

Visual Aids

- I. The purpose of visual aids is to explain an idea visually that cannot be expressed easily verbally. They should not be merely something for the audience to look at, but rather created carefully and presented effectively.

- A. Six basic guidelines for creating visual aids:
 1. Prepare them in advance (for creativity, attractiveness, and practice).
 2. Keep them simple.
 - a. Purpose is to enhance communication not to display artistic talent.
 - b. Make the visual aid clear, straightforward, and uncluttered.
 3. Make sure they are large enough.
 - a. Check the visibility from the distance of the farthest listener for your speech.
 - b. Use 36-point type for titles, 24-point type for subtitles, and 18-point type for other text.
 4. Use fonts that are easy to read (e.g., Times, Times New Roman, Helvetica, Geneva).
 5. Use a limited number of fonts.
 - a. Use no more than two fonts: one for the title or major headings and another for subtitles or text.
 - b. Use a block typeface for the title and a rounder typeface for subtitles and text.
 6. Use color effectively.
 - a. Contrasting colors that can be differentiated.
 - b. Limited number of colors.
 - c. Use strategically to highlight key points.

- B. Seven tips for presenting visual aids during a speech:
 1. Speakers should avoid using the chalkboard for visual aids.
 - a. Forces you to turn your back.
 - b. Lack vividness and neatness.
 2. Speakers should display visual aids where listeners could see them.
 - a. Find a location in advance.
 - b. Don't stand in front of them.
 3. Speakers should avoid passing visual aids among the audience.
 - a. Handouts distract attention.
 - b. Pass materials to take home after the speech.
 4. Speakers should display visual aids only while discussing them.
 - a. Distracting if visible throughout the speech.
 - b. Cover or remove when done.
 5. Speakers should talk to their audiences not to their visual aids.
 - a. Glance at the aids as necessary.
 - b. Keep eye contact to get feedback.
 6. Speakers should explain their visual aids clearly and concisely.
 - a. Visual aid only as useful as the explanation that goes with it.
 - b. Don't rush it: describe and interpret your visual aid.
 7. Speakers should practice with their visual aids.