

Using Visual Aids

Cuyamaca ARC Center

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Reference: Lucas, S. E. (2007). *The Art of Public Speaking* (9th ed.). Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill.



- **Advantages of visual aids**
- **Types of visual aids**
- **Preparing visual aids**
- **Presenting visual aids**
- **Review tips**

Content





Clarity: make your information more vivid to your audience; make it easier for the audience to understand exactly what you are trying to communicate.

Enhance: visual aids indicate that the speaker is well prepared, credible, and professional. Also, it increases the persuasiveness of a speech.

Advantages of visual aids



Retention: visual images often stay with the audience longer than verbal ones.

Interest: the interest generated by visual images is strong. About 65 percent of the population are visual learners.

Combat stage fright: visual aids shift attention away from the speaker and give the speaker greater confidence in the speech.

Advantages of visual aids

Objects:

The actual items that are mentioned in your speech, such as a kite, a doll, a guitar, etc.

Many objects, however, can't be used effectively as a visual aids for your speech.

Some are too big; some are too small; some are against the carrying rules of the speech environment, such as school rules.



Types of visual aids ~1

Models:

An object, usually built to scale, that represents another object in detail.

- **Life-size model:** *the actual item.*
- **A small-scale model of a large object:** *a model of a famous building.*
- **A large-scale representation of a small object:** *a molecular model.*



Types of visual aids ~2

Photographs:

Pictures made by using a camera: *crime scene photo, a picture of a dog, etc.*

Photographs won't work effectively unless they are large enough for the audience to view without straining.

Normal-size photos are not big enough to be seen clearly without being passed around which is not recommended.



Types of visual aids ~3

Drawings:

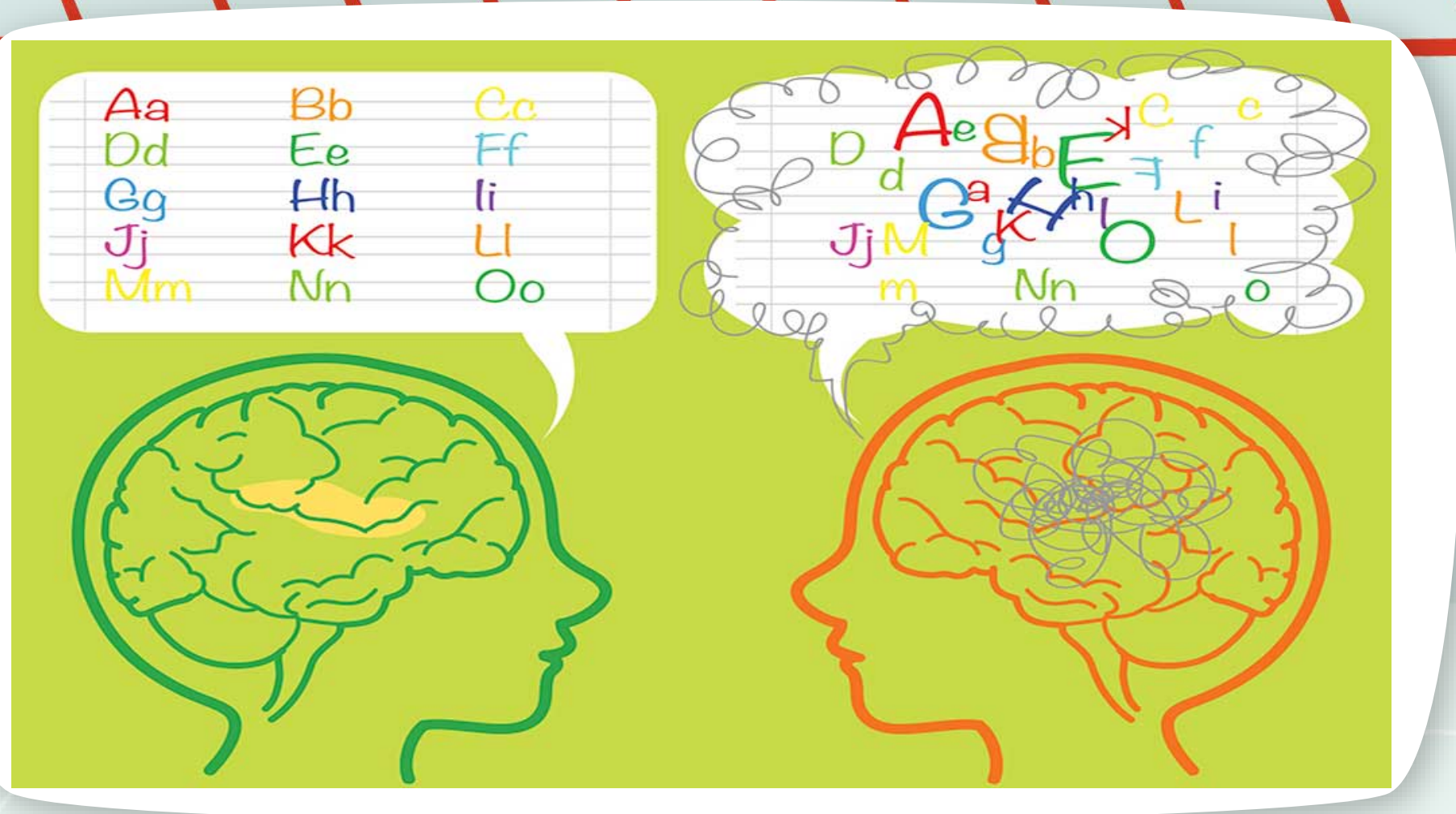
Diagrams, sketches, and other kinds of drawings are superb alternatives to photographs.

They are likely inexpensive to make.

Since they are drawn/chosen specifically for one speech, they can be designed to illustrate your points exactly.



Types of visual aids ~4



A drawing example that shows what reading is like for people who suffer from dyslexia.

Graphs:

Graphs are a good way to simplify and clarify statistics.

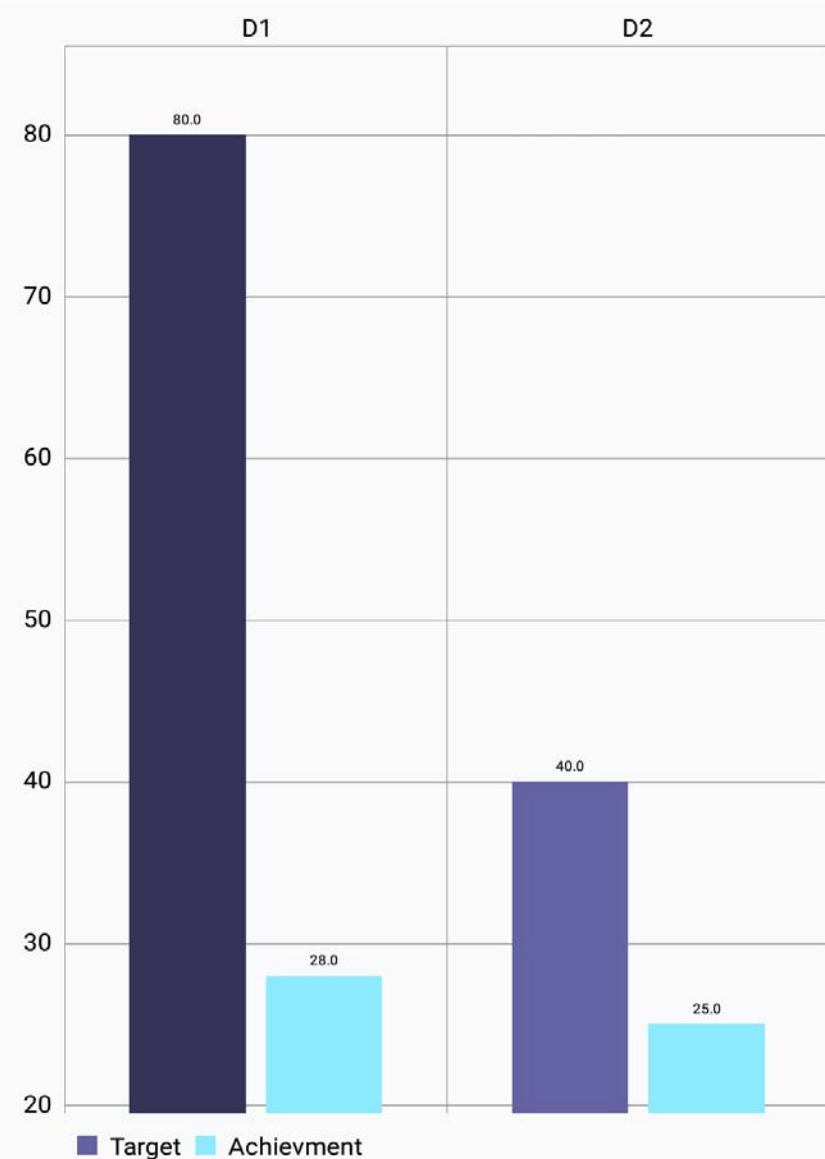
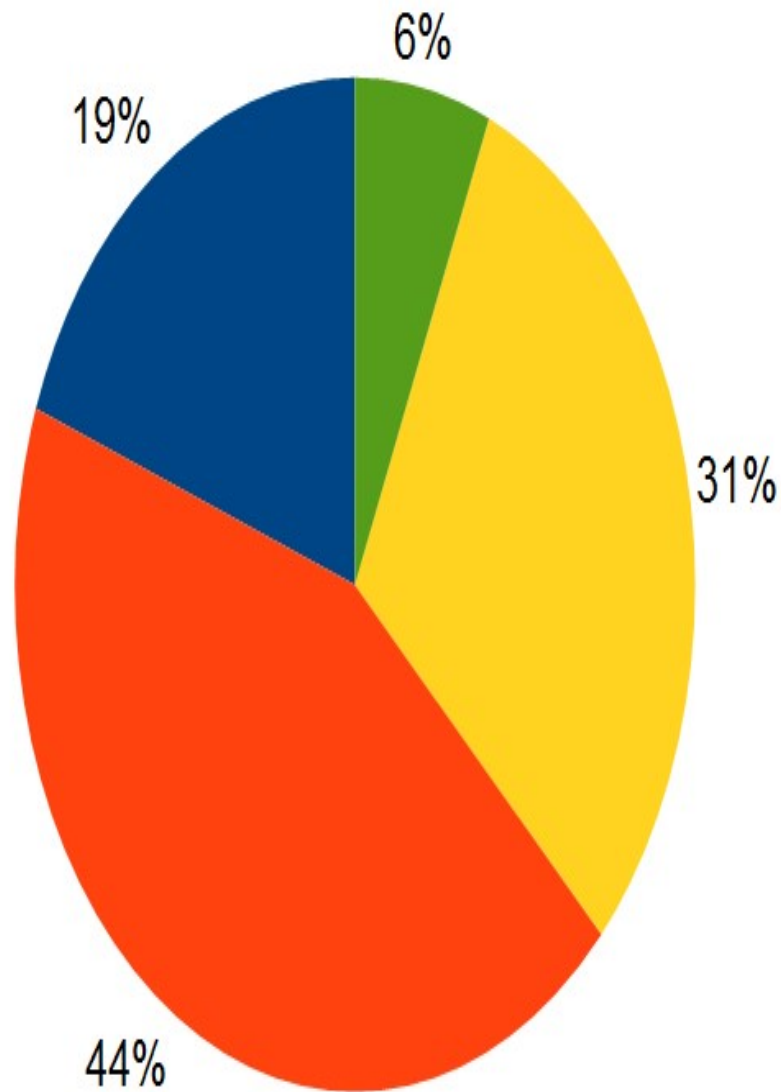
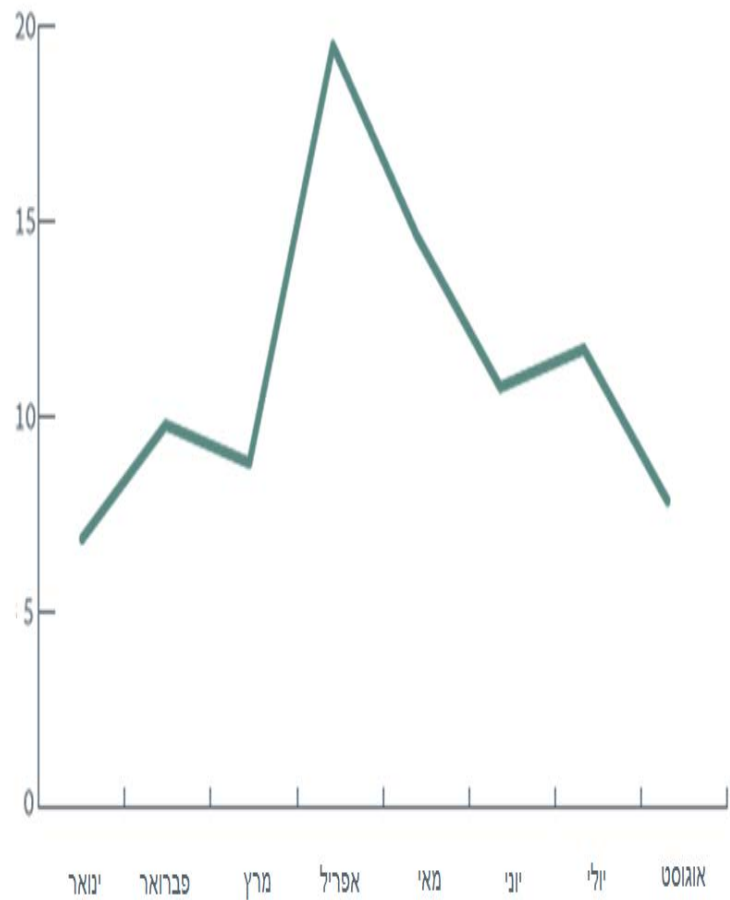
1. **Line graph:** uses one or more lines to show changes in statistics over time or space.

2. **Pie graph:** highlights segments of a circle to show simple distribution patterns.

3. **Bar graph:** uses vertical or horizontal bars to show comparisons among two or more items.



Types of visual aids ~5



Line graph

Pie graph

Bar graph

Charts:

Charts are useful for summarizing large blocks of information.

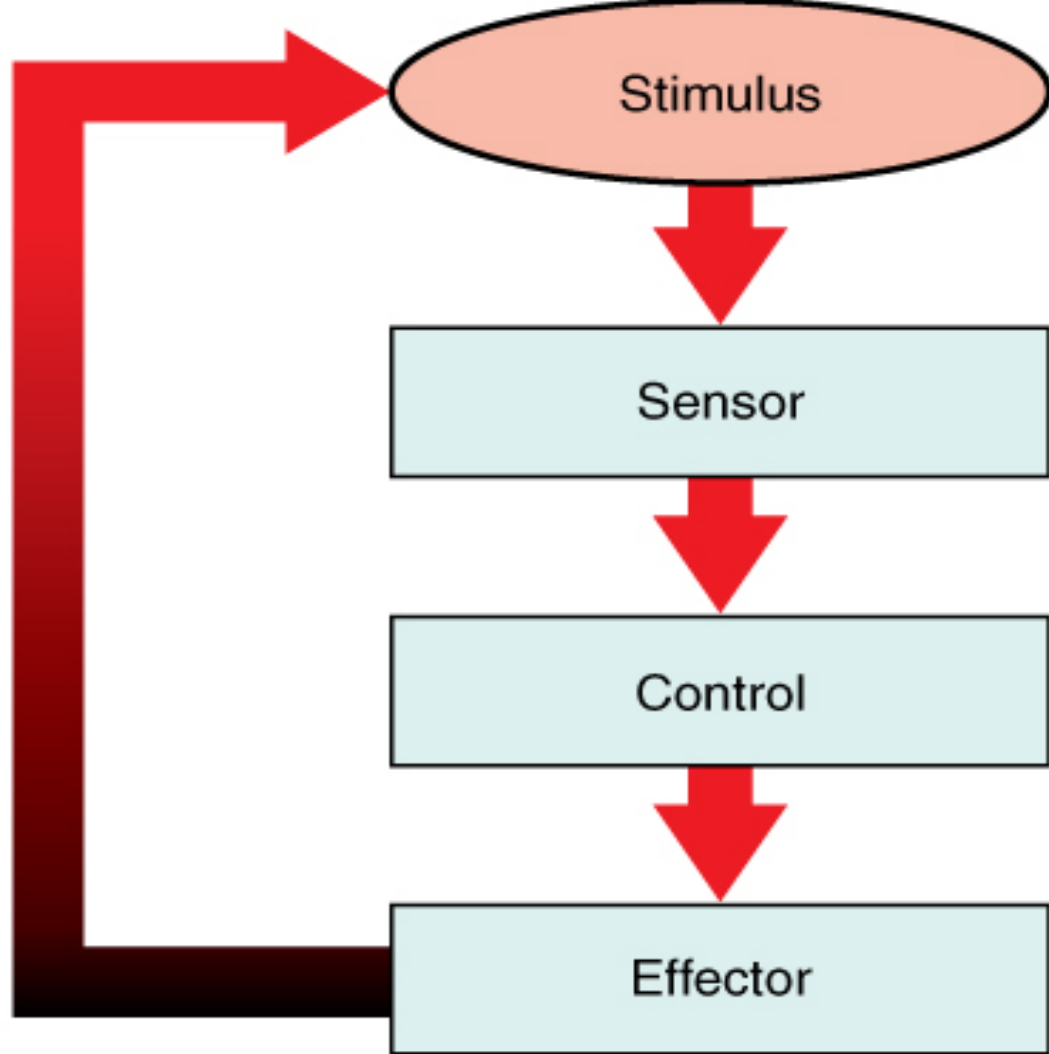
It is also valuable for showing the steps of a process.

It can also be used to present information that your audience may want to write down.

Don't include too much information that the chart is jumbled and hard to read.



Types of visual aids ~6

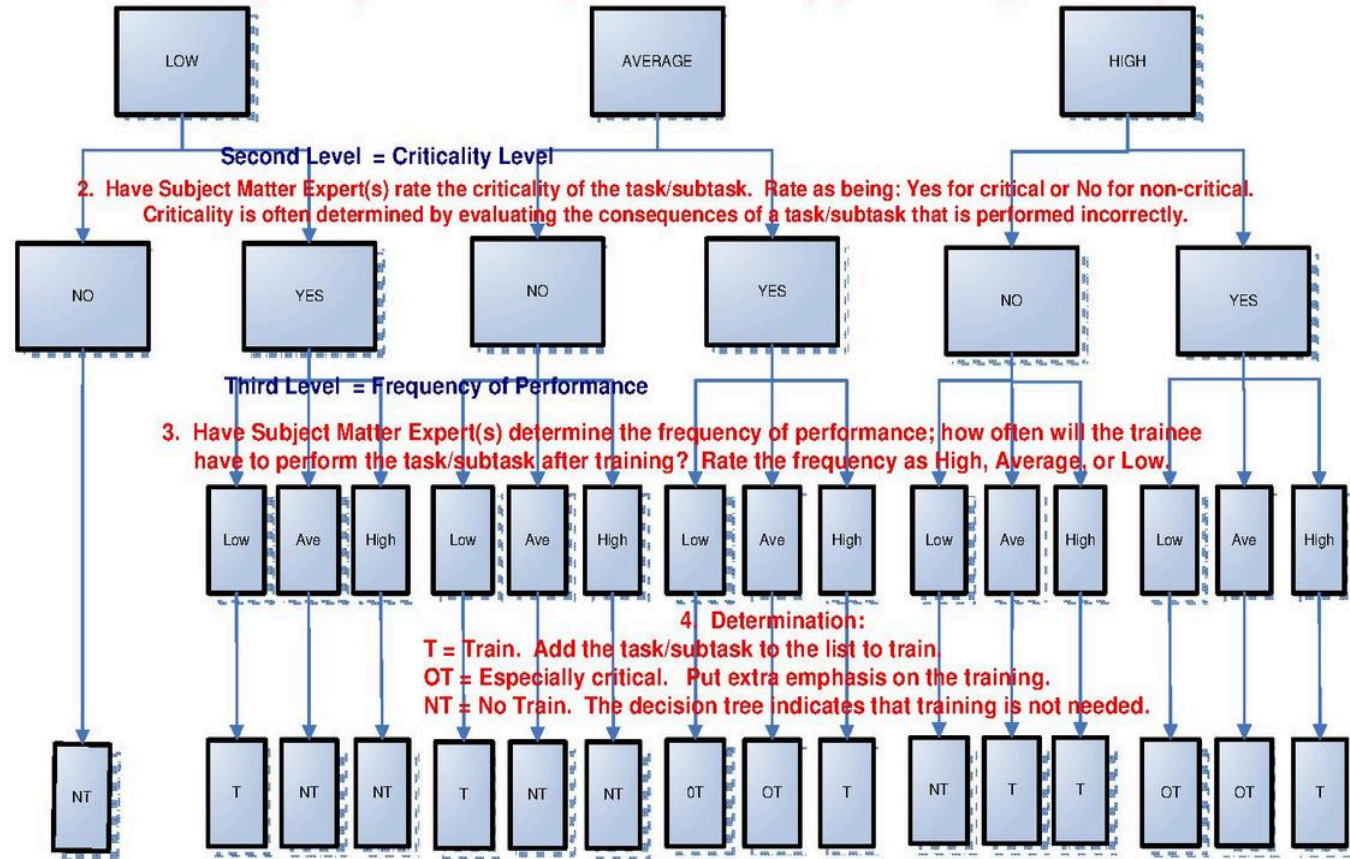


(a) Negative feedback loop

Difficulty, Criticality, Frequency (DCF) Model for Training Content Selection

First Level = Difficulty Level

1. Have Subject Matter Expert(s) rate the level of difficulty for the task/subtask. Rate the level of difficulty as High, Average, or Low. Difficulty can be attributable to physical and/or cognitive difficulty.



Second Level = Criticality Level

2. Have Subject Matter Expert(s) rate the criticality of the task/subtask. Rate as being: Yes for critical or No for non-critical. Criticality is often determined by evaluating the consequences of a task/subtask that is performed incorrectly.

Third Level = Frequency of Performance

3. Have Subject Matter Expert(s) determine the frequency of performance; how often will the trainee have to perform the task/subtask after training? Rate the frequency as High, Average, or Low.

4. Determination:

T = Train. Add the task/subtask to the list to train
 OT = Especially critical. Put extra emphasis on the training.
 NT = No Train. The decision tree indicates that training is not needed.

T = Train

NT = No Train

OT = Over Train*

*The need to Over Train may also be a good indication that supplemental training aids, jobs aids, electronic performance support systems (EPSS), etc. may also be warranted.

This evaluation instrument adapted from MIL-HDBK-29612-2A, Instructional Systems Development/Systems Approach to Training (ISD/SAT), Page 71, dated 31 August 2001.

Effective_(readable)

Ineffective (“unreadable”)

Video:

The detail, immediacy, and vividness of video are hard to match.

Make sure the video matches the idea/point you are trying to prove.

Knowing that a sloppily edited video is of less value than no video at all.

Be ware of the length/quality of the video. Prepare for technical problems, back it up/plan B.



Types of visual aids ~7

The speaker:

Sometimes the speaker can use his/herself as visual aid – by showing movements, demonstrating steps, doing magic tricks, etc.

Doing a demonstration well requires special practice to coordinate your actions with your words and to control the timing of your speech.

Make sure all audience can see your actions.



Types of visual aids ~8

Whether you are creating visual aids by hand or designing them on a computer, there are **six basic guidelines you should follow to make your aids clear and visually appealing.**

These guidelines apply whether you are speaking in or out of the classroom, at a business meeting or a political forum, to an audience of 20 or of 200.



1. Prepare visual aids in advance.

Prepare the visual aids before your outline is due.

Then, you will have enough time to choose a visual aid that actually will enhance your speech. Also, you will have extra time to practice your speech with the visual aid.



2. Keep visual aids simple.

Visual aids meant to communicate your ideas, not to display your virtuosity as an artist or wizardry with computer graphics.

Visual aids should be simple, clear, and to the point.

Include a visual aid only when you need to make a point; don't use a visual aid which will distract your audience.



3. Make sure visual aids are large enough.

A visual aid is useless if no one can see it.

When you use a visual aid, keep in mind the size of the room which you will be speaking. Make sure the aid is big enough to be seen easily by everyone in the room.

No all caps. A long string of words in all caps is harder to read than normal text. All caps could be used for titles.



4. Use fonts that are easy to read.

Avoid decorative fonts.

The fonts are audience-friendly, only when they are clear and easy to read.

Avoid fonts that are fancy and not commonly used.



5. Use a limited number of fonts.

Using no more than two fonts in a PowerPoint visual aid – one for the title or major headings, another for subtitles or other text.

The fonts of all slides in a PowerPoint should be consistent.



6. Use color effectively.

Some colors do not work together; remember some people are color-blind:

Red and green are a tough combination for people to read; they look the same to people who are color-blind.

Many shades of blue and green are too close to each other to be easily differentiated. As are orange and red, blue and purple...

You can use color to highlight key points in visual aids.



Presenting -1

Display visual aids where the audience can see them.

Consider the size of your speech room and your audience. For actual objects, walk around the stage with the object.

Don't just holding the object standing at one side of the room.



Presenting -2

Avoid passing visual aids among the audience.

If you pass the visual aids around, there is no guarantee the audience will pay attention to it only when you want them to; this includes handout visual aids for everyone.

If you need to give your audience some copies, do it after your finish talking.



Presenting -3

Display visual aids only while discussing them.

To minimizing any distractions:

Keep your visual aids out of your audience's sight until you are ready to discuss it.

When you finish your discussion, place the visual aids back out of sight.



Presenting -4

Talk to your audience, not to your visual aids.

Always facing towards the audience, even when you are discussing about the visual aids.

Having eye contact with your audience will help you pick up feedback about how the visual aids and your discussion of it are coming across.

Especially, DO NOT read from your visual aids!!



Presenting -5 (most important)

Introduce & explain the visual aids clearly & concisely.

Visual aids don't explain themselves.

Always introduce your visual aids before presenting it; mention the reasons you are presenting it (especially when the visual aid could make the audience feel discomfort—such as a crime scene photo). *E.g. “I am about to show you a photo of dead coral reefs so you can see what pollution had done to the lives under our ocean...”*

When you are presenting it, pointing at certain features of the visual aids and explaining/translating it to the audience as they are children.

After presenting, make a transition to your next point of the speech.



Presenting -6

Practice your visual aids with timing.

Rehearse with your equipment to be sure you can present your aids with a minimum of fuss. Have a plan B for any technical issues.

Run through the entire speech several times, practicing how you will show the aids, the gestures you will make, and the timing of the entire speech with the visual aids.



What type of visual aids will you use? Can they be carried to your speech location?

Are your visual aids simple, clear, and able to prove your point?

Mind the size of your speech room and the audience. Are the visual aids large enough?



Check your PowerPoint's number & types of fonts, color used...

Prepare a plan B, in case there is any technical issues.

Keep your visual aids out of the audience's sight until you are about to discuss it.



Don't read from your visual aids. Don't talk to your visual aids instead of your audience.

Prepare to introduce & explain the visual aids; then at least have 1 transition sentence.

Check if your visual aids meet your instructor's requirements? Then, practice with timing.



The background features a light blue sky with faint outlines of buildings and a green field. On the left, a girl with long dark hair, wearing a blue dress, is flying a large orange kite with a black cross on it. The kite is attached to a string that has several small, colorful triangular flags (green, blue, red) on it. On the right, two people are sitting on a brown ledge, reading books. One is a man with dark skin and short hair, wearing a brown shirt, reading a red book. The other is a man with light skin and curly hair, wearing a red shirt, reading a green book.

We are visual creatures.

Visual things stay put, whereas sounds fade.

~ Steven Pinker

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