Pecha Kucha

For the ASTD Sacrament Throw-down 2013

Daniel Pink article on Pecha Kucha

[www.wired.com/techbiz/media/magazine/15-09/st\_pechakucha](http://www.wired.com/techbiz/media/magazine/15-09/st_pechakucha)

link to NPR article

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=130698873>

Link to article below

<http://catherinecronin.wordpress.com/2012/06/13/pecha-kucha/>

Some wonderful examples of Pecha Kucha presentations were a highlight of the recent [Galway Symposium on Higher Education](http://www.nuigalway.ie/celt/conference/conference12.html) (#celt12) held at NUI Galway. If you’ve attended or delivered a Pecha Kucha presentation, you’ll know that it can be both a dynamic and challenging presentation format. Over the past two years I’ve had the opportunity to prepare and deliver four different Pecha Kucha presentations. Each time is a unique learning experience! This past year I did something I’d considered for quite a while: I assigned Pecha Kucha presentations to my students. In terms of presentation quality and the skills students developed, this was a great success. In this post I’ll share a few tips about Pecha Kucha presentations, some resources which my students and I found helpful, and a few examples of PK presentations.

**I. Pecha Kucha presentation tips**

A Pecha Kucha or 20×20 presentation contains 20 slides, with each slide shown for 20 seconds, for a presentation of exactly 6 minutes, 40 seconds. The format is similar to an Ignite talk, which is 20×15 (i.e. 20 slides, 15 seconds per slide, 5 minutes in length), so advice for preparing and delivering Ignite and Pecha Kucha presentations is similar.

The advantages of the Pecha Kucha format for a conference or a class are clear. Within a given time slot, more presentations can be scheduled and the schedule is predictable. In addition, the atmosphere in a Pecha Kucha session is usually very engaging. Once the “clock starts ticking”, the audience is on the side of the presenter, willing them to succeed. This is a wonderful atmosphere for both new and experienced presenters.

***Tips for presenters:***

* Images are the key to effective Pecha Kucha. Try to find images which are illustrations or metaphors of your key points and/or use words-as-image, as in the example above. This makes delivery of your presentation much easier, as you’re not trying to race through a list of points. It also makes your presentation more engaging. This is why Pecha Kucha is so successful, I think. It’s not the timing, as such, but the fact that it leads presenters to use best practice in creating presentations which are visually strong and appealing. Let’s banish the bullets! 
* Practice, practice and practice again. I’m not a person who tends to memorize my presentations. For a Pecha Kucha presentation, however, memorizing your key points for each slide is usually the best approach. I suggest writing down the 2 key points you want to make for each slide and trying to stick to that. Then practice delivering your presentation until it flows easily. Practice really makes the difference.
* Hack the format! If you want to go into depth on one particular slide and 20 seconds just won’t be enough, repeat the slide and add text or graphics to develop your points. Your information will then be on-screen for 40 seconds, with small changes appearing midway through. This is a very graceful way to keep within the format but still go into depth.
* When delivering the presentation, don’t worry if you finish making your points on one slide before the next slide advances. Pausing will break your flow. Just start speaking about your next slide; it will likely appear midway through your first sentence. This makes for a more polished presentation rather than pausing for a few seconds to wait for the next slide to appear.
* In working with students, I found that it was important to spend plenty of time beforehand to help students to develop not just an understanding of good presentation skills, but also of copyright, Creative Commons, and how to [find, use and assign CC-licensed images](http://catherinecronin.wordpress.com/2011/03/28/creative-commons-resources/). Most students who completed Pecha Kucha presentations in my Professional Skills course assigned CC licenses to their presentations and uploaded their work to Slideshare, forming part of their e-portfolio and digital footprint (some examples below).

***Tips for organisers:***

* If possible, schedule Pecha Kucha presentations in a room that is not too large. I’ve attended Pecha Kucha sessions in small rooms and in large lecture halls, and I’ve found the atmosphere in rooms with a higher density of people is more connected and more fun. Participants tend to feel in touch with the presenter and the presenter can feed off the positive energy of the audience.
* If you are organising a Pecha Kucha conference session, make sure all presenters send you their presentations ahead of time so that you can be sure that the timings are set correctly to 20 seconds per slide. Another approach you might consider is creating one long presentation for each Pecha Kucha session, with a transition slide (or two) between each presentation. This makes for a seamless session.
* In one conference I attended ([#ece11](http://www.ece.salford.ac.uk/)) yet another element of excitement was added by putting the presentations in each session in random order. Presenters didn’t know where their presentation fell in the running order, so had to be prepared to pop up when their name appeared. This led to much hilarity and great audience engagement and support.
* When organising Pecha Kucha presentations for a class, I took on less of the organising work. I asked students to bring their own laptops or share laptops. Students learned a lot from loading presentations, connecting to the projector system, adjusting the room lighting, etc. And in one or two cases where students had not set the slide timings correctly, it served as a great learning moment for everyone.

**II. Pecha Kucha resources**

[**Pecha Kucha 20×20**](http://www.pecha-kucha.org/what) –  This page gives the basics and a brief history of Pecha Kucha.

[**Why and How to Give an Ignite Talk [video] by Scott Berkun**](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rRa1IPkBFbg) — This terrific presentation (in Ignite format) is relevant for both Pecha Kucha and Ignite presentations. Take Scott’s advice and “hack the format” if necessary. If it’s Pecha Kucha, just be sure your presentation is 6 minute and 40 seconds long.

[**Creating an Ignite presentation**](http://www.speakingaboutpresenting.com/content/fast-ignite-presentation/) — This article was written by presentation expert Olivia Mitchell about creating an Ignite presentation, however the guidelines apply just as easily to Pecha Kucha. This is a terrific, visual article, very helpful for careful planning of your presentation.

[**Choosing good images for presentations**](http://www.powerpointninja.com/graphics/what-makes-an-image-good-for-presentations-part-i/) — This blog post has excellent advice on finding relevant, potent images for your presentation.

**Finding CC-licensed images —** the following sites are helpful in finding Creative Commons-licensed images and learning how to reference them:

* [Compfight](http://compfight.com/) – excellent search tool for Creative Commons-licensed Flickr images
* [Creative Commons Wiki](http://wiki.creativecommons.org/Image) – a Creative Commons image directory
* [CC Search](http://labs.creativecommons.org/demos/search/?beta=1&q=) — powerful search across a variety of platforms (e.g. Flickr, Google images, YouTube) to help you find content you can share, use, remix
* [Flickr](http://www.flickr.com/) images – enter search term, click **Advanced Search**, then tick the box “**only search within** Creative Commons-licensed content”
* [Content Directories](http://wiki.creativecommons.org/Content_Directories) — extensive list of directories of Creative Commons-licensed materials (audio, video, image, text

[**40+ Tips for awesome PowerPoint presentations**](http://flirtingwelearning.wordpress.com/2011/11/01/40-tips-for-awesome-powerpoint-presentations/) — This is a useful checklist for *all* presentations, not just PowerPoint.

[**Prezi workshop**](http://www.theconsultants-e.com/resources/ToolsResources/Prezi.aspx) – Prezi videos, examples and templates

[**Great Presentations [video] by Nancy Duarte**](http://vimeo.com/32198910) — Nancy Duarte is the author of the excellent books [*Resonate* and *Slideology*](http://www.duarte.com/books) – unbeatable sources of ideas and inspiration for all presenters. This 25-minute video is worth viewing if you want a deeper understanding of what makes a presentation which truly connects with an audience.

**III. Pecha Kucha examples**

The first two presentations below are examples of student Pecha Kucha presentations. Each of these was the first presentation ever created by the student — wonderful work, I’m sure you’ll agree! Links to other student work in CT231 Professional Skills (including presentations, blogs and audio podcasts) can be found on the [CT231 Student Showcase](http://www.scoop.it/t/ct231-student-showcase) on Scoop.it.