

Using Visual Aids

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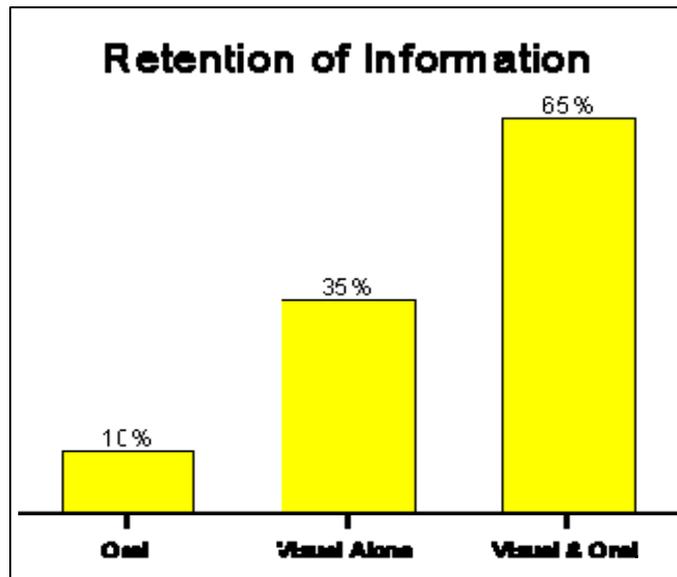
Visual aids help your presentation make things happen. Visual aids help you reach your objectives by providing emphasis to whatever is being said. Clear pictures multiply the audience's level of understanding of the material presented, and they should be used to reinforce your message, clarify points, and create excitement.

Visual aids involve your audience and require a change from one activity to another: from hearing to seeing. When you use visual aids, their use tends to encourage gestures and movement on your part. This extra movement reinforces the control that you, the speaker, need over the presentation. The use of visual aids, then, are mutually beneficial to the audience *and* you.

Visual aids add impact and interest to a presentation. They enable you to appeal to more than one sense at the same time, thereby increasing the audience's understanding and retention level. With pictures, the concepts or ideas you present are no longer simply words - but words plus images. The chart below cites the effectiveness of visual aids on audience retention.

People tend to be eye-minded, and the impacts visual aids bring to a presentation are, indeed, significant. The studies, below, reveal interesting statistics that support these findings:

- In many studies, experimental psychologists and educators have found that retention of information three days after a meeting or other event is six times greater when information is presented by visual and oral means than when the information is presented by the spoken word alone.
- Studies by educational researchers suggest that approximately 83% of human learning occurs visually, and the remaining 17% through the other senses - 11% through hearing, 3.5% through smell, 1% through taste, and 1.5% through touch.
- The studies suggest that three days after an event, people retain 10% of what they heard from an oral presentation, 35% from a visual presentation, and 65% from a visual and oral presentation.



The use of visual aids, then, is essential to all presentations. Without them, the impact of your presentation may leave the audience shortly after the audience leaves you. By preparing a presentation with visual aids that reinforce your main ideas, you will reach your audience far more effectively, and, perhaps, continue to "touch" them long after the presentation ends.