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Making Waves

Delivering Impactful Presentations at Water Industry Events

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Water Awareness & Outreach Committee

Find Us Online at www.vaawwa.org/page/water-awareness-and-outreach

The **Water Awareness and Outreach Committee** provides educational and networking opportunities for public information, education, and outreach professionals in water utilities throughout Virginia. This committee seeks to serve public information officers and education and outreach coordinators by connecting them to a wider professional network focused on the sharing of information, tactics, and resources related to drinking water quality and supply.

- Communications Toolkits
- Networking and educational events
- Annual Public Information Awards
- Social Media Management for VA AWWA



Do not edit
How to change the design



What is your biggest presentation challenge?

The Slido app must be installed on every computer you're presenting from

slido

Introductions



Nicolle Bradford
GFT



Whitney Roberts
Lynchburg Water Resources



Jill Greiner
The City of Charlottesville

Making Waves

Nicolle Bradford
Senior Analyst, *Safety & Security*
GFT



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Setting the Stage
Understanding Your Audience and Objectives

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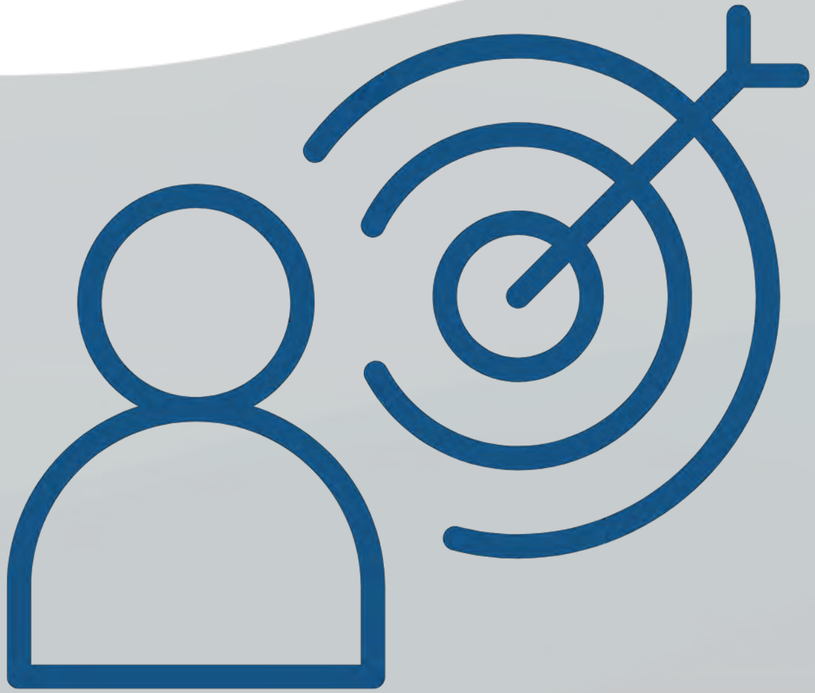
What is your role at your organization?

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Who are you talking to?

- Industry peers (e.g., Engineers, Operators, Senior Leadership/Utility Managers, Water Quality, etc.)
- Policy Makers/Regulators
- Community Members
- Clients



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Who is your typical presentation audience?

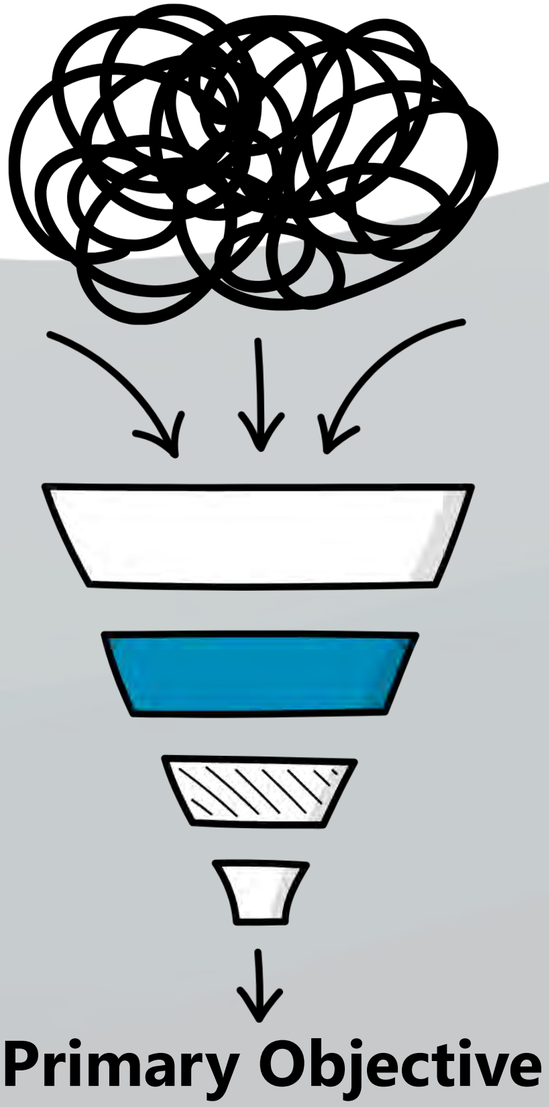
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What's the goal of your talk?

Four categories to consider:

- Inform
- Inspire
- Persuade
- Train



Crafting a compelling narrative

Problem > Solution > Outcome

1. *We faced "X" challenge…*
2. *Here's what we tried…*
3. *Here's what we learned or improved…*

Content is Key
Developing Insightful and Concise Material

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Structuring Your Presentation

- **Intro**: Hook (shocking statistic or question), purpose, roadmap
- **Body:** 2-3 core points, each supported by visual and story
- **Conclusion:** Recap, tie back to the objective, call to action



Simplifying Complex Information

Translating Technical to Tangible

- Use **visual analogies** or metaphors (e.g., "like a clogged artery" for a sewer pipe blockage)
- Swap out data tables with infographics, progressions, maps, or flow diagrams
- Avoid industry jargon or acronyms **unless** it's well-explained and necessary

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3-Year Capital Improvement Plan

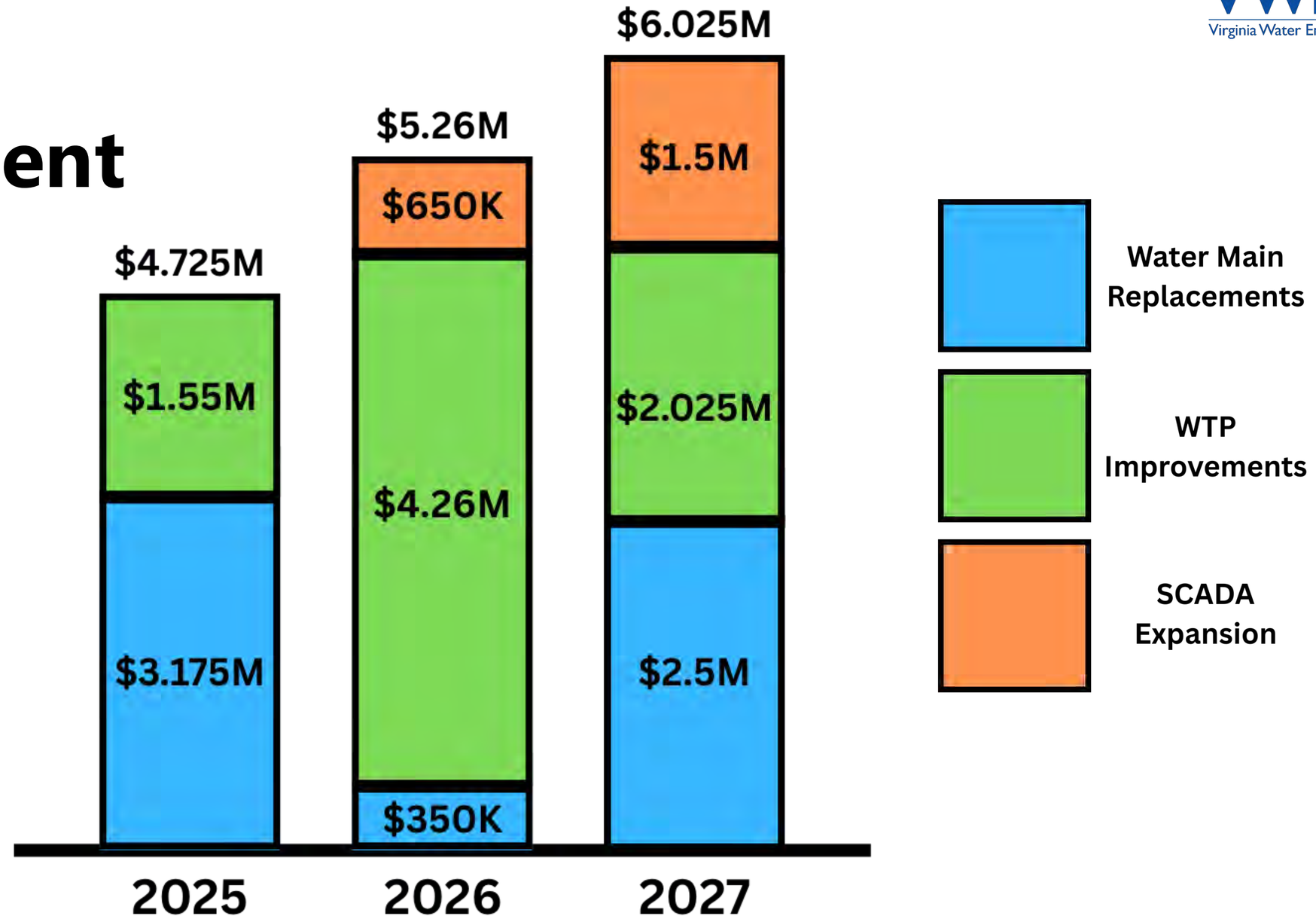
Asset	Asset ID	2025	2026	2027	
Main Street 16" CI Pipe Replacement	56454-6	$1,500,000			
Babbling Brook Boulevard 4" AC Pipe Replacement	51385-8	$600,000			
Springfield Avenue 6" DIP Pipe Replacement	56475-7	$950,000			
1st Street 4" CI Pipe Replacement	45674-8		$250,000		
2nd Street 6" DIP Pipe Replacement	46216-9		$100,000		
Diagon Alley 20" Transmission Main Improvements	74578-7			$2,500,000	
LaPush Place 2" AC Pipe Replacement	56798-8	$125,000			
		$3,175,000	$350,000	$2,500,000	$6,025,000

Asset	Asset ID	2025	2026	2027	
Green Street WTP GenSet	22158-7	$350,000			
Green Street WTP Pump Improvements	34837-3	$1,200,000	$1,450,000.00	$800,000	
Baxter River Intake Replacement	32659-4		$2,500,000	$250,000	
Baxter River PS Improvements	16518-9		$310,000		
Orange Grove WTP Clear Well Improvements	12467-7			$625,000	
Orange Grove WTP Filter Replacement	41279-1			$350,000	
		$1,550,000	$4,260,000.00	$2,025,000	$7,835,000

Asset	Asset ID	2025	2026	2027	
Green Street WTP SCADA Expansion	15104-4		$650,000	$500,000	
Orange Grove WTP SCADA Expansion	12694-2			$1,000,000	
			$650,000	$1,500,000	$2,150,000

Asset	Asset ID	2025	2026	2027	
Main Street 16" CI Pipe Replacement	56454-6	$1,500,000			
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Diagon Alley 20" Transmission Main Improvements	74578-7			$2,500,000	
LaPush Place 2" AC Pipe Replacement	56798-8	$125,000			
		$4,725,000	$5,260,000.00	$6,025,000	$16,010,000.00

3-Year Capital Improvement Plan



Less is More

- Stick to the 6x6 rule:
  6 words per line, 6 lines per slide
- Speak more than you show:
  Don’t just read slides.
- Building breathing room into your visuals
  White space!!

Green Street Water Treatment Plant Improvements

The Green Street Water Treatment Plant, originally constructed in 1983 and last upgraded in 2004, is a **critical** component of the regional water supply system, serving over 75,000 residents across four municipalities and multiple industrial zones. The facility currently operates at approximately 85% of its designed capacity, processing an average of 12 million gallons per day, with peak flows reaching 15 MGD during heavy rainfall events.

Recent evaluations conducted by the engineering firm Downey & Sons identified several vulnerabilities in the plant's aging electrical systems, generator capacity, and filtration media. Furthermore, the lime feed system has shown significant signs of wear and inconsistent dosing, resulting in compliance risks related to pH adjustment and residual turbidity. Operators have also noted delays in real-time monitoring due to outdated SCADA interfaces and data transmission errors to the central control center.





Green Street Water Treatment Plant Improvements

⚡ Aging equipment and backup power system pose reliability risks

💧 Inconsistent chemical dosing threatens compliance

📉 Outdated SCADA system slows real-time response

Total Planned Investment: $1.55M



Recap

Each and every single one of you can be a successful storyteller.



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Questions?



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Making Waves

Jill Greiner

Water Efficiency Program Coordinator

Charlottesville, VA



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Visual Victory

Designing Effective and Engaging Slides



Design for Clarity

- **Fonts:** Readable, consistent, and professional
- **Color:** harmonious palettes, contrast for readability
- **Texture:** use patterns, icons, and labels

Tools to Check Accessibility

- Microsoft Office Accessibility Checker (available for PowerPoint)
- Color Oracle
- Coblis

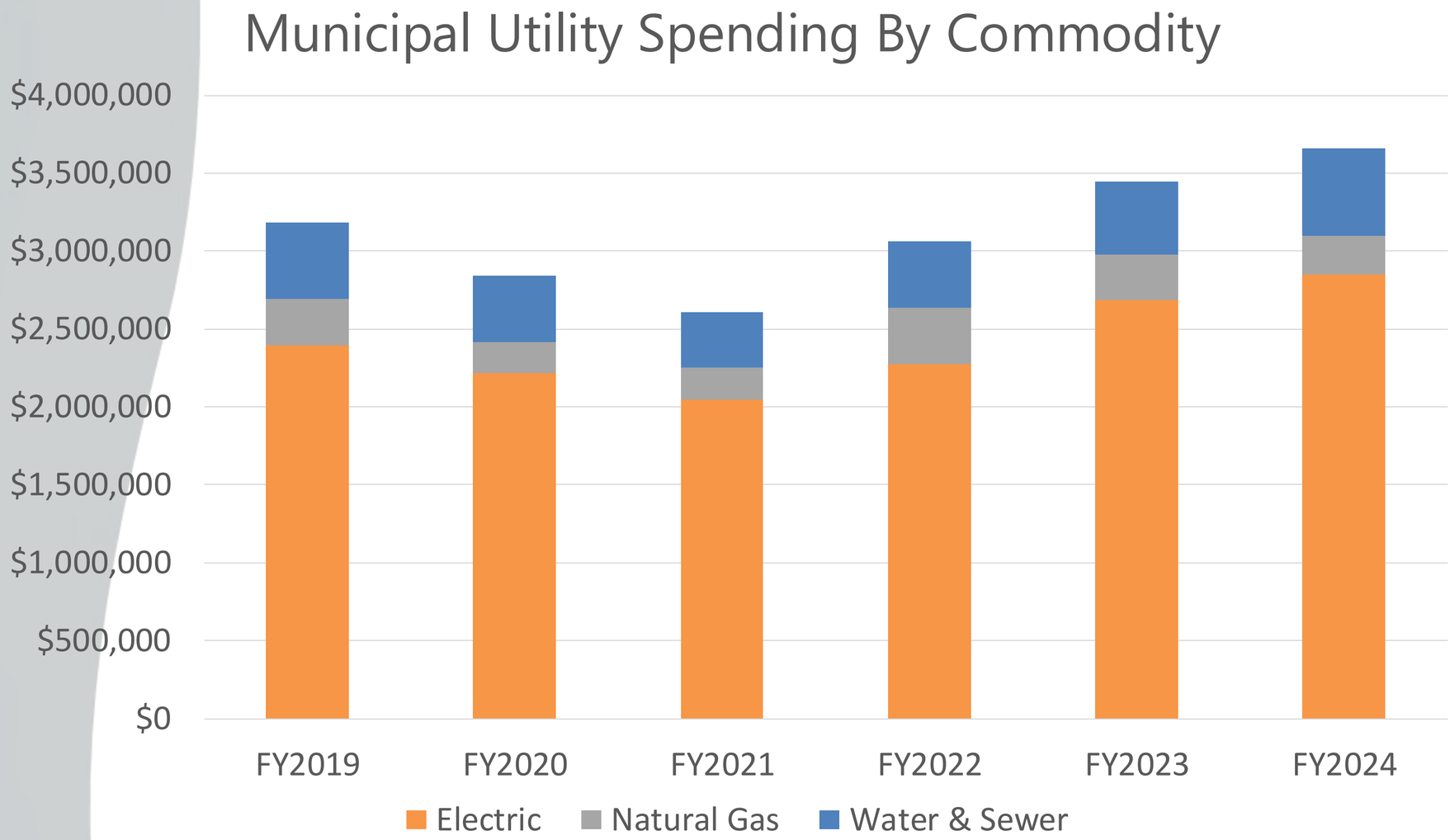
Design for Clarity: Layout

Less is more.

Fewer slides, fewer words, more white space

The Art of Visual Aids: Graphs and Charts

- **Chart type**
- **Remember labels & units**
- **Simplify**
- **Tell a story**



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The Art of Visual Aids: Images

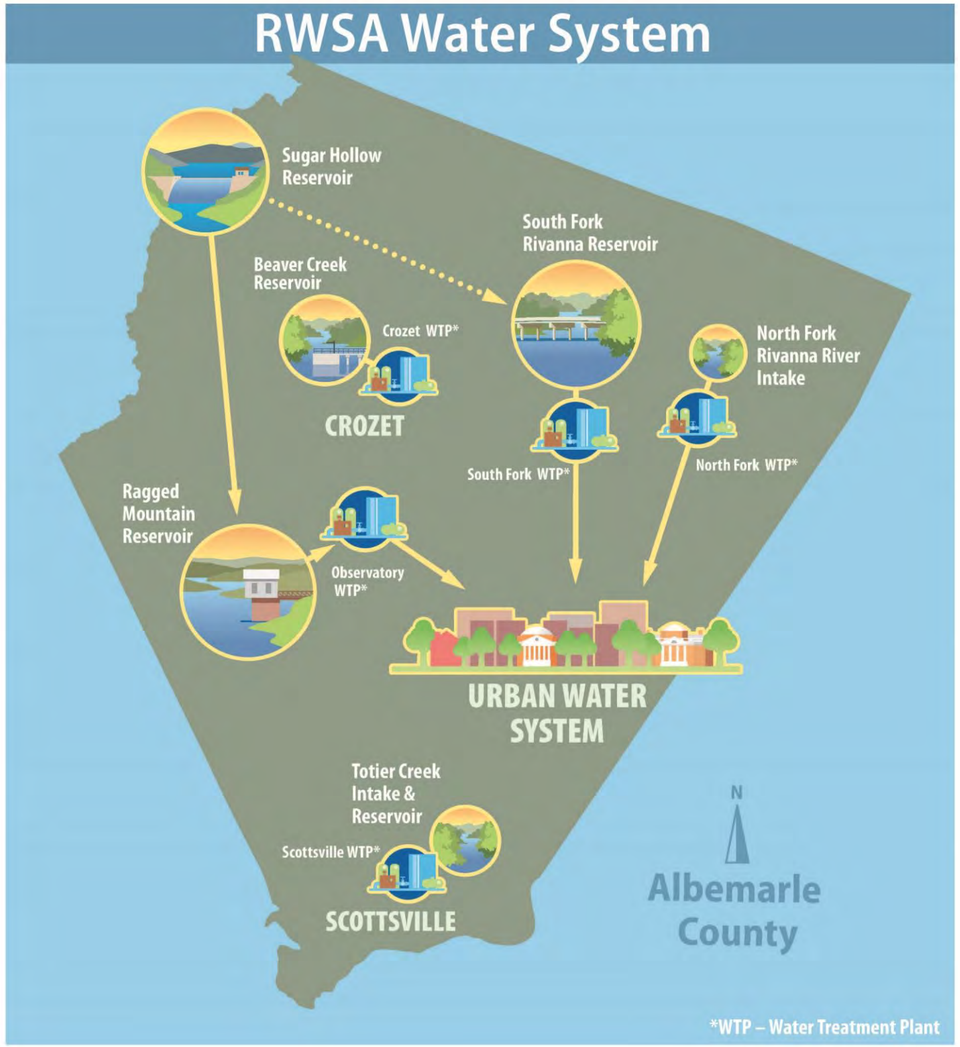


Image from Rivanna Water & Sewer Authority

- **One** image per slide
- Images should have a ***purpose***
- Use **high-res** images

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The Art of Visual Aids: Videos



- Keep it **short**
- Make sure to **set up the video**
- CHECK TECH!
- Have a **back-up**

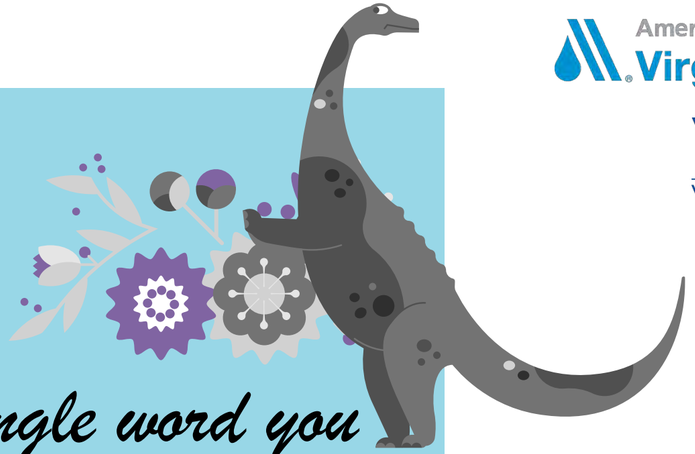
https://youtu.be/uzB2U84m9wg?si=PJjtOYNuk4ReiRr7

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Avoiding Common Pitfalls



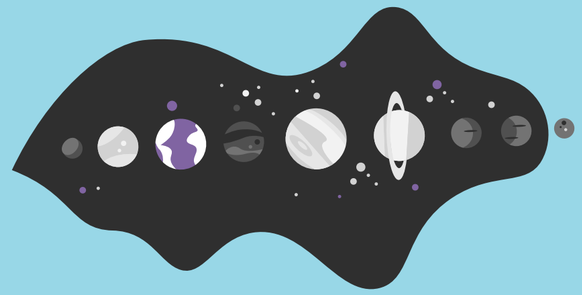
- *You don't need to include every single word you want to say on your slide and then say the same thing in your presentation.*
- Make sure your content isn't too small





- Avoid unnecessary animations & content







Don’t put important content at the bottom of the slide

Delivering with Confidence and Impacts

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Mastering Your Delivery

- Clear and slow speaking
- Project your voice and use the microphone
- Vary tone and pace for engagement
- Speak to the audience, not the screen
- Practice your transitions
- End with a clear takeaway

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Non-Verbal Communication



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Non-Verbal Communication

Practicing for Success

- **Practice, practice, practice!**
- Rehearse out loud and simulate the setting
- Record yourself
- Build in buffer time

Practice Makes Progress

Handling the Unexpected

- Arrive early
- Have backups
- Prepare to pivot
- Review Specific Presentation Rules & Tips

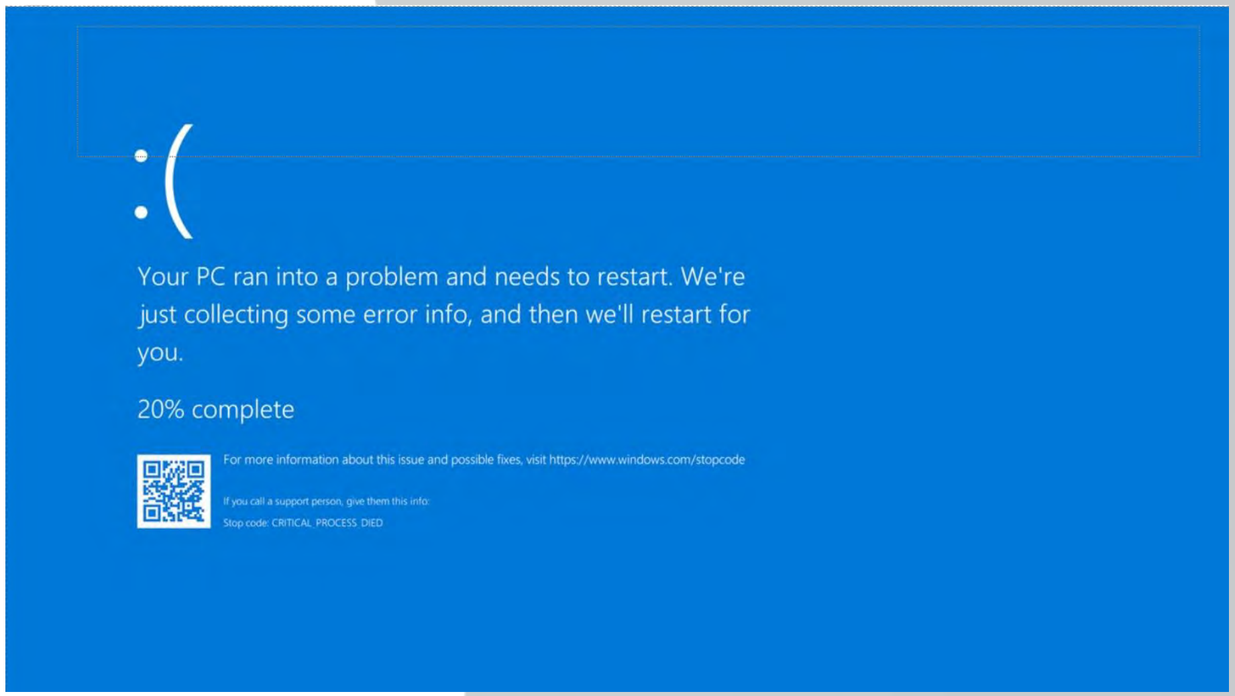


Image from Microsoft

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Navigating the Q&A Session

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Q&A Sessions: Preparing for Questions



- Determine how you'll take questions
- Review your content
- Prepare concise responses
- Prepare a response if you don't know an answer
- Rehearse with a colleague to ask unexpected questions

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Q&A Sessions: Q&A Managing Strategies

Challenge	Strategy
Aggressive question	Stay calm, thank them, and reframe the question positively
Off-topic question	Acknowledge and redirect: “Let’s take that offline.”
No questions at all	Prepare a few “seed” questions to get things started

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Questions?



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JillGreiner

Join Us!

Water Awareness & Outreach Committee

Interested in joining the committee?

Want to sit in on a monthly meeting to see what it's all about?

Whitney Roberts, Chair

whitney.roberts@lynchburgva.gov

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Thank you!