Starting a CERT Program - Step 5: Tailoring Training

Overview

The basic CERT training materials use an all-hazards approach and are intended for a national audience. All CERTs should receive training in the skills contained in the basic program. However, some of the information may not be relevant to your area. As the CERT Program Coordinator, you should tailor these materials by:

- Substituting photographs about your local hazards and your CERTs performing skills.
- Teaching local protocols. Because teams are local resources, they need to interact effectively with local agencies using local standards and protocols.

Contents

This step includes the following resources:

- Reviewing the CERT Content
- Hiding PowerPoint Visuals
- Changing the Master Slide
- Reviewing CERT Activities
- Updating CERT Materials
- Inserting Photos Into PowerPoint
- Tips for Using Photographs
- Revising the Word Files
- Keeping Your Instructors Current
- Tips for Tailoring Training
- Supplemental Video Materials
- Photographs of CERT Training

Web Resources

- Supplemental Video Materials
  Web Address: http://training.fema.gov/emiweb/cert/certvidmat.htm

- Photographs of CERT Training
  Web Address: http://training.fema.gov/emiweb/cert/photos.htm

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How To: Reviewing the CERT Content

It is important that you review the basic CERT materials carefully both to familiarize yourself with the course content and to identify areas that require tailoring for your program. Make sure to review both the Instructor Guide and the Participant Manual.

Step 1: Review the Course Overview

The Course Overview will provide you with general information about the CERT program and the materials. Review this section carefully to ensure that you understand the CERT concept fully and gain some ideas about how to implement CERTs in your community.

Step 2: Review Unit 1 — Emergency Preparedness

Unit 1: Emergency Preparedness sets the context for the remainder of the CERT program. The unit includes a general description of the CERT program, together with preparedness and response information for a wide array of potential hazards (included as appendices to the unit). Some of the hazards included in these sections may not present a risk in your area, so you will want to review them carefully and use only the information about those hazards that present a threat. As you review Unit 1:

❑ **Review the Objectives, Scope, and Methodology** to gain a quick overview of what will be presented and the general flow of the unit.

❑ **Review the unit content** carefully.

❑ **Mark your changes** directly in the Instructor Guide so that you know what you need to change in the electronic files.

❑ **Identify local examples** that will add interest to the material.

❑ **Review all activities** to:

  ❑ Determine whether they meet your program's needs.

  ❑ Determine how the activities must be conducted and managed in your community.

  ❑ Verify equipment requirements.

After reviewing the entire unit, **return to the time plan and visualize the flow**. Given the changes you've marked:

❑ Can the material be presented in the time allotted?

❑ Does the material meet your program needs?

❑ Do you have questions about any of the unit content? If so, write them down. Contact another CERT Program Coordinator or the FEMA CERT Program Coordinator for advice.

How To: Hiding PowerPoint Visuals

As you reviewed the CERT course materials, you undoubtedly identified visuals that do not relate to the hazards faced in your community. You will not want to show these slides during your course presentation, but deleting them will make the numbering inconsistent with those in the Instructor Guide and Participant Manual.

Follow the steps below to hide the PowerPoint visuals that you do not want to show without damaging the integrity of the overall presentation.
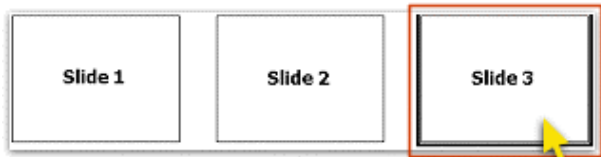
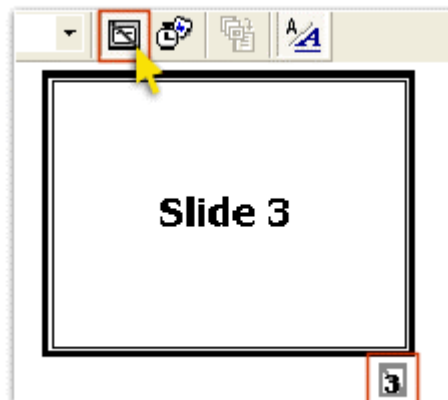1. Open the PowerPoint presentation you wish to change.
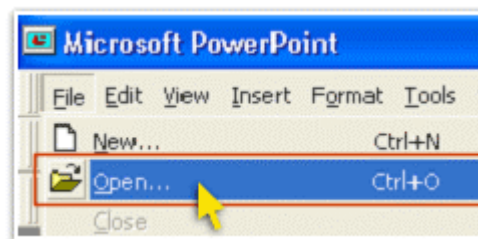
2. Left click "Slide Sorter View" at the bottom left corner of the screen.

3. Left click once on the first slide you wish to hide.

4. Click "Hide Slide" at the top of the screen. That slide will **not** be shown during your presentation.

Repeat steps 3 and 4 for each slide you wish to hide.

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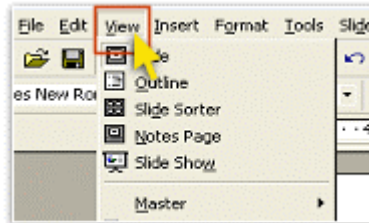
How To: Changing the Master Slide

The PowerPoint presentations for the CERT program have been developed using a slide master to ensure consistency in color, layout, point size, bullets, and font. If you want to change the color, point size, bullets, or font on all of the slides in a PowerPoint presentation, you should change the master slide. Changing the master slide is easier for you and ensures that your presentation will be consistent and professional.

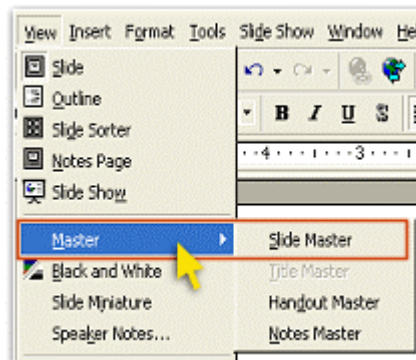Follow the steps below to change the master slide in PowerPoint presentations:

1. Open the PowerPoint presentation you wish to change.
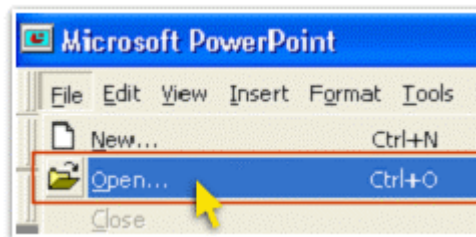
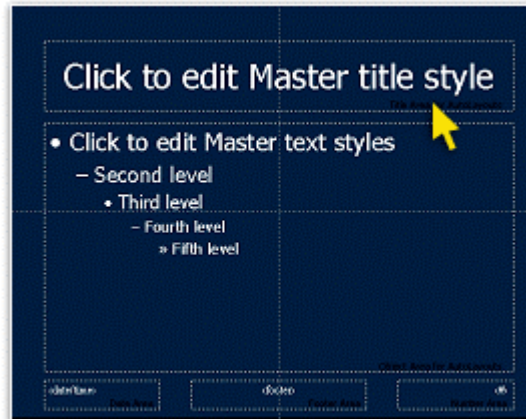2. Left click "View" at the top of the screen.

3. Left click "Master."

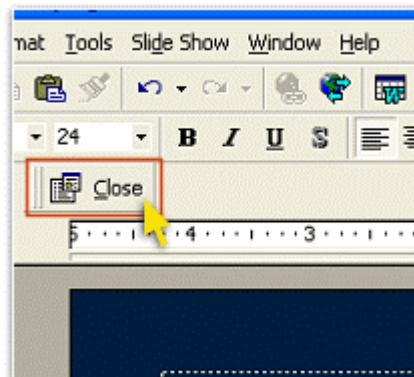4. Left click "Slide Master" to see the master slide layout.

How To: Changing the Master Slide (Continued)

5. Click on the area of the slide that you wish to change to make your changes on the master slide.

6. When finished, click on the "close" button at the top of the screen. Your changes to the master slide will be incorporated on every slide in the presentation.

It is recommended that you review the entire slide presentation following any changes to the master slide to ensure that you have not changed something that interferes with the presentation of some, but not all, of the slides. Also, if you change the background or text colors, review the presentation to ensure that the slides project well and are readable in the new colors.

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Reviewing CERT Activities

Before you deliver the CERT training for the first time, you will need to review all of the CERT course materials carefully. One area that will require your particular attention is the activities. Follow the steps below to ensure that you understand the concept behind each CERT activity— and to ensure that you have the equipment and facilities to conduct the activities safely.

- Review the Unit Objectives for the activities you are reviewing.
- Read the activity purpose statement to ensure that you understand the activity concept.
- Read each of the steps in the activity to ensure that you understand the intended flow.
- Review all scenarios and supplemental materials, if any, for the activity.
- Identify all special materials and equipment required for the activity.
- Consider your program, instructors, and facility limitations. Then answer the questions below:

  ❏ Do you understand the intent of this activity and why it is in this section?
  ❏ Do you understand how this activity fits into your planned CERT response in a disaster event?
  ❏ Do you understand how the activity is supposed to work?
  ❏ Do you understand what the participants will learn and apply through the activity?
  ❏ Do you have all of the equipment and materials required to complete this activity safely and as described?
  ❏ Will your instructors understand the intent of the activity or will they require additional input from you?
  ❏ Can you safely conduct the activity, without modification, given the constraints of your facility?

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Updating CERT Materials

The CERT classroom materials were last updated by FEMA during the fall of 2002. The materials are intended to provide the basic content for CERT programs nationwide.

Because of the range of hazards and vulnerabilities across the United States—and because communities have developed their own protocols and procedures—you may need to revise the national materials so that they align more closely to your program. Update CERT materials to:

- Add hazards that are not included in the national materials, provide supplemental information about hazards that are included, or to delete hazards for which your community is not at risk.
- Add local case studies and success stories.
- Add photographs that are meaningful to your audience.
- Change activities to tailor them to your community.
- Reflect local protocols, procedures, and terminology (e.g., triage terminology) to align them with what local responders follow or use.
- Provide handouts with additional information that is specific to the community.

Text documents for CERT have been developed using Word 2000® and are available on the CERT website in both Word and .pdf formats. If you need to update the materials, be sure to download the Word version. Visuals have been developed using PowerPoint 2000®.

Starting a CERT Program - Step 5: Tailoring Training

How To: Inserting Photos Into PowerPoint

You may wish to add photographs to some of the PowerPoint visuals, to make them more visually interesting or to add immediacy to the presentation. To add a photograph to a PowerPoint visual:

1. Open the PowerPoint presentation you wish to change.
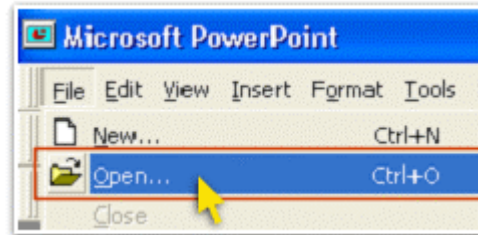
2. Left click "Slide Sorter View" at the bottom left corner of the screen.
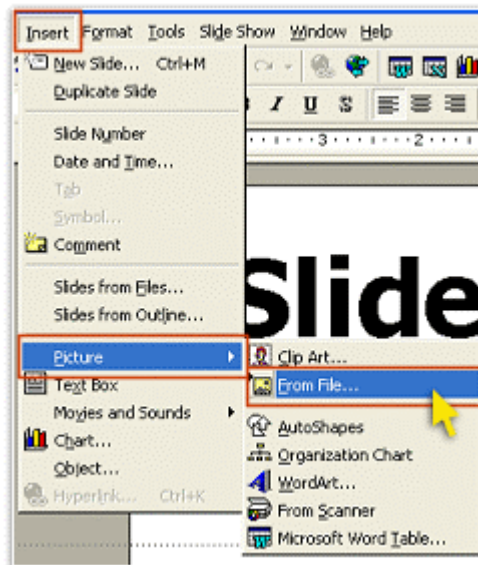
3. Left click twice to select the slide to which you will add the photograph.

4. Left click "insert" at the top of the screen.

5. Highlight picture.
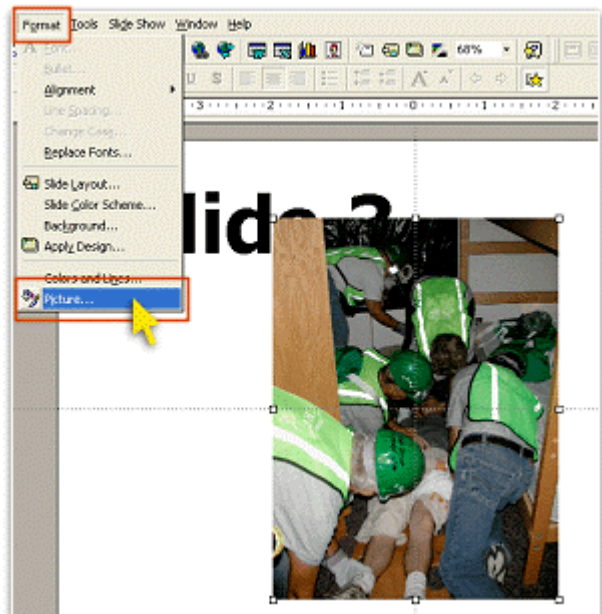
6. Left click on "From File."

How To: Inserting Photos Into PowerPoint (Continued)

7. Locate the photo and left click to highlight the file name.

8. When you have located the file, left click on the Insert button.
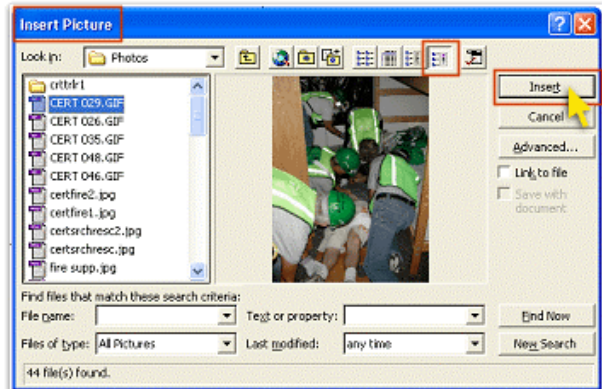
To edit the photo:

1. Left click once on the photo image.

2. Right click to access the pull-down menu.

3. Select "Format Picture."

How To: Inserting Photos Into PowerPoint (Continued)

4. Select "Size."

5. Ensure that "Lock Aspect Ratio" is checked. If not, click that box.

6. Click "Height," and type the percentage change (larger or smaller) for the photo.

7. Tab to "Width." The percentage should change automatically to keep the aspect ratio correct.

8. Click "OK." You photograph will resize by the percentage you requested.
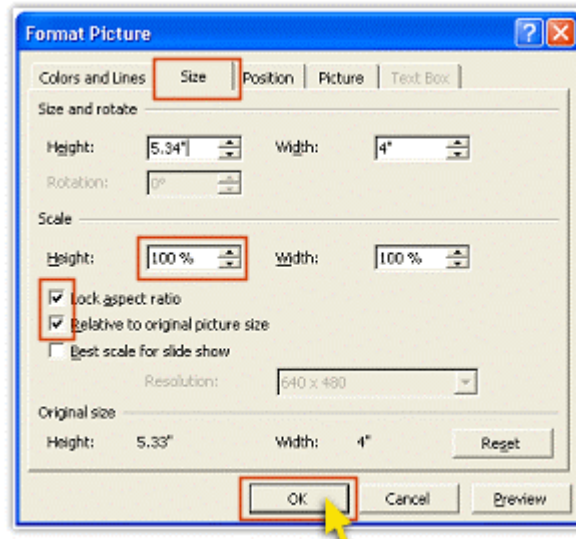
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Tips for Using Photographs

There are several important factors to keep in mind when adding photographs to the PowerPoint slides.

- **Use photographs in .jpg format.** .jpg files are smaller in size and will help to keep your PowerPoint presentation smaller. Using files that are formatted as .bmp or .tif will increase your file size dramatically and may cause operational problems when you run the slide show.

- **Don't use too many.** Unless you have the expertise to use photo-editing software to reduce the file size of the photos you use, you will see that your PowerPoint file will become very large, very quickly. If you use too many photographs, your PowerPoint file will become so large that it will cause the computer to operate very slowly or to freeze.

- **Don't "clutter" the slide.** Aside from making your file size unwieldy, too many photos on a single slide can become clutter and destroy the effect you're trying to make.

- **Don't overshadow the text message.** While there may be nothing better to emphasize a point, photographs should always support the text message, not overshadow it. Size your photographs appropriately so that the message of the visual remains clear to the student.

- **Think before adding photographs to the Word file.** The visuals in the Word files (both Instructor Guide and Participants Manual) currently meet the requirements for accessibility to the disabled, as required under Section 508 of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you add photographs to the visuals in the Word files (or anywhere else in the Word files, for that matter), you must include captions describing the photos to remain compliant. Also, photos will increase the file size and may not reproduce well when you copy the training materials.

Revising the Word Files

As you update the CERT materials, you will want to update the Instructor Guide and Participant Manual to ensure that they are consistent with the message your instructors present and to make them specific to your community's program. Revising the Instructor Guide and Participant Manual can be very easy if you take a few precautions.

Tips for Revising Word Files

- **Always revise with the "paragraph" symbols visible.** The "paragraph" symbol will be located at the top of your screen if you have the Standard toolbar turned on. If you cannot find the icon, click "View," then "Toolbars" to ensure that the Standard toolbar is turned on.
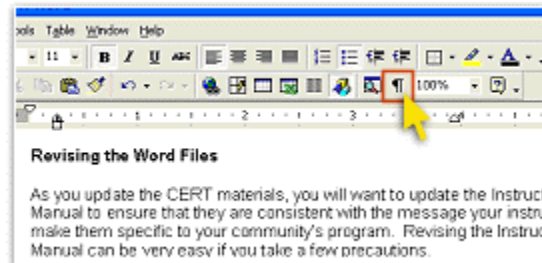
  While you may find these symbols annoying for routine work, they are important when revising the course materials because, along with hard returns, you will also be able to view page breaks and, more importantly, section breaks.

- **Don't delete section breaks.** The page headers and footers are linked to section breaks. If you delete a section break, the header and footer may become incorrect. If you inadvertently delete a section break, click the "undo" button at the top of the screen immediately.

- **Think before adding photographs to the Word file.** The visuals in the Word files (both Instructor Guide and Participants Manual) currently meet the requirements for accessibility to the disabled, as required under Section 508 of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you add photographs to the visuals in the Word files (or anywhere else in the Word files, for that matter), you must include captions describing the photos to remain compliant. Also, photos will increase the file size and may not reproduce well when you copy the training materials.

- **Don't use macros.** Macros are a great way to save keystrokes but leave your files susceptible to macro viruses. It's better to use more keystrokes.

- **Just type the changes.** The basic formatting for the Word files is coded in the documents themselves. Headers will be available to you by clicking on the "style" pop-down menu at the top of your screen. If you are not adding a header, your computer will default to the "Normal" style.

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Revising the Word Files (Continued)

To Update Word Documents

- Open the document that you wish to update.

- Scroll or use CTRL + PAGE DOWN to find the area of the text you wish to change.

- To add text, left click at the point of insertion and type the text.

- To delete text, use the mouse to highlight the text that you wish to delete. Then, press DELETE. If you accidentally delete something that you want to remain in the text, click the undo icon at the top of the screen.

- If you wish to add an icon in the left column, just find that icon anywhere in the document. Copy it, and paste it where you want it.

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Keeping Your Instructors Current

As you update the CERT materials, you will need to establish a way to keep your instructors current on the revised materials. How you approach instructor currency will depend on you and how you work with your instructors. Some suggestions from experienced CERT Program Coordinators for keeping instructors current are listed below.

- Type revisions to the Instructor Guide in **bold** to make them stand out to the instructors.
- Provide a synopsis of program revisions by email or CD.
- Conduct a briefing with instructors to go over the revisions before the first session of each class.

Even if you have not updated the materials, if you don't offer CERT courses regularly, or if you have a large cadre of instructors, you may need to ensure that they remain current on the materials. One way to ensure currency is to require each instructor to train at least once on a regular basis. (Initially, keep your instructor cadre small so that you can schedule instructors more frequently. As your program grows, these instructors will become the core of your cadre.)

Another is to plan regular meetings with your instructor cadre to cover program content, logistics, and training techniques.

You may have other ways that have worked to keep your instructors current. Continue to use them, and share them with others.

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Words of Advice: Tips for Tailoring Training

Stew Anderson - Natrona County, Wyoming
Not All Communities Are the Same

The most beneficial training we offer is the basic CERT class itself because that has made most of the folks hungry for further classes.

It's important to remember that not all communities have the same types of hazards that affect them so you want to be hazard-specific to your area. Also your resources are not the same nationwide.

Joe Lowry - Memphis, Tennessee
People Relate to Local Examples

The CERT training materials provided are good but you also need to add quite a bit of local information. This is necessary so people can relate to the information being presented.

Rachel Jacky - Portland, Oregon
Absolutely Localize Training

The off-the-shelf training materials are good but you have to localize the FEMA curriculum to feature your community's hazards and vulnerabilities.

Frank Lucier - San Francisco, California
Tailor Both to the Community and Audience

I feel that the initial CERT training is the most critical and beneficial. That's when you get them in the door. If it isn't effective and enjoyable for the participants, you have lost them forever.

Training should be tailored to the threats faced by the community. Second, it should be tailored not just to the community but the audience. All communities have different communities within them. Faith-based groups are different from neighborhood groups which are different from workplace groups which are different from school groups. To be effective when the disaster strikes the training should fit the group, not the group fit the training.