

Communicate Effectively.

PECHA KUCHA / LIGHTENING TALKS

Pecha Kucha is a Japanese term for the sound of conversation (“chit chat”). As a communication methodology, it was conceived by Astrid Klein and Mark Dytham in Tokyo, back in 2003. Their original goal was to create a space where designers could share their ideas/passions with others.

Knowing how dangerous it is to give a designer a microphone, they decided to put some checks in place. To prevent speakers from droning on and on, they decided that the Pecha Kucha format would have restrictions placed on it, namely 20 slides, on display for 20 seconds each.

Because of this constraint every single Pecha Kucha presentation, regardless of speaker or topic, is exactly 6 minutes and 40 seconds in length.

Since its inception, the Pecha Kucha format has spread to multiple cities around the world. As of June, 2009, more than 200 cities hold their own Pecha Kucha events, where people across multiple disciplines and fields of study share the things that interest and invigorate them. Visit www.pecha-kucha.org for more info, and to find an event near where you are.

Some tips for delivering Pecha Kucha;

- Choose a simple topic - Leave out the un-necessary and focus on your message – condense your entire message in one, simple line and then elaborate as required.
- Start with an outline - use 3 x 5 inch note cards for your main ideas. Restrict yourself to one idea per card. Under each main idea, jot 3 quick sentences about that idea.
- Images are the key to effective Pecha Kucha. Try to find images that are illustrations or metaphors of your key points. You should end up with 20 slides -- play and watch them.
- Practice, practice and practice again. Memorizing your key points for each slide is usually the best approach. It's suggested that you write down the 2 key points you want to make for each slide and try to stick to that.
- Practice again. With less than 7 minutes to present, you can afford to practice more often. Even if you end up using 2 or 3 minutes more in a Pecha Kucha presentation, that won't be acceptable or even possible using the format -- so you must have time on your side, right down to the minutest level.
- Be creative. If you want to go into depth on one 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.
- Love your audience. Be human with your audience.
- 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 keep going.

In addition to Pecha Kucha as a presentation style, you might want to try a Lightning Talks, which comes with less rigidity, as a style. Lightning talks are very short presentations lasting only a few minutes. For example, you might opt for 3 slides in 3 minutes. Several lightning talks will usually be delivered by different speakers in a single session and this is sometimes called a data blitz.