

# Elevate 2019

# Steps to Make Accessible Slide Decks

Campus Labs is committed to accessibility whenever possible and we thank you for helping ensure all attendees can benefit from accessible presentations.

The below information covers seven important elements to focus on, including tips and guidance to ensure your slide deck is usable and accessible for all attendees.

## 1: Contrast

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Use color combinations that achieve recommended contrast ratios, or those that surpass recommended ratios.

Be bold with contrast choices. Subtle contrast between text and background is hard to see, especially when projector quality and room lighting scenarios will vary. Be careful when putting text over an image. If you do, make sure it also passes contrast ratios or has a background contrast behind the text before it's placed on the image.

A good rule of thumb is to use light text on darker backgrounds, or darker text on light backgrounds.

### **Important**

Don't rely on color to convey things that aren't conveyed in another way, such as a style, like underline or bold, or added icons, etc.

**Use these resources to help:**

[WebAIM Contrast Checker](#)

[Web Content Accessibility Guidelines Contrast Criterion](#)

## 2: Alternative (Alt) Text

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All images need descriptive alt text. This includes photographs, shapes, screenshots, charts, and tables. To determine the best alt text, ask the question: “If I could not see this image, what text would I put in its place?” In many cases, this will be a brief overview of something like a screenshot.

Unless images are part of the slide background, there is no way to hide a decorative image (simply for fluff/add no value) in Powerpoint, so images that don’t add context to the slide should be kept to a minimum. Background images don’t need any sort of attempt at alt text.

Logos should just be described as whatever they are the logo for (“Vanderbilt University”). You do not need to add “logo” to logo image alt text.

**Use this resource to help:**

[Microsoft Powerpoint Alt Text Procedure](#)

## 3: Text Size & Amount of Text

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**Do not use text smaller than 20.** Avoid using all caps, use bold for emphasis, and be realistic with spacing.

Remember: it’s a slide, not a novel. Every time you put up text, the audience will read it instead of listening to you. More text means waiting longer to reclaim their attention. Consider people with cognitive disabilities struggling to both read and pay attention to you, or people with reading difficulties being unable to finish reading text-heavy slides. Use keywords or short phrases in slides—not whole sentences—and avoid paragraphs.

## 4: Slide Titles

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All slides need to be titled uniquely, but not all titles need to be visible. People who have vision impairments or reading disabilities rely on slide titles to navigate. If they use a screen reader to view the content, they can scan through a list of titles and go directly to the slide they need.

**Use these resources to help:**

[Microsoft Powerpoint Slide Title Addition Procedure](#)

[Microsoft Powerpoint Side Title Hiding Procedure](#)

## 5: Descriptive Links

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Raw URLs (full URLs without set display text) may not make sense to people viewing the deck, so make the text descriptive. Descriptive links help provide users the proper context of where clicking that link will take them. People using a screen reader will navigate from link to link.

### **Use this resource to help:**

[Microsoft Powerpoint Link Editing Procedure](#)

## 6: Screen Reading Order

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By default, a lot of slides should be correct already, but setting the reading order of contents will make it easier for any person using a screen reader to hear the contents in the order they're intended to be read. Within Powerpoint, the content is read top to bottom and should actually show up in the order page starting at the bottom.

### **Use this resource to help:**

[Microsoft Powerpoint Content Reading Order Procedure](#)

## 7: Plain Language

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Avoid specialist words and phrases. Assume there can be a minimum level of knowledge. Avoid using jargon and acronyms, even if you think they're well known. Explain them first, and spell it out first if you are going to reference later.

Don't mistake using simple words for "dumbing down" a slide.

Mind your language—your choice of words may offend or exclude some of your audience and you may not even know it. Don't assume your audience has the same abilities, background, or experience as you.