

HOW TO USE VISUAL AIDS

1. Design visual props to fit into your planned talk (not vice-versa).
2. A visual aid should be used to support or reinforce what you have already said: TELL-AND-SHOW, not show-and-tell.
3. The most common mistake business people make when they include visual aids in their presentation is that the visual aid is on the screen while the presenter is talking.

When this happens, the speaker provides a distraction. The eye can gather information much faster than the ear. Audiences will tend to subconsciously tune out the speaker and so will miss vast portions of what he is saying.

4. If using a model as a visual prop, try to make as many points as possible before showing the model.
5. Use black blanks between slides to make sure the audience focuses on you.
6. Don't forget - you are the most important ingredient. Do not allow yourself to be in the dark when you are talking.
7. Use visuals naturally and interactively. If you look at the visual you are showing the audience that you wish them to look at it. But avoid talking to the slide.

8. When something is on the screen don't talk until your audience has had time to absorb your visual aid.

The progression should go something like this:

- Make your point verbally
- Lead into the slide saying: *“Let me show you what I mean ...”*
“As you can see here ...”
“Here's a picture of what I'm talking about ...”
- Put the slide on the screen
- Look at it yourself and scan it with the audience, silently
- It's okay to make an explanatory remark if you think this necessary
- Pause
- Take the slide off or put up a blank
- Continue your presentation verbally until you want to use your next visual aid

9. Remember rules are the same as for speaking. Try to keep visual props simple so that only one or two points are conveyed by each slide, etc.

10. Try to avoid word slides. Ask yourself: “Does the audience need these headings or are the headings my notes”?

Golden Rule: An audience can either look or listen. They cannot do both at once.