

Rescuing the Student Presentation With Pecha Kucha

The art of effective presentation is an important skill for students to master; however, even when they are provided with guidelines regarding presentation format, students often read their PowerPoint® slides, exceed the time limit, and lose focus. The Pecha Kucha (PK) presentation method limits presenters to 20 slides, which are displayed for 20 seconds per slide (the automatic advance feature on a PowerPoint slide projector), for a total presentation time of 6 minutes, 40 seconds. Pecha Kucha forces presenters to tightly edit their slides, as well as their delivery (Bang-Jensen, 2010).

Pecha Kucha (*pa-chok-cha*)—the Japanese term for chatter or chit-chat—was developed in 2003 by two architects, Mark Dytham and Astrid Klein, living in Tokyo (Pink, 2007). Dytham and Klein developed PK to revive a performance space they owned where designers and architects showcased their work. When PK became popular, it was used as a means of efficiently accommodating large numbers of presenters. Pecha Kucha gatherings have become a worldwide phenomenon for creative people, in part because the format is

liberating—all participants are required to use the same format, which decreases the pressure to outperform other presenters (Pink, 2007). Additional information can be found on the PK Web site (<http://www.pecha-kucha.org>).

Pecha kucha adapts well to the classroom setting. For several years, we have taught one of the first courses in the first semester of the master's in nursing program at our university, during which we discussed with students the expectations of the graduate program, including academic writing, using library resources, evaluating Web sources, adjustments to graduate education, and presentations.

Students are apprehensive when they are initially introduced to the PK method. To model the work, the material regarding PK is delivered in the PK format. Graduate students often have trouble prioritizing content, especially when writing a term paper on the same topic as a presentation; however, with PK, they are compelled to aggressively manage the material and rehearse the presentation to keep pace with the slides. This adds to the pressure of the presentation process felt by the students, but the results are worth the effort.

When students were complimented on how well they completed a pilot PK as-

signment, some of their comments were, "I practiced and practiced," "You have to listen because you know they won't be repeating it" and "Well, we can't read the slides, we have to work on being organized!"

We, as faculty, have been pleased by the consistent improvement in presentation delivery, resulting in the students speaking to the audience and not to the slides. However, the biggest difference between PK and regular presentation format is that the enforced time limit prevents students from rambling and keeps them on point.

References

- Bang-Jensen, V. (2010, May 1). Pecha kucha: A quick and compelling format for student PowerPoint presentations. *The Teaching Professor*, p. 5.
- Pink, D.H. (2007, August 21). Pecha kucha: Get to the PowerPoint in 20 slides then sit the Hell down. *Wired Magazine*, 15.09. Retrieved from http://www.wired.com/techbiz/media/magazine/15-09/st_pechakucha

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