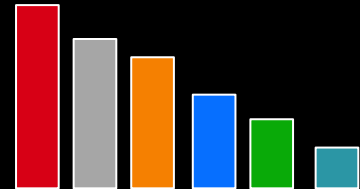
Arial Narrow Regular  
*Arial Narrow Italic*  
Arial Normal



**Arial Narrow Bold**  
***Arial Narrow Bold Italic***  
**Arial Bold**



**Arial Narrow Bold**  
***Arial Narrow Bold Italic***

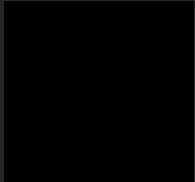


**Black example**

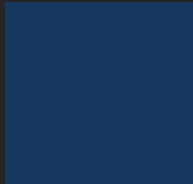
# Use EPFL colors in your slide (slide master)



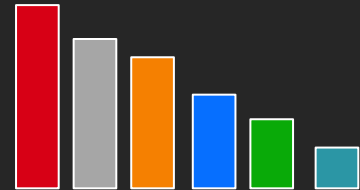
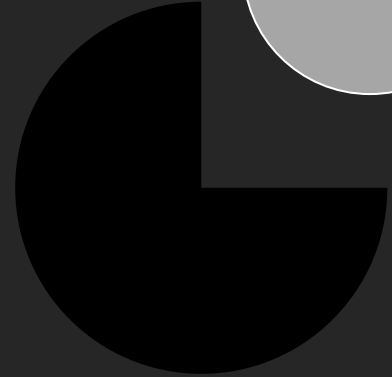
Arial Narrow Regular  
*Arial Narrow Italic*  
Arial Normal



Arial Narrow Bold  
*Arial Narrow Bold Italic*  
Arial Bold



Arial Narrow Bold  
*Textes Arial Narrow Bold Italic*

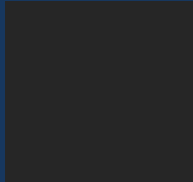
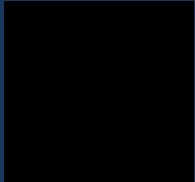


**Dark grey example**

# Use EPFL colors in your slide (slide master)



Arial Narrow Regular  
*Arial Narrow Italic*  
Arial Normal



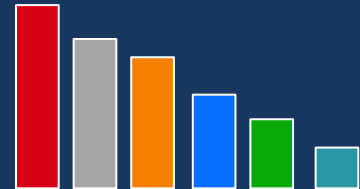
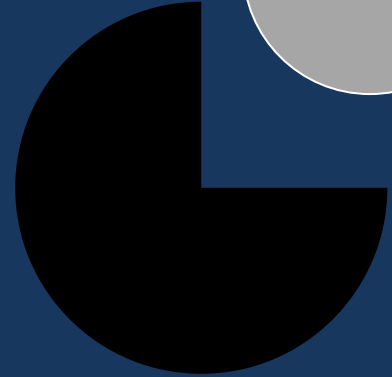
Arial Narrow Bold  
*Arial Narrow Bold Italic*  
Arial Bold



Arial Narrow Bold  
*Arial Narrow Bold Italic*



**Blue example**



# The right way to use images



*Images should support your message. Show them in **full screen** whenever possible.*

*The right image should neatly summarize what you want to say. Don't waste time describing the image, instead explain your point.*

*Studies have shown that vision is our dominant sense, and that our brains are attracted more to pictures than text. So be sure to leverage visuals to boost your presentation's impact.*



# Ecole polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne

Presentation title

Your name



Image

First slide

*The image should be the background*



# Digitalization @ EPFL

Presentation title

Your name



Image

First slide in  
context

*A collection of images will soon be available*

**We are ready to  
embrace the new  
opportunities that  
digitalization brings**



***Example slide***

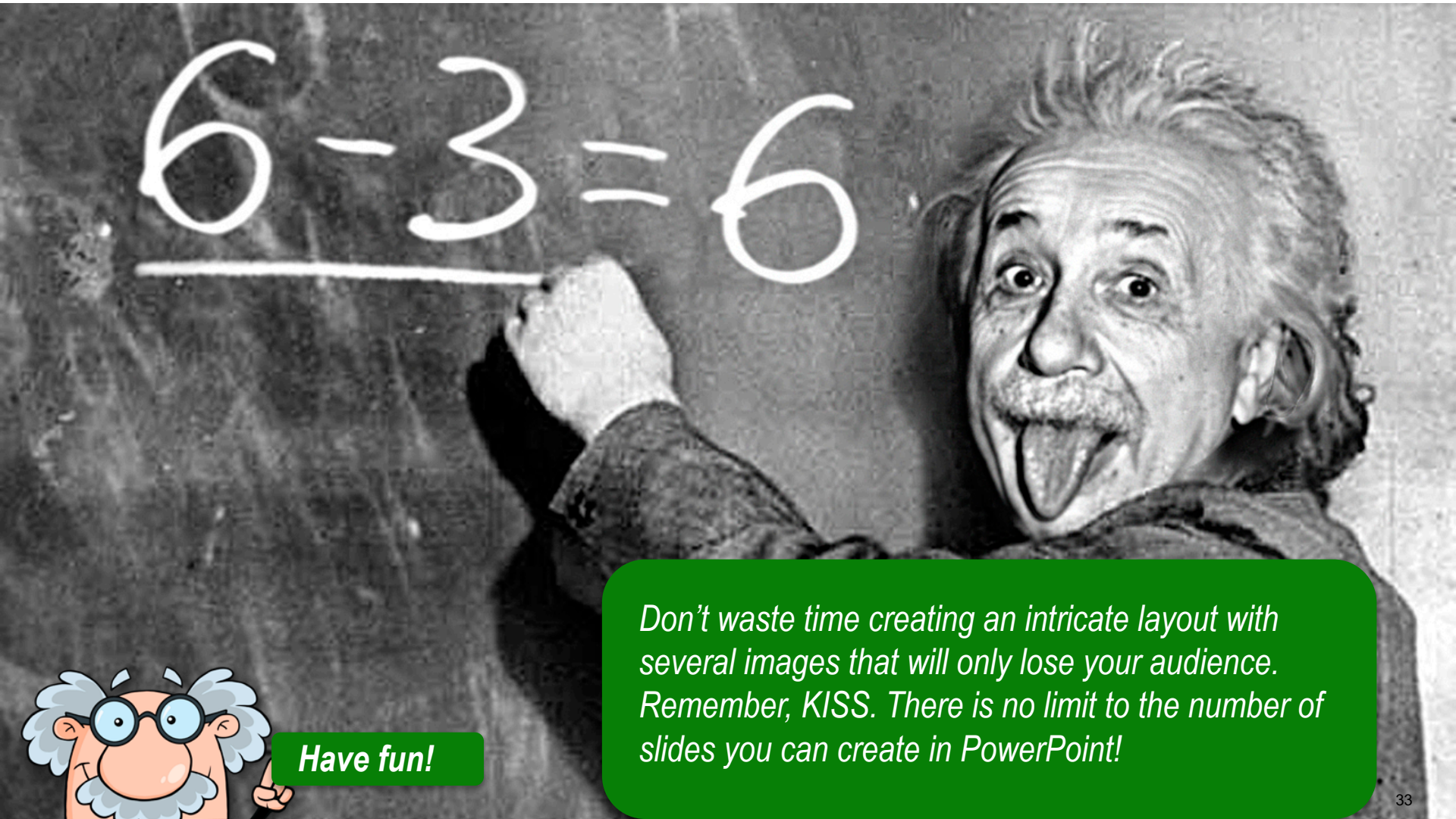




# New initiatives



*Example intro slide for a new section*

A black and white photograph of Albert Einstein, looking at the camera with a playful expression, sticking out his tongue. He is holding a piece of chalk and has just finished writing the equation  $6 - 3 = 6$  on a chalkboard. The equation is written in large, white, hand-drawn numbers. A horizontal line is drawn under the first '6' and the minus sign.
$$6 - 3 = 6$$

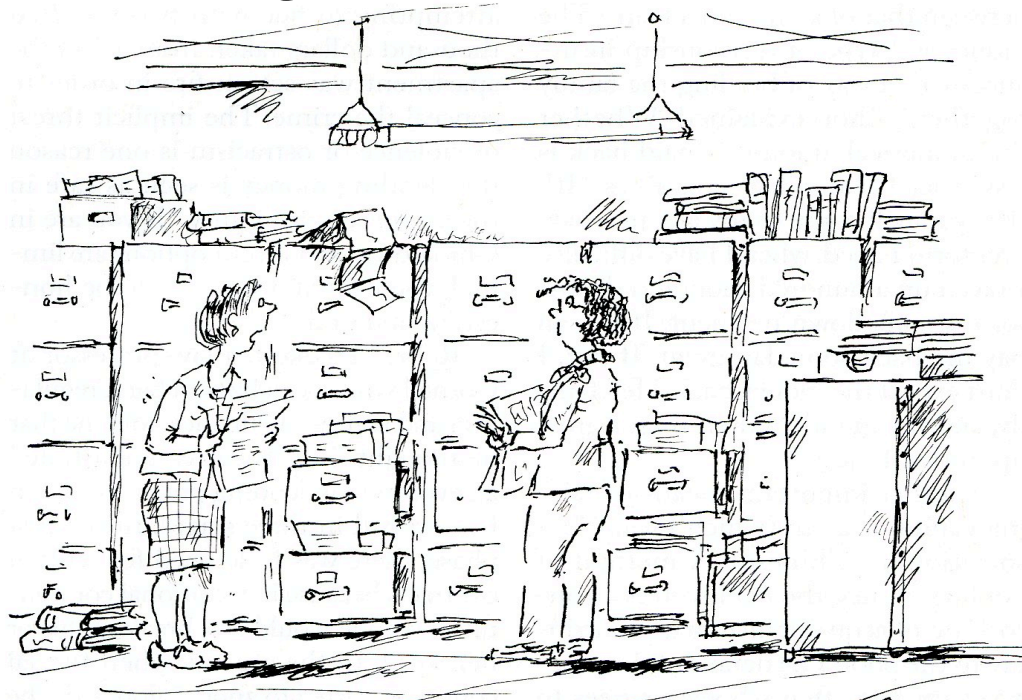


**Have fun!**

*Don't waste time creating an intricate layout with several images that will only lose your audience. Remember, KISS. There is no limit to the number of slides you can create in PowerPoint!*



# The right way to use images



**Don't forget the copyright**

*"A robot was doing my job, but it quit."*

© Barbara Smaller, *The New Yorker*



# Don't go overboard!

## Animation

*Animation effects can make a presentation seem unprofessional. They are superfluous and needlessly monopolize the audience's attention. Use them only if you have no choice.*



## Slide transitions

*Ditto for transitions! They are generally useless and break the audience's concentration – and yours!*

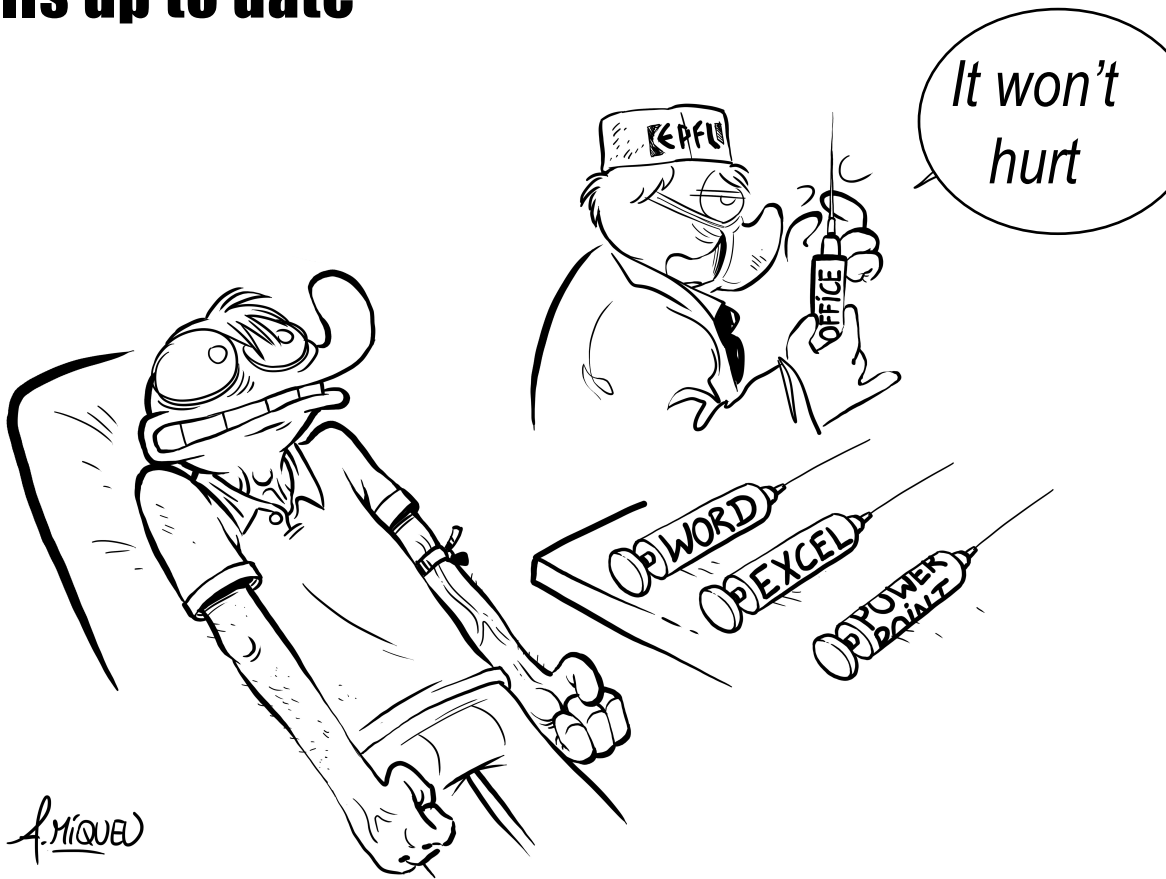
# Keep your PowerPoint skills up to date



*The EPFL Staff Training Service (STS) now offers a new type of refresher course to help you develop your PowerPoint skills.*

Learn more at:  
**[sfp.epfl.ch/rapido](http://sfp.epfl.ch/rapido)**

*f. Miquel*





# Over to you!

***Don't end with "The End."***  
*Conclude with a call to action.*

*Your conclusion is important  
because it largely determines  
what state of mind your audience  
will leave with.*



# Questions?

*Use the slide that will appear during Q&A to once again give your name and organization.*



# Conclusion

Thanks for your  
attention

