# DESIGN: CHOOSING STYLE

## Make use of bullets



**Bullet Points**

Readership

Continuous text without paragraphs

• Attention
• Interest
• Curiosity
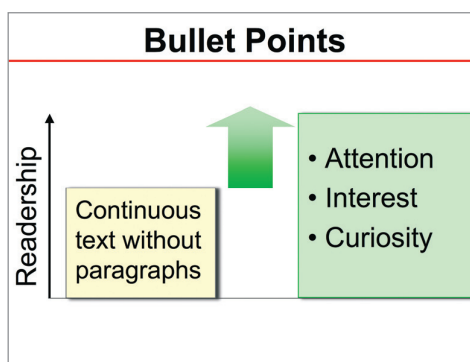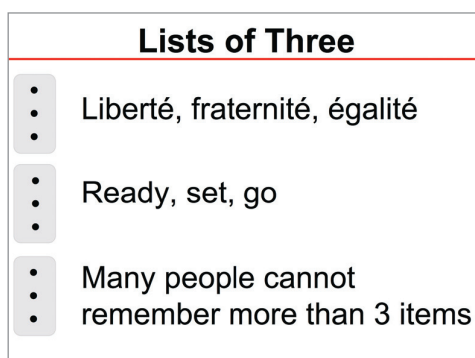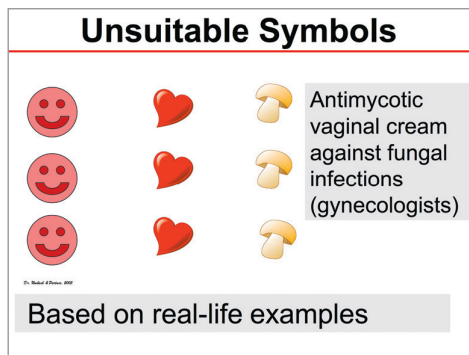
A continuous block of text will attract less readers than a well designed list. Use bullet points to express the key areas you wish to highlight. You will increase the likelihood that they are read.

## Try lists of three



**Lists of Three**

• Liberté, fraternité, égalité

• Ready, set, go

• Many people cannot remember more than 3 items

Is there an optimal number of bullet points? Many people have trouble remembering more than three items, so use lists of three. If you want to list more than three items, uneven numbers of bullet points (for example five) will encourage higher response rates than even numbers.

## Choose suitable symbols

**Unsuitable Symbols**

Antimycotic vaginal cream against fungal infections (gynecologists)
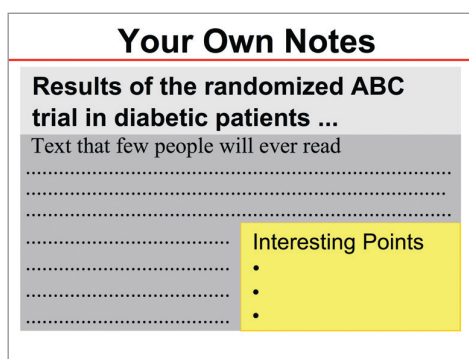
Based on real-life examples

Cardiologists have a different view of the anatomy of the human heart than the stereotypical symbols some creative agencies love to use. The company that used mushrooms as symbols in their mailing promoting a vaginal cream designed to treat fungal infections, simply looked silly in the eyes of the targeted gynaecologists who received the mailing.

**Suitable Symbols**

- Round shapes are more appealing than angular shapes with corners

■ ▲
■ ▲
■ ▲
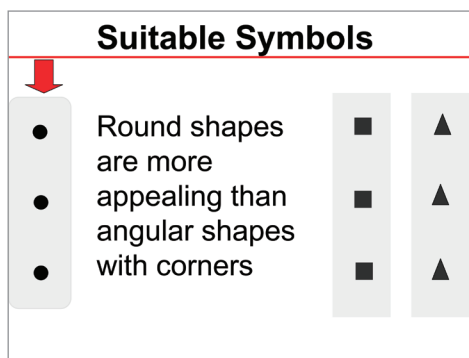
Using the typical well-established round symbols is the better technique. Squares and arrows are an option, but angular shapes usually appear less appealing than rounded shapes. You may have noticed that most pictograms and symbols in Microsoft Windows® XP have rounded shapes.

## Use notes to annotate

**Your Own Notes**

**Results of the randomized ABC trial in diabetic patients ...**

Text that few people will ever read
..........................................................................
..........................................................................

Interesting Points
.................................... •
.................................... •
.................................... •

Most people will not read the whole text of a scientific article. You can add your own notes highlighting important items. Bullet points will help the reader get the message. Select a heading other than those used in the original article: 'Conclusions', 'Summary, or 'Key points'. You could even print your text on adhesive Post-it® notes and stick them onto the original article. A Post-it® will catch the reader's attention.

## Pay attention to typography

**Attention to Typography**

| Joy | Joy |
|---|---|
| The Art of Care | The Art of Care |
| Innovative Therapy | Innovative Therapy |

Ensure harmony between message and type font

If you have precise branding guidelines, the decision about which fonts to use has already been made for you. Follow your branding guidelines. If the guidelines do not give any recommendations, alert your global brand team. If there is none, choose a font and stick to it.

Try to achieve a synergy between the message you want to convey and the font you use. Reaching consistency between content and typography is subjective. Do not decide on the font on your own and don't let your agency decide on their own. Have several versions available and ask some colleagues and clients.

**Font Types**

*This trial confirms that substantin can improve survival of patients*

Avoid unusual lettering

This trial confirms that substantin can improve survival of patients

Avoid lettering that might appear unusual, eccentric, odd, outdated or strange.

Choose fonts that appear appropriate, modern and normal.

**Font Size**

Many people cannot read letters smaller than 20 points!

Choose appropriate size

In your presentation charts use letters that are big enough to read for people sitting in the last row, for example 40 points.

Choose an appropriate, easily readable font size. Many young creative people in advertising agencies have a tendency towards small font sizes. And yet many people over 40 (probably the vast majority of your customers) are far-sighted which means they will not be able to read small print without their reading glasses. Your printed text needs to be large enough so that they can read it even if they have misplaced their reading glasses. Presentation charts and print material demand of course specific guidelines.

## Pay attention to typography (cont)

### Capitals and Lower Case

THIS TRIAL CONFIRMS THAT SUBSTANTIN CAN IMPROVE SURVIVAL OF PATIENTS

Avoid capital letters

This trial confirms that substantin can improve survival of patients

Text set solely in capital letters is difficult to read, since we are used to the 'peak and valley' silhouette of text that helps us recognize combinations of letters. Use an orthodox style, one with a combination of capital and lower case letters.

### Bold Fonts

This trial **confirms** that **substantin** can **improve survival** of **patients**

Restrict use of bold letters within the text

This trial confirms that substantin can **improve survival** of patients

Overuse of bold font makes the text difficult to read. Use bold type face sparingly and selectively. Reserve bold font for the words that convey a benefit to the reader.

### Italics

*This trial confirms that substantin can improve survival of patients with advanced breast cancer*

Stay away from italic style

This trial confirms that substantin can improve survival of patients with advanced breast cancer

Text set solely in italic is difficult to read and therefore best to avoid. If you feel that you must use it, do so very selectively.

### Underlining

This <u>trial confirms</u> that <u>substantin</u> can <u>improve</u> <u>survival</u> of <u>patients</u> with advanced <u>breast cancer</u>

Avoid underlining

This trial confirms that substantin can improve survival of patients with advanced breast cancer

Text with a large number of underlined words is difficult to read. If you feel that you must underline words, do so very selectively.

## Opt for narrow columns

**Column Width**

This trial confirms that substantin can improve survival of patients with advanced breast cancer

Limit the number of words within one line

This trial confirms that substantin can improve survival of patients with advanced breast cancer

Wide columns are difficult to read. Choose a narrow column width. Have a look at newspapers: they often have less than 30 characters per line. Visit professional websites. They, too, have narrow text columns. Of course you need to be careful to choose the appropriate column width. Too narrow can be as bad as too wide.

## Choose reader-friendly line spacing

**Line Spacing**

This trial confirms that substantin can improve survival of patients with advanced breast cancer

Set line spacing between 1.0 and 1.2

This trial confirms that substantin can improve survival of patients with advanced breast cancer

Generally do not set your line spacing below a value of 1.0. Choose line spacings between 1.0 and 1.2. Experiment and check which setting gives you best readability.

## Contrast text and background

**Text and Background**

Dark-coloured letters on a dark-coloured background

Light-coloured letters on a light-coloured background

Ensure sufficient contrast

Better readability    Better readability

Avoid dark-coloured letters on a dark-coloured background or light-coloured letters on a light-coloured background. Ensure sufficient contrast. Sounds obvious? How many folders, leaflets and advertisements violate this simple principle?

## Use initial capitals

**Initial Capitals**

| Capitalize the first letter of the first word in a paragraph .... | **C**apitalize the first letter of the first word in a paragraph ... |
| --- | --- |
| | ... and increase readership |

Use an initial capital for the first letter of the paragraph: you will increase the likelihood that the viewer will start reading.

## Use direct quotations

**Direct Quotations**

"An exciting trial"

Quotation marks will increase recall by 28%

An exciting trial

When you have a quotation or testimonial, use quotation marks. It makes the text more memorable. Encourage customers to contribute quotations and testimonials. Pick the most appropriate ones.