

# Book review: Presentation Zen

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## **Presentation Zen: Simple Ideas on Presentation Design and Delivery**

By: Garr Reynolds

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This isn't the first book spawned from a website (presentationzen.com), and it's undoubtedly not the last. But *Presentation Zen* doesn't read like it's cashing in on an audience. It is a small, tidy package that delivers a message, and delivers it well. Essentially, the message is: in PowerPoint, less is more.

As might be inferred by the title, Garr Reynolds draws heavily on Zen philosophy while describing the do's and don'ts of good presentation technique. While the range and breadth of analogy certainly spark the imagination, there are times when the book breaks its own cardinal rule. At several points, it seems to waffle merely for the sake of having something to say.

Self-importance aside, the book is an easy read. It combines light humour with colourful example slides to illustrate each point. Gorgeous photography keeps the Zen theme near the forefront as well as enhancing the visual appeal of the book. In short, it's pretty. As is appropriate for a text extolling the virtues of presentation.

The chapters are well structured; ideas are explained in detail and then in summary. The text is livened with relevant quotations from famous figures, mini-biographies of other presentation experts, and perceptive insights.

Overall, *Presentation Zen* is a useful handbook. It's easy to follow, and distinct enough not to bore. At times it may feel self-indulgent, but on the whole the content is refreshing and well-articulated. It's a straightforward, yet interesting, guide to basic PowerPoint design.

*Thanks to Peachpit Press for providing a copy of this book for review.*

