

SUMMARY

Presentation aids are tools to help you communicate your ideas more dramatically than words alone can. There are different types of presentation aids, and general guidelines can help you use them effectively.

Presentation aids help improve listeners' understanding and recollection of your ideas. They help you communicate the organization of your ideas, gain and maintain the audience's attention, and illustrate a sequence of events or procedures.

Three-dimensional presentation aids include objects, models, and people. Two-dimensional presentation aids include drawings, photographs, slides, maps, graphs, charts, flipcharts, projected transparencies, and chalkboards. Software graphics packages can be used to produce many presentation aids inexpensively and efficiently. Audiovisual aids include DVDs and video-

tapes. Audio aids such as tapes and compact disks can also help communicate ideas to your listeners.

When you prepare your presentation aids, make sure your visuals are large enough to be seen clearly by all of your listeners. Adapt your presentation aids to your audience, the speaking environment, and the objectives of your speech. Prepare your visuals well in advance, and make sure they are not illegal or dangerous to use.

As you present your speech, remember to look at your audience, not at your presentation aid; talk about your visual, don't just show it; avoid passing objects among your audience; use handouts to reinforce the main points in your speech; time your visuals carefully; and be sure to have backup supplies and a contingency plan.

RECAP



Checklist for Presentation Aids

WHEN DEVELOPING PRESENTATION AIDS

- Are your presentation aids easy to see?
- Are they simple and uncluttered?
- Do they suit your audience, speech objectives, and speech environment?
- Are they attractive and carefully prepared?
- Are your presentation aids legal and nonthreatening to your audience?
- Have you rehearsed with your presentation aids?

WHEN USING PRESENTATION AIDS

- Do you look at your audience when you talk, rather than at your presentation aids?
- Do you explain your presentation aids, rather than just show them?
- Can you avoid having to pass around your presentation aids?
- Have you carefully timed the use of your handouts?
- Do your presentation aids keep your audience's attention focused on your speech?
- Can you operate the hardware you have chosen, and do you have backup supplies?

Presentations in “The Conceptual Age”

My favorite book in the summer of 2006 was Daniel Pink's best-seller, *A Whole New Mind* (Riverhead Trade). Tom Peters called the book “a miracle.” There's a reason. *A Whole New Mind* sets the context for the “Presentation Zen approach” to presenting in today's world, an era that Pink and others have dubbed “the conceptual age” where “high-touch” and “high-concept” aptitudes are first among equals. “The future belongs to a different kind of person,” Pink says. “Designers, inventors, teachers, storytellers—creative and empathetic right-brain thinkers whose abilities mark the fault line between who gets ahead and who doesn't.”

In *A Whole New Mind*, Pink paints an accurate and vivid picture of the threats and opportunities facing professionals today. Pink claims we're living in a different era, a different age. An age in which those who “Think different” will be valued even more than ever. We're living in an age, says Pink, that is “...animated by a different form of thinking and a new approach to life—one that prizes aptitudes that I call ‘high concept’ and ‘high touch.’ High concept involves the capacity to detect patterns and opportunities, to create artistic and emotional beauty, to craft a satisfying narrative...”

Now, Pink is not saying that logic and analysis (so-called “left-brain reasoning”), which are so important in “the information age,” are not important in “the conceptual age” of today. Indeed, logical thinking is as important as it ever has been. So-called “right-brain reasoning” alone is not going to keep the space shuttle up or cure disease. Logical reasoning is a necessary condition. However, it's increasingly clear that logic alone is not a sufficient condition for success for individuals and for organizations. Right-brain thinking is every bit as important now—in some cases more important—than left-brain thinking. (The right-brain/left-brain distinction is a metaphor based on real differences between the two hemispheres; a healthy person uses both hemispheres for even simple tasks.)

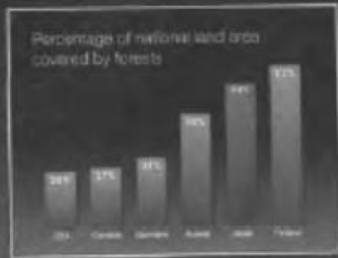
Particularly valuable in *A Whole New Mind* are the “six senses” or the six “right-brain directed aptitudes,” which Pink says are necessary for successful professionals to possess in the more interdependent world we live in, a world of increased automation and out-sourcing.

The six aptitudes are: design, story, symphony, empathy, play, and meaning. Mastering them is not sufficient, but leveraging these aptitudes has now become necessary for professional success and personal fulfillment in today's world. The introduction of the aptitudes that follow on the next page is written with multimedia-enhanced presentations in mind, but you could take the six aptitudes and apply them to the art of game design, programming, product design, project management, health care, teaching, retail, and so on. The slide below summarizes six of the key points found in Dan Pink's book. *(Original images in the slide are from a vector file from iStockphoto.com, file no. 700018.)*



1. Slides the audience will see

聞き手が見るスライド



2. Notes only you will see

話し手が使うメモ



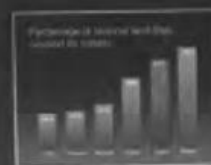
3. Handout to be taken away

復習のための配布資料



Three Parts of a Presentation

If you remember that there are three components to your presentation—the slides, your notes, and the handout—then you will not feel the need to place so much information (text, data, etc.) in your slides. Instead, you can place that information in your notes (for the purpose of rehearsing or as a backup “just in case”) or in the handout. This point has been made by presentation experts such as Cliff Atkinson, yet most people still fill their slides with reams of text and hard-to-see data and simply print out their slides instead of creating a document. (I have used the four slides on this page while making this point during my live talks on presentation design.)



Slides

聞き手が見るスライド



Notes

話し手が使うメモ



Handout

復習のための配布資料

Grids and the Rule of Thirds

For centuries, artists and designers have introduced a proportion called the "golden mean" or "golden ratio" found in nature into their works. The golden section rectangle has a proportion of 1:1.618. There is a belief that we are naturally drawn to images that have proportions approaching the golden section rectangle, just as we are often drawn to many things in the natural environment with golden-mean proportions. However, attempting to design visuals according to golden-mean proportions is impractical in most cases. But, the "rule of thirds," which is derived from the golden mean, is a basic design technique that can help you add balance (symmetrical or asymmetrical), beauty, and a higher aesthetic quality to your visuals.

The rule of thirds is a basic technique that photographers learn for framing their shots. Subjects placed exactly in the middle can often make for an uninteresting photo. A viewfinder can be divided by lines—real or just imagined—so that you have four intersecting lines or crossing points and nine boxes that resemble a tic-tac-toe board. These four crossing points (also called "power points," if you can believe it) are areas you might place your main subject, rather than in the center.



Remember, there is no liberty in "absolute freedom" when it comes to design. You need to limit your choices so that you do not waste time adjusting every single design element to a new position. I recommend that you create some sort of clean, simple grid to build your visuals upon. Although you may not be aware of it, virtually every Web page and every page in a book or magazine is built atop a grid. Grids can save you time and ensure that your design elements fit more harmoniously on the display. Using grids to divide your slide "canvas" into thirds, for example, is an easier way to at least approach golden-mean proportions, and you can use the grids to align elements that give the overall design balance, a clear flow and point of focus, and a natural overall cohesiveness and aesthetic quality that is not accidental but is by design.

In Sum

- Design matters. But design is not about decoration or about ornamentation. Design is about making communication as easy and clear for the viewer as possible.
- Keep the principle of signal-versus-noise in mind to remove all nonessential elements. Remove visual clutter. Avoid 3-D effects.
- People remember visuals better than bullet points. Always ask yourself how you can use a strong visual—including quantitative displays—to enhance your narrative.
- Empty space is not nothing; it is a powerful something. Learn to see and manipulate empty space to give your slide designs greater organization, clarity, and interest.
- Use the principle of contrast to create strong dynamic differences among elements that are different. If it is different, make it very different.
- Use the principle of repetition to repeat selected elements throughout your slides. This can help give your slides unity and organization.
- Use the principle of alignment to connect elements visually (through invisible lines) on a slide. Grids are very useful for achieving good alignment. This will give your slide a clean, well-organized look.
- Use the principle of proximity to ensure that related items are grouped together. People will tend to interpret items together or near to each other as belonging to the same group.