

10 TIPS FOR BUILDING AN EFFECTIVE PECHA KUCHA



1. **Pecha what???** Pecha Kucha is a Japanese concept – the term means “chit chat” or the “sound of conversation.” Pecha Kuchas all follow the same format – 20 slides, each advancing after 20 seconds. Slides usually have more images than words – Pecha Kuchas emphasize more “showing” and less “telling.” You’ll find lots of Pecha Kuchas online to draw inspiration from.
2. **Choose a manageable focus.** Recognize time and space constraints and set limits on what you can realistically cover. If your Pecha Kucha is an assignment, understand the grading criteria and be sure that you are following it closely. Some Pecha Kuchas go wide – offering highlights or an overview of a topic. Others go deep – drilling down into one specific sub-topic or theme.
3. **Decide on flow.** Keep your purpose and audience in mind – be creative and make your Pecha Kucha memorable and fun! Pecha Kuchas provide great opportunities for shared learning, breaking up long classes or conference sessions, and bringing in a variety of voices.
4. **Select content.** Aim to maximize images and minimize text. Recognize that searching for the perfect metaphors and images (or creating custom images for your presentation) can consume hours! Give each Pecha Kucha only the amount of your life that it’s worth. Also be sure to **acknowledge your sources**, even for images, through text boxes, speaker’s notes, or an acknowledgement slide at the end.
5. **Choose a design theme.** Aim for consistency in layout, background, colours, types of images (e.g., photos, illustrations), and fonts. Consider your audience and be sure to select images representing relevant diversity.
6. **Plan what to say.** It’s important to have a general sense of key ideas to cover for each slide. Some people prefer to write a script that they can read to ensure their timing works – others prefer a more conversational approach, working from bulleted notes or key word prompts on the slide; the latter tends to facilitate more seamless transitions.
7. **Take care of the details.** A second set of eyes is useful for any presentation or written project – we tend to see what we expect to see, so try to engage someone else to help with proofreading and editing. Typos and inconsistent capitalization or punctuation can detract from professionalism. Keep font sizes easily readable (i.e., generally no smaller than 20, and 24+ is even better). Set the 20 second transitions using the transitions tab in PowerPoint – indicate Advance Slide after 00:20.00.
8. **Rehearse.** Due to the automatic slide advancement, rehearsing a few times will be helpful to determine what can reasonably be said in 20 seconds. However, don’t over-rehearse – a natural conversational style with tone variation and lots of eye contact will engage your audience.
9. **Extend the conversation.** If time permits, consider preparing some discussion questions, reflective prompts, or activities to further engage your audience with your topic after your presentation.
10. **Breathe – and have fun!** Pecha Kuchas are intended to stimulate creative thinking, shared learning, and meaningful conversation. Enjoy the process!



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