

# Communicating through PowerPoint

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3 Sept 09

# Overview

- Three Laws of Technical Communication
- Building PowerPoint Presentations
- PowerPoint Gone Bad

# Three Laws of Tech Comm

First Law: Adapt to Your Audience

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Second Law: Maximize Your Signal-to-Noise Ratio

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Third Law: Use Effective Redundancy

# Three Laws of Tech Comm

First Law: Adapt to Your Audience

Second Law: Maximize Your Signal-to-Noise Ratio

Third Law: Use Effective Redundancy

Zeroth Law: Have a Purpose

# PowerPoint on PowerPoint

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# Advantages of Visual Aids

- Increase the message impact
- Save time
- Attract listeners' attention
- Add credibility
- Strengthen organization, effectiveness, and efficiency
- Assist the speaker



## Slide Structure – The Good

- Generally, use 1-2 slides per minute of your presentation
- Write in point form, not complete sentences
- Include 4-7 points per slide, no more
- Avoid wordiness by using key words and phrases only

## Slide Structure – The Bad

- This page contains too many words for one presentation slide. It is written in full sentences rather than bullet points which makes it difficult for both your audience to read and for you to present each point. Although there are exactly the same number of points on this slide as the previous slide, it looks much more complicated. By now you're probably all reading this and not listening to me. Hey! I'm talking to you!

## Slide Structure – The Ugly

- Do not use distracting animation
- Do not go overboard with the animation
- Be consistent with the animation that you use

# Size Matters

- Use appropriate size
  - This is 18 point type
  - This is 32 point type
  - This is 36 point type
  - This is 48 point type
  - This is 60 point type

## Fonts – The Good

- Use **at least** 18-point font
- Use different size fonts for main points and secondary points
  - this font is 24-point, the main point font is 28-point, and the title font is 36-point
- Use a standard font like Times New Roman or Arial

# Fonts – The Bad

- If you use a small font, your audience won't be able to read what you have written
- CAPITALIZE ONLY WHEN NECESSARY. IT IS DIFFICULT TO READ
- **Don't use a complicated font**

# Fonts – The Ugly

- **The amount of ugliness in fonts is simply endless**
- *Be smart with your text and choice of font*
- Just because it looks cool, doesn't mean it's professional!

# Color - The Good

- Use a color of font that contrasts sharply with the background
  - Ex: blue font on white background
- Use color to reinforce the logic of your structure
  - Ex: light blue title and dark blue text
- Use color to emphasize a point
  - But only use this occasionally



# Color – The Bad & the Ugly

- Using a font color that does not contrast with the background color is hard to read
- Using color for decoration is distracting and annoying.
- Using a different color for each point is unnecessary
  - Using a different color for secondary points is also unnecessary
- Trying to be creative can also be bad

# Graphs – The Good

- Use graphs rather than just charts and words
  - Data in graphs is easier to comprehend and retain than raw data
  - Trends are easier to visualize in graph form
- Always title your graphs
- Always label your graphs

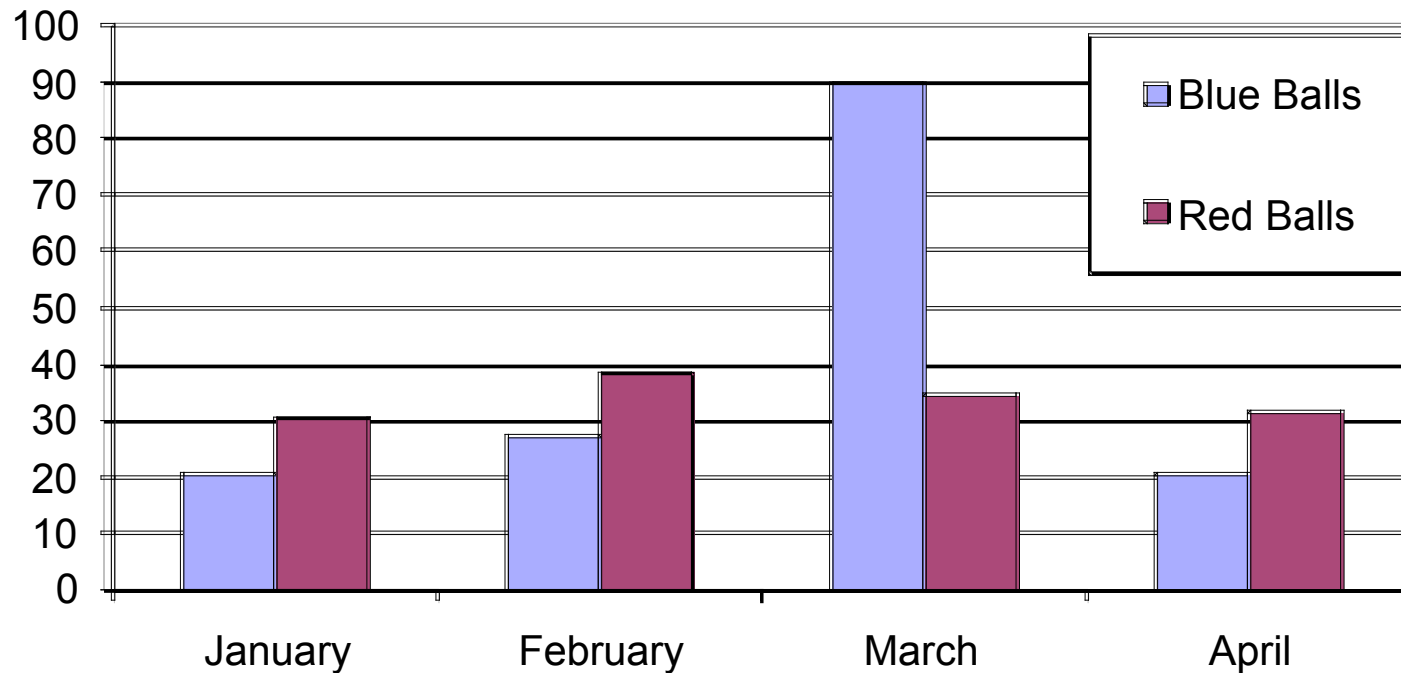
# Graphs – The Bad

	January	February	March	April
Blue Balls	20.4	27.4	90	20.4
Red Balls	30.6	38.6	34.6	31.6

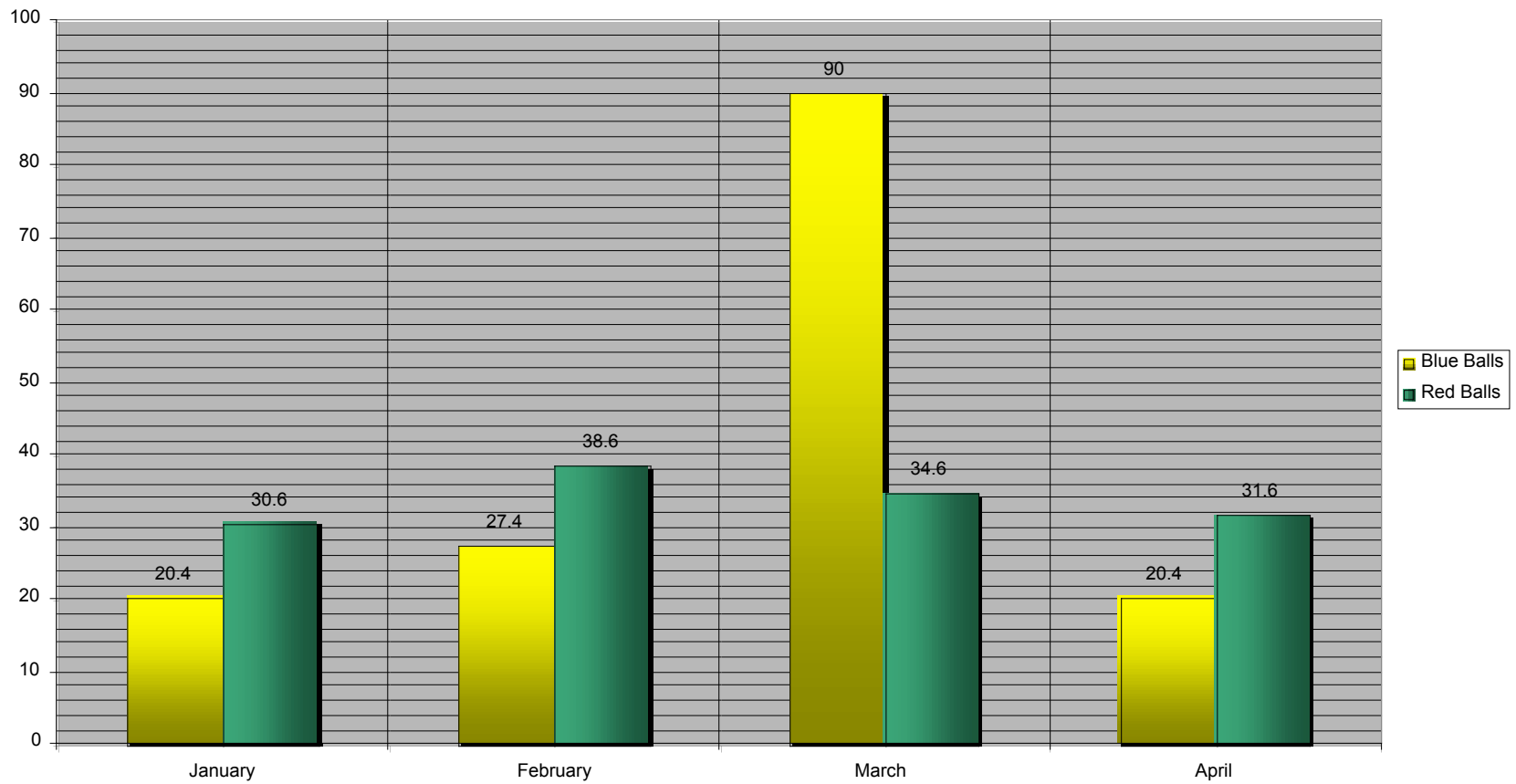
What's wrong here?

# Graphs – Some More Goodness

Items Sold in First Quarter of 2002



# Graphs – And some real Ugly



## How to Use it

- Reveal slides when appropriate
- Refer attention when appropriate
- Maintain audience focus throughout
- Plan transitions
- Know your information

# Conclusion

- Use an effective and strong closing
  - Your audience is likely to remember your last words
- Use a conclusion slide to:
  - Summarize the main points of your presentation
  - Suggest future avenues of research