

Presentation Design Fundamentals

- Visual design shapes clarity, credibility, and audience action
- Well-designed slides improve comprehension and long-term retention
- Strong visuals make presentations 43% more persuasive
- Course roadmap: structure, hierarchy, typography, color, imagery
- Practical workflow from outline to polished deck



Why Slide Design Directly Affects Retention and Persuasion



- Audience recall improves when headlines state the slide's main assertion



- Visual support makes presentations 43% more persuasive than unaided delivery



- Assertion-evidence slides outperform noun-phrase headlines plus bullet lists



- Decorative or irrelevant visuals reduce learning and weaken presenter credibility

How the Audience Brain Processes a Slide



- Audiences cannot read text while listening to narration



- Preattentive attributes guide attention before conscious reading



- Use one idea per slide to respect working memory



- Sentence headlines improve recall versus phrase headlines

READING

Visual input
(text on slide)



LISTENING

Auditory input
(narration)



WORKING MEMORY

Bottleneck—
limited capacity
for both input
and processing



COGNITIVE LOAD

When reading and listening compete, cognitive load rises and understanding drops.

● Low Load ● Moderate Load ● High Load

The Four Core Design Principles:

Contrast, Alignment, Repetition, Proximity



Contrast

- **Contrast:** Make different elements strongly different to create focus



Alignment

- **Alignment:** Connect every element to another for order and unity



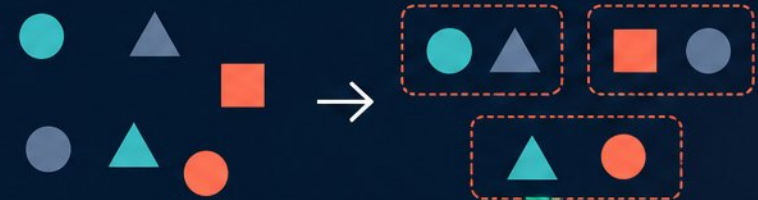
Repetition

- **Repetition:** Reuse fonts, colors, and layouts for visual consistency



Proximity

- **Proximity:** Group related items together to signal relationship



- Together, these principles create clear, scannable, intentional slides

Whitespace and Visual Hierarchy: Guiding the Eye Intentionally



BEFORE: Crowded and Confusing

Design Better Slides

Effective slide design is essential for clear communication. When slides are crowded with too much text, images, and elements, the audience doesn't know where to look. Everything competes for attention, which causes confusion and reduces impact. Good design uses visual hierarchy and whitespace to guide the eye and emphasize what matters most.



Key Principles for Better Slide Design

- Use size and placement to define a clear viewing order
- Use whitespace as an active tool for emphasis and comprehension
- Group related items to signal connection and reduce clutter
- Split one crowded slide into one-idea-per-slide layouts

Why It Matters

A clear visual hierarchy helps your audience quickly grasp your message and stay engaged from start to finish.



Remember, your slides support your presentation—they don't replace it. Keep it simple, be intentional, and design with your audience in mind. Less clutter. More clarity. Stronger impact.



AFTER: Clear and Intentional

Design Better Slides

Use visual hierarchy and whitespace to guide attention and make your message stick.



Use size and placement to define a clear viewing order



Use whitespace as an active tool for emphasis and comprehension



Group related items to signal connection and reduce clutter



Split one crowded slide into one-idea-per-slide layouts

Structuring Your Presentation as a Narrative

- A clear story arc beats chronological or topic-by-topic order
- Problem → Solution → Impact
- Situation → Complication → Resolution
- Before → After → Bridge
- Make the audience the hero of the transformation
- Use signposting and transitions to maintain momentum



Typography That Communicates

- Sans-serif for on-screen body text; serif for elegant, editorial titles
- Pair Montserrat or Poppins headings with Lato, Open Sans, or Inter body text
- Keep body text at 24pt+ and line spacing around 1.2 for back-of-room readability
- Avoid thin weights, decorative scripts, and more than two font families

RECOMMENDED FONT PAIRING

HEADING FONT

MONTSERRAT

EXTRA BOLD

SIZE
72pt+

WEIGHT
Extra Bold

Clear Ideas.
Stronger Impact.

STYLE
Uppercase for labels,
Title Case for headlines

BODY FONT

LATO

REGULAR

SIZE
24pt+

LINE SPACING
Around 1.2

Good typography improves comprehension, retention, and credibility. Use clean, readable fonts and clear hierarchy to communicate your message effectively.

ALIGNMENT
Left-aligned
for readability

Color and Contrast for Clarity and Accessibility



- Build a simple, reusable palette for consistency and brand perception.



- Meet WCAG AA contrast: 4.5:1 for normal text, 3:1 for large text.



- Never rely on color alone to convey meaning; add labels or icons.



- Check contrast with the WebAIM Contrast Checker or built-in tools.

SIMPLE, REUSABLE PALETTE



CONTRAST RATIO CHECKER (TEXT EXAMPLES)

This is an example of normal text.



Does not meet 4.5:1
Low contrast makes text hard to read.

This is an example of normal text.



Meets 4.5:1
Good contrast makes text easy to read.

Using Images and Visual Aids That Support the Message



USE THESE



AVOID THESE



High-quality photo



Clip art



Simple icon



Pixelated image



Clear diagram



Irrelevant visuals



- Choose high-quality images that reinforce the message, not decorate it



- Use icons, diagrams, and infographics to simplify complex ideas



- Avoid clip art, pixelated graphics, and irrelevant visuals



- Source images ethically and credit them appropriately

Designing Charts and Graphs for Rapid Comprehension



- Match chart type to the analytical relationship



- Announce the key insight with active titles and annotations



- Remove chartjunk: dense gridlines, shadows, decorative color



- Keep scales honest and avoid overly complex visualizations



- Make the chart interpretable in three seconds or less

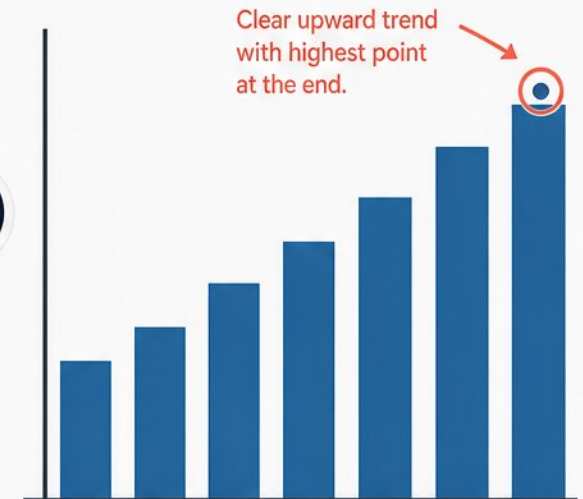
BEFORE

Hard to Read, Hard to Understand



AFTER

Clear Trend. Key Insight Instantly.



Adapting Design to Context and Audience



SMALL MEETING ROOM

Speed and clarity for quick decisions



LARGE CONFERENCE ROOM

Readable from a distance, impactful and focused



SHARED FILES (DETAIL VIEW)

More detail for review and reference



Business meetings prioritize speed, logic, and immediate decision-making



Classrooms and conferences need designs readable from a distance



Live delivery uses minimal on-slide text; shared files carry more detail



Screen size, room scale, and brand rules shape every visual choice

Common Slide Design Mistakes and How to Fix Them

Our Amazing Strategy!!! *Best in Class!*

WE DELIVER EXCELLENCE THROUGH INNOVATION AND
COLLABORATION TO DRIVE TRANSFORMATION

Key Points You Must Remember

In today's fast-paced and constantly evolving business environment, organizations need to be agile, customer-centric, and data-driven in order to stay ahead of the competition and deliver outstanding value to all stakeholders. This requires empowering cross-functional teams, fostering a culture of continuous learning and improvement, leveraging cutting-edge technologies and best practices, while also maintaining a strong focus on operational excellence, risk management, compliance, and sustainability across all levels of the organization.

- ❖ Empower teams
- Customer first always
- *Leverage cutting-edge technologies*
- Operate with excellence
- ★ Sustain growth responsibly



Let's Make Things Happen Together!

Overloaded text

Inconsistent fonts, colors, and alignment

Decorative visuals

No clear hierarchy

Cluttered and noisy

HOW TO FIX IT



- Overloaded text: edit down, or move detail to speaker notes



- Inconsistent fonts, colors, and alignment break visual unity



- Decorative visuals distract from the core message



- Apply a repeatable audit: message, hierarchy, consistency



- Make each fix intentional — don't just polish the clutter

COGNITIVE LOAD GAUGE

Design choices affect how hard your audience has to think.

BEFORE: HIGH LOAD



Harder to process,
easier to lose.



Reduce friction.
Increase clarity.

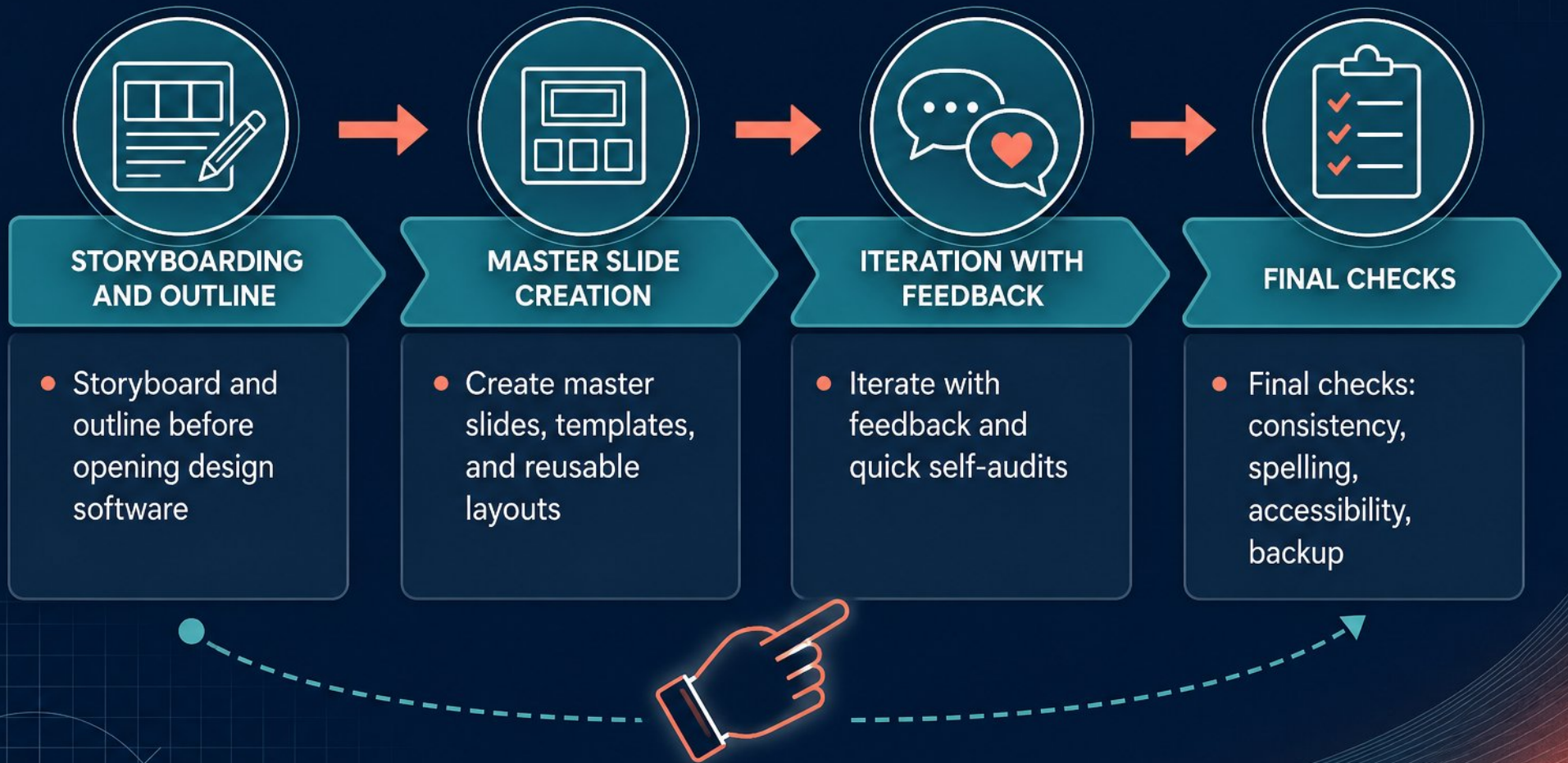
AFTER: LOW LOAD



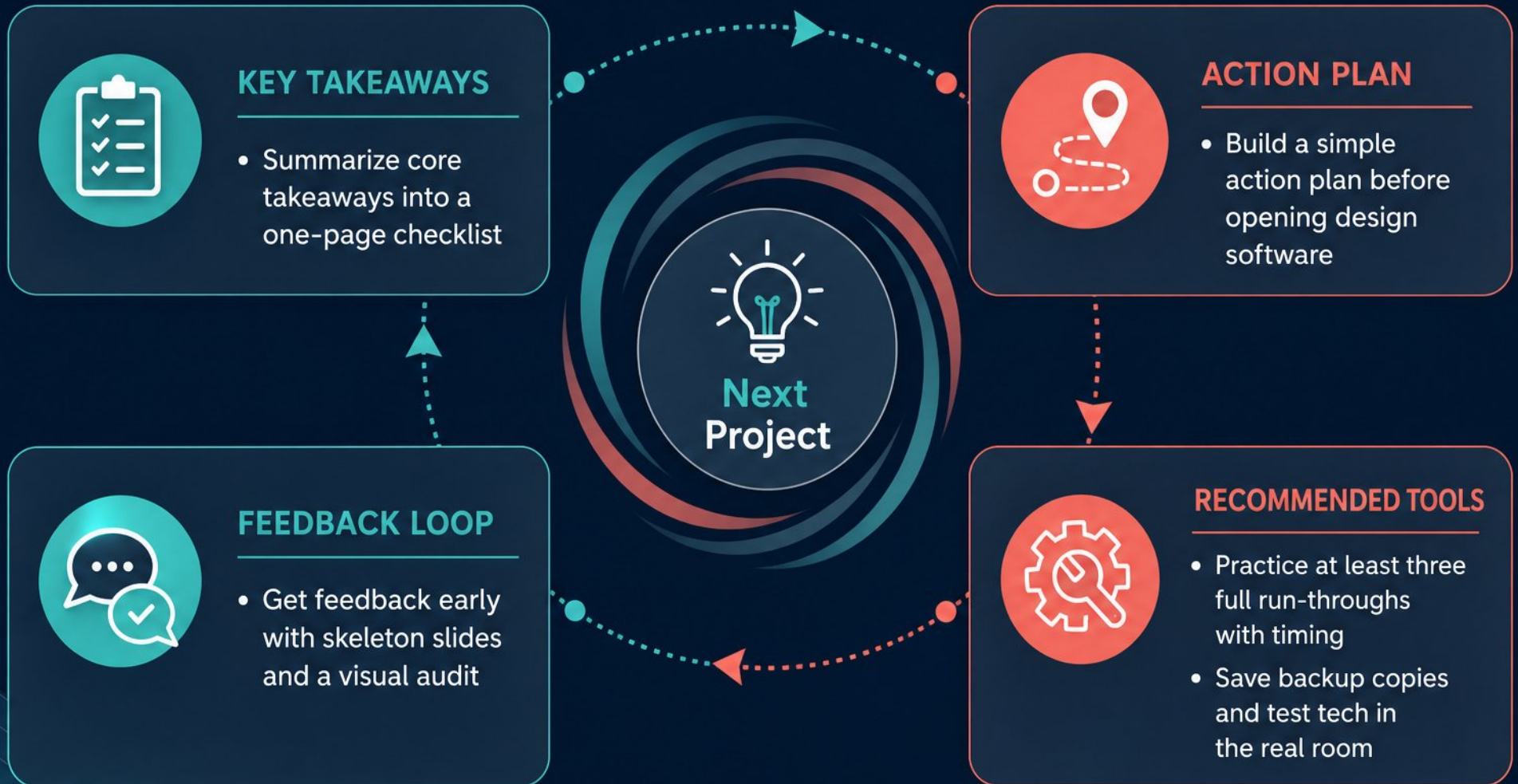
Easier to understand,
more likely to remember.

A Practical Workflow:

From Outline to Finished Deck



Applying These Fundamentals to Your Next Project



PersonWise.

PersonWise • AI digital-human course platform



Scan the code or click anywhere to watch this course live, with voice Q&A

personwise.ai/t/6418655c/public