2026 ascd annual

June 28–July 1
Orlando, Florida

Co-located with ISTELive — two amazing events, one registration.

Presenter Tips *and Best Practices*

event.ascd.org/2025/

ASCD Annual Conference 26 Presenter Tips and Best Practices

SPOKEN PRESENTATIONS

- ○ Speak clearly and at a moderate pace.
- ○ Use a microphone at all times, even in small rooms.
- ○ Avoid turning your back to the audience when speaking.
- ○ Describe visual content.
- ○ Use inclusive language (avoid jargon, idioms, or ableist language).
- ○ Avoid vague references ("this, that, these, etc.") and clearly state what you are referring to.
- ○ Repeat questions or comments from the audience before responding.
- ○ Offer multiple ways for the audience to participate (written and verbal questions).

PRESENTATION SLIDES

FORMATING:

- ○ Header text should be minimum 32 pt font, preferred/optimal is 36-44 pt font.
- ○ Body text should be a minimum 18-24 pt font.
- ○ Select a simple, sans serif font (Arial, Calibri, Helvetica, Poppins).
- ○ Use consistent formatting throughout (titles, bullets, spacing).
- ○ Maintain high contrast between text and background.
  - ▸ Contrast is the noticeable difference between two or more elements.
  - ▸ Example: Bold text on a white background.
- ○ Use a color contrast checker.
  - ▸ Avoid using red and green together; it can be problematic for those with color blindness.
  - ▸ Select solid backgrounds over busy or patterned backgrounds.
- ○ Leave ample whitespace to reduce visual clutter.
- ○ Limit each slide to one main idea.
- ○ Use left-aligned text and avoid full justification for better readability.
- ○ See sample slides

CONTENT:

- ○ Include a brief agenda or overview slide.
- ○ End with a summary or key takeaways slide to reinforce main points.
- ○ Ensure slide titles clearly reflect the slide content.
- ○ Spell out acronyms on first use.
- ○ Use clear language and avoid jargon and idioms.
- ○ Allow the audience time to read slides.

GRAPHIC CONTENT (VISUALS):

- ○ Add descriptive alt-text and/or provide a verbal explanation of images, charts, or graphs.
- ○ Ensure visuals are clear and high resolution.
- ○ Use animation sparingly and with clear purpose, avoiding any flashing, flickering, or blinking effects – especially those that occur more than three times per second.
- ○ Do not rely on visuals alone to convey important information; summarize verbally.

VIDEOS:

- ○ Use captions to support deaf or hard-of-hearing audiences.
- ○ Audio and video quality should be high, with a clear and understandable audio track.
- ○ Provide a brief summary of the video's content to give blind and low-vision audience members context.

HANDOUTS

FORMATING:

- ○ Headings should be a minimum 16-18 pt font for the general audience.
- ○ Body text should be a minimum 12-14 pt font for the general audience.
- ○ Select a simple, sans serif font (Arial, Calibri, Helvetica, Poppins).
- ○ Use 1.5 line spacing or greater to enhance readability.
- ○ Avoid dense blocks of text.
  - ▸ Break content into short paragraphs, bullet points, or numbered lists.
- ○ Use left-aligned text and avoid full justification for better readability.
- ○ Use bold for emphasis; avoid italics and all caps.
- ○ Maintain high contrast between text and background.
- ○ Use a color contrast checker.
  - ▸ Avoid using red and green together; it can be problematic for those with color blindness.
  - ▸ Select solid backgrounds over busy or patterned backgrounds.
- ○ Leave ample whitespace to reduce visual clutter.

DIGITAL ACCESSIBILITY (IF SHARING ELECTRONICALLY):

- ○ Use accessible formats.
  - ▸ Properly tagged PDFs.
  - ▸ Microsoft Word and/or Google Docs accessibility checker enabled.
  - ▸ Plain HTML or text versions.
- ○ Ensure links are descriptive.
- ○ Upload handouts and URLs via your presenter portal to make them available to attendees through the conference website program search.

POSTER PRESENTATIONS

POSTER DESIGN:

- Header text should be 85-120 pt font.
- Body text should be minimum 24-32 pt font.
- Select simple, sans serif font (Arial, Calibri, Helvetica, Poppins).
- Line spacing should be a minimum 1.5 line height.
- Use consistent formatting throughout (titles, bullets, spacing).
- Maintain high contrast between text and background.
- Use a color contrast checker.
  - Avoid using red and green together; it can be problematic for those with color blindness.
  - Select solid backgrounds over busy or patterned backgrounds.
- Leave ample whitespace to reduce visual clutter.
- Add image descriptions directly on the poster for key visuals.
- Avoid dense blocks of text.
  - Break content into short paragraphs, bullet points, or numbered lists.
- Use left-aligned text and avoid full justification for better readability.

INTERACTION AND ENGAGEMENT:

- Summarize poster content aloud.
- Face the audience when speaking.
- Offer a large-print or digital version on a tablet, QR code, or handout.
  - QR code should direct to a text-only version of poster.

VIRTUAL PRESENTERS

- Avoid backlighting and harsh overhead lighting when possible.
- Soft, forward-facing light is preferable.
- Speak clearly and at a moderate pace.
- Tell the audience where they can find any materials that are referenced.
- Explain where they can find close captioning, chat, and Q&A options on the screen.
- Tell the audience if/when there will be breaks.
- Describe any images on the screen.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Color Contrast Checker

Canva Design Accessibility Tips

Google Accessibility Tips

Microsoft Accessibility Guidelines

Alt Text Guidelines

Disability Language Guide

Sample Slides