

HOW TO USE VISUAL AIDS IN PRESENTATIONS

Questions to think about:

1. What is the primary function of using visual aids during the presentation? What is their aim: to show, or to illustrate?
2. Why is PowerPoint gaining bad reputation as a speaker tool? What may the primary problem of presenter using PowerPoint be?
3. Which approach to visuals will you choose and why? To show a visual and then to talk about it, or vice versa?
4. How much text should there be on a PowerPoint slide? Why?
5. What should, ideally, a PowerPoint slide contain?

Any time you are giving a PowerPoint presentation, you are really giving three separate presentations:

1. The words out of your mouth
2. The slides projected on the screen
3. The paper handouts you give to audience members after the presentation

Each medium is unique and each of them contains inherent strengths and weaknesses.

The spoken word is excellent _____ but is a poor medium for _____.

Visual projections on a screen are wonderful for _____ but slides are a poor and inefficient method for _____.

The printed page is great for _____. It is the most accessible and flexible of all media because _____.

However, print does not _____.

Source: TJ Walker, Jess Todtfeld: Presentation Training A-Z, Media Training Worldwide, 2008

Exercise 1:

Listen to business people from different cultures sharing their views. Write notes on points you agree with.

Italian	
Dutch	
Swedish	
Japanese	

Source: Powell, Mark: Dynamic Presentations, Cambridge United Press, 2012

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Exercise 2: Sometimes using real objects or ‘props’ in a presentation can be highly effective. Listen to business people talking about some of the best uses of prop they’ve seen presenters make and answer the questions below.

- a) How did Apple CEO Steve Jobs demonstrate the thinness of the MacBook Air?
- b) What is the weirdest use of a prop the second speaker’s ever seen?
- c) How did Cisco CEO John Chambers demonstrate the TelePresence system?
- d) What’s the connection between a jeans pocket and the iPod Nano?

Video: Watch part of the following TED talks and identify what kind of visuals the presenters use and what role they play in their presentations. Listen for ways in which the presenters refer to their visuals.

Manuel Lima: A visual history of human knowledge

Hans Rosling: The best stats you have ever seen/ Don’t panic

Jamie Oliver: Teach every child about food

Exercise 3: Listen to part of a presentation about marketing to women and note the context in which the following key figures are mentioned.

- | | |
|---------------|------------------------|
| a) 85% _____ | d) 10% _____ |
| b) 8/10 _____ | e) \$ 70 m _____ |
| c) 75% _____ | f) $\frac{3}{4}$ _____ |

Source: Powell, Mark: Dynamic Presentations, Cambridge United Press, 2012

VISUAL AIDS

Visuals help you to give a lot of information in a short space of time. They are really “quick snapshots“ of situations, developments, events and processes which would take a long time to explain fully in words.

Good visuals speak for themselves and require little or no description, but you often need to draw your audience’s attention to one or more key points before you discuss them in more detail:

- **1 HIGHLIGHTS** Which parts of the visual are most significant?
- **2 COMMENTS** Why?
- **3 INTERPRETATIONS** What conclusions can you draw?

TASK 1

These expressions highlight important information in a visual. Complete them using the following words:

on to at out about

I’d like	us to look	1. ____ this part of the graph in more detail.
	us to focus our attention	2. ____ one particularly important feature.
	you to think	3. ____ the significance of this figure here.
	to point	4. ____ one or two interesting details.
	to draw your attention	5. ____ the upper half of the chart.

TASK 2

These expressions comment on important information in a visual. Complete them using the following words:

if as whatever whichever however

1. _____ you can see, there are several surprising developments.
2. _____ you look at it more closely, you’ll notice a couple of apparent anomalies.
3. _____ you try to explain it, this is very bad news.
4. _____ the reasons for this, the underlying trend is obvious.
5. _____ way you look at it, there are some of our best results ever.

TASK 3

These expressions interpret important information in a visual. Complete them using the following words:

lesson message significance conclusions implications

I’m sure the	1. _____ to be drawn from this are 2. _____ to be learned from this is 3. _____ of this are 4. _____ of this is 5. _____ here is	clear to all of us.
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Source: Mark Powell: Presenting in English – How to Give Successful Presentations, Thomson Heinle 1996

REFERRING TO VISUALS

⇒ Preparing the audience for visuals - teasing

- The graph on the following slide gives you a rough outline of...
- On the next slide you'll see something quite remarkable.
- The next graph might come as a surprise to some of you.
- The next visual contains the key information that most of you came here to hear about.

⇒ Preparing the audience for visuals - teasing, 3 examples

- The next graph will show you the inflation rate of the U.S. from the late 1920s to the year 2000. You'll be surprised when you see the overall development since there are several movements in this graph that I imagine some of you won't have anticipated.
- The next slide shows a cartoon by the famous cartoon artist Gary Larson - a cartoon that, in a humorous way, captures the very problem we're facing with our after sales services.
- The next set of figures and statistical data on our production costs in Asia will be somewhat of a shock to those of you who haven't seen them yet.

⇒ Explaining the parameters of a graph.

- On the horizontal axis you see the...
- On the vertical axis we have...
- The figures on the vertical axis are units of one thousand...

⇒ Simplifying graphs

- This graph shows three distinct developments.
- I'd like to draw your attention to two major phases of the overall graph movement.
- The turning point in the performance of the graph is....
- What this complex line boils down to are three major developments.

Source: Mario Klarer: Působivá prezentace a přednáška v angličtině, Grada 2007

**Look at these presentation phrases and decide whether they:
*refer backwards, refer forwards, refer to visuals or deal with interruptions.***

1. This graph indicates...
2. As I said earlier, ...
3. This leads me to my next point.
4. Taking this into consideration, ...
5. As this bar chart shows, ...
6. If you don't mind, I'll deal with questions later on.
7. Going back to a point I made earlier, ...
8. Sorry, could I finish first?
9. I'll deal with this point again later.
10. I'll give you some more information on this in a moment.

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