

# GUIDELINES FOR USING VISUAL AIDS



## Guidelines for Using Visual Aids

Visuals are one of the most compelling parts of a presentation. There are many advantages of using visual content to help you deliver an engaging and memorable presentation by grabbing the students' attention, making complex ideas easier to understand, increasing interest and reinforcing concepts.



Lockard & Sidowski (1961) found that people retained 10 percent of what they heard from an oral presentation, 35 percent of what they heard from a visual presentation, and 65 percent of what they heard from a visual and oral presentation. This shows how the combined effect of both the visual and oral components can contribute to long-term memory.

### Here are some helpful guidelines on the use of visual aids in presentations:



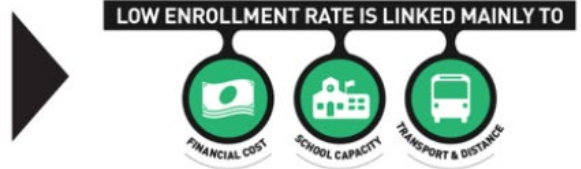
**Use high-quality images.** Make sure that visuals are high quality and avoid using images that are blurry, overexposed or grainy. All images must be a minimum of 300 dpi for best results. If the

images are not the same dimension as the screen, put them on a black background. Don't use other colors, especially white. Also, you can walk to the last row, where students will be sitting and make sure that everything on the visual can be seen clearly.

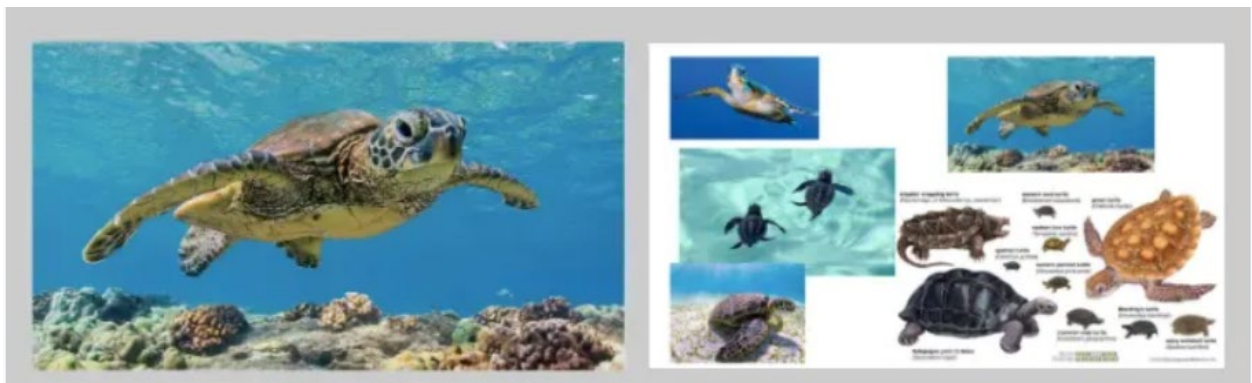


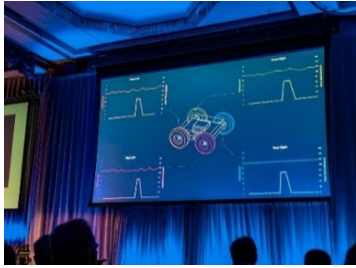
Use an infographic instead of paragraphs of text. You can [get straight to the point](#), and reduce the word count in the process. Using an infographic format can help to explain difficult concepts, and also works well for visualizing processes or timelines. You can design your own infographics through several different apps such as [Canva](#), [Visme](#) and [Adobe](#).

"The low enrolment rate is linked to a range of factors including school capacity, cost, transportation and distance, curriculum and language, bullying and violence, and competing priorities such as the need for children to work. Educational opportunities for children with disabilities are particularly limited. If the situation does not improve dramatically, Syria risks ending up with a generation disengaged from education and learning."



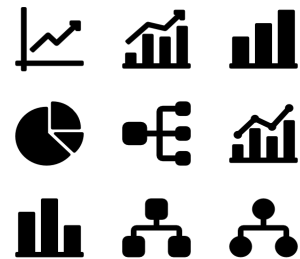
**Keep to one image per slide.** According to Riley (2020), a single image that fills the entire screen is far more powerful than a slide cluttered with images. A slide with too many images may be detrimental to your presentation. The audience will spend more mental energy trying to sort through the clutter than listening to your presentation. If you need multiple images, you can put each one on its own slide.





**Explain the visual aids as you show them.** According to McLean (2003), you should make a clear connection between your words and the visual aid for the audience. When you first present a visual aid, you should explain its content and relevance. Random images that are placed to just fill empty space are distracting and reduce the impact of your presentation.

**Use appropriate figures.** Figures can quickly illustrate, clarify, or emphasize key relationships between categories and numbers, revealing structural relationships and processes. Graphs, charts, diagrams, and photographs are all examples of figures. Also, keep in mind that figures should be properly labeled.




**Use tables:** Tables are effective when you must classify information and organize it in categories. Tables have four essential elements: title, column headings, row headings, and field. You can apply colors of the table cells or rows to distinguish more and less important data. Also, if the table you're presenting has drawn data from a previous study, remember to cite the source.

**Remove the visuals immediately after you're finished talking about them.** You need to remove the visual aid as soon as you're finished with it, because otherwise some of your audience will probably keep staring at it, or read it again. And while they're doing that, they may not listen to you. If you want to keep their attention on you, put the visual part of your presentation away when you're not talking about it.



**Use copyright images.** It is the most important point to be kept in mind while choosing or picking up images from the internet. There are many excellent websites for free images that you can use for your presentations. Below are some of them;



*You may use the checklist below to evaluate the visual aids you prefer to use in your presentations.*

#### **Visual Aid Evaluation Checklist**

- Visuals aid clarify, simplify or emphasize major points.
- Visuals are high quality.
- Visual aids are relevant and used effectively to support the content.
- All visual aids can be explained.
- Graphics, charts or tables are used rather than text whenever possible.
- Visual aids capture and retain students' interest in my presentation.
- Images are large and clear enough for the viewer to see or read.
- Images are shown with explanatory text or a caption.
- Visual aids improve my credibility as the presenter.
- All important parts of each graphic and figure are labelled.



## References

Lockard, J., & Sidowski, J. R. (1961). Learning in fourth and sixth graders as a function of sensory mode of stimulus presentation and overt or covert practice. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 52(5), 262–265.

McLean, S. (2003). *The basics of speech communication*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Rielly, T (2020). *The #1 rule for improving your presentation slides*. Ted Masterclass.

<https://masterclass.ted.com/blog/visual-presentations-series-less-is-more>

Incorporating Effective Visuals into a Presentation. University of Minnesota.

<https://open.lib.umn.edu/writingforsuccess/chapter/14-2-incorporating-effective-visuals-into-a-presentation/>

Preparing Visual Aids. American College of Physicians.

<https://www.acponline.org/membership/residents/competitions-awards/acp-national-abstract-competitions/guide-to-preparing-for-the-abstract-competition/preparing-visual-aids>

10 Easy Tips to Choose the Right Images for Presentations.

<https://www.chillibreeze.com/presentation-design/10-easy-tips-to-choose-the-right-images-for-presentations/>

10 tips for planning successful visual aids.

<https://pcwww.liv.ac.uk/~pgro/Presentations/10%20tips%20for%20planning%20successful%20visual%20aids.pdf>

How to Give an Awesome Presentation with Visual Aids (2019).

<https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/341612>



## Further Reading and Resources

- [Designing Visual Aids. Centre for Teaching Excellence. University of Waterloo.](#)
- [Improving Presentation Style. Center for Teaching and Learning. Washington University.](#)
- [Presentations - Visual Aids. Manchester Metropolitan University.](#)
- [Top 12 presentation visual-aid tips in 4 minutes. Barry Brophy.](#)
- [The 3 Magic Ingredients of Amazing Presentations. Phil WAKNELL TEDx.](#)