

Using Timers in PowerPoint Presentations

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Time management is important during workshops. Presenters often have a great deal of material to cover and little time to waste. Using count-up and count-down timers inserted into PowerPoint presentations can energize your audience and keep both you and them attentive and time-conscious. NOTE: You can download free timers that can run in PowerPoint for use in your presentations by visiting: <http://www.interventioncentral.org/interventions/timers.php>

During workshops, PowerPoint timers can be used to:

- *Get People Back in Their Seats Promptly After Breaks.* Presenters who give their audiences a short break can have difficulty pulling the group back together again! Display a PowerPoint slide with the **10-** or **15-**minute count-down timer at the start of the break to help participants to gauge how much break time they have left and ensure that they return to the presentation room in a timely fashion.
- *Keep Participants Focused During Table Activities.* Presenters who direct their audience to take part in table activities will find that using a timer helps participants to stay focused on the task. For brief table discussions, use the **2-** or **5-**minute timer. For more extended activities, use the **10-** or **15-**minute timer.
- *Build Audience Motivation Through 'Lightening' Discussions.* Workshop participants often need a variety of activities to hold their interest, particularly during longer presentations. Pacing is everything! Consider posing interesting questions for table discussions. Using a short (**1-** or **2-** minute) count-down timer, present the question to the group, direct tables to begin their discussions, and start the timer. When the time period is over, call randomly on audience members to share the high points of their discussion.
- *Encourage Fun Competition.* Energize your audience by giving them a fun competitive table activity. Use a count-up timer. As each table completes its task, have them write the elapsed time (the number of minutes displayed on the count-up timer at the moment that the table finishes the activity). Consider giving small prizes to tables with the speediest performance.