

# Adapting to Handouts and Visuals

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## WHAT'S COVERED

In this lesson, you will learn about some additional components you can add to your presentation. Specifically, this lesson will cover:

1. Adapting to Handouts and Visuals
2. Types of Visual Aids
3. The Format of Visual Aids
4. Tips for the Speaker

## 1. Adapting to Handouts and Visuals

Visual aids are used to help audiences understand and process the information being presented. There are many different types of **visual aids** from handouts to projections of PowerPoint slides.



Planning ahead is important when using visual aids. It is necessary to choose a visual aid that is appropriate

for the material and audience. Thus, it is important for speakers to understand how to use handouts and other speech components correctly so that visuals help, and not distract or confuse listeners.

Handouts in particular can be passed out before, during, or after the speaker's presentation. This allows the presenter to provide audience members with supporting facts, data, or tips that may otherwise be overlooked while being displayed on an overhead projector or screen.



#### TERM TO KNOW

#### Visual Aid

Visual aids are often used to help audiences of informative and persuasive speeches understand the topic being presented. There are many different types of visual aids that range from handouts to Power Point slide presentation.

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## 2. Types of Visual Aids

You can bring an actual object to exhibit during the speech. Objects are often necessary when demonstrating how to do something such as tying knots. As a drawback, some objects are unavailable or too large.

Models can represent how an object or system works, such as the solar system. Models can serve as substitutes that provide better examples of the real thing to the audience. However, models may take away from the reality of what is being spoken. For instance, a model may make it more difficult to comprehend how vast the solar system actually is.

Graphs are used to visualize the relationships between different quantities. There are many useful types including bar graphs, line graphs, and pie graphs. Graphs can help the audience visualize statistics, resulting in a greater impact. However, graphs can easily become cluttered with too much detail.

Maps show geographic areas or the location of something. As with graphs, too much detail on a map can cause the audience to lose focus.

Tables use columns and rows to organize words, symbols, or data. Tables make it easy to understand the comparison of facts, but they may not be interesting or pleasing to the eye. They can also overwhelm audience members with too much information.

Photographs can be prepared quickly with inexpensive digital cameras. Photographs are good tools to make or emphasize a point or to explain a topic when the real object can not be physically or legally presented. However, enlarging photographs can be expensive if not using a projector.

Drawings or diagrams can be created to show specific focus, especially when a photograph is too detailed or does not show important parts. However, drawings or diagrams can look sloppy and unprofessional.

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## 3. The Format of Visual Aids

You can deliver your visual aid in different media or formats depending on your budget and the availability of supplies and equipment.

Chalkboards or whiteboards are very useful, particularly when more advanced types of media are unavailable. They are cheap and also allow for much flexibility.

Poster boards can display charts, graphs, pictures, or illustrations. It is relatively light weight; nonetheless, make sure to attach the poster so it does not fall over during the speech.

Handouts can also display charts, graphs, pictures, or illustrations. A handout can be taken away to remember after the presentation. Passing out handouts can be extremely distracting. Distribute the handout right before you reference it since it might be difficult to bring back the attention of your audience if given out too far in advance.

Video can be a great attention grabber. Make sure to transition smoothly into the video and to only show short clips.

Overhead projectors are still used but require you to develop a transparency of what is to be projected. You can connect a computer to a projection system in a large room for PowerPoint presentations or to project files or images from the Internet.

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## 4. Tips for the Speaker

Speakers should heed to the following tips:

1. Only show the audience what you are presenting at the moment and move on. If using a chalkboard or whiteboard, create your drawing and then cover it until it is ready for use.
2. Incorporate handouts into the presentation and only distribute them when they are going to be used.
3. Make sure the text and graphics are easy to read.



### SUMMARY

In this lesson, you learned that there are many different **types and formats of visual aids**, such as **handouts** and projections of PowerPoint slides. Make sure your visual aid uses readable text and graphics. People identify items more quickly when using graphics in addition to text alone. A handout can help the audience remember what was said long after the presentation, but passing them out can be extremely distracting. Once a handout is given out, it might be difficult to bring back the attention of your audience. An important **tip for speakers** is to distribute the handout right before you reference it. Only show the audience what you are presenting at the moment and move on.

Source: Boundless. "Adapting to Handouts and Visuals." Boundless Communications Boundless, 14 Mar. 2017. Retrieved 31 May. 2017 from <https://www.boundless.com/communications/textbooks/boundless-communications-textbook/delivering-the-speech-12/effective-visual-delivery-65/adapting-to-handouts-and-visuals-262-10650/>



## TERMS TO KNOW

### **Visual Aid**

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