

Let your pictures speak – but the message should be clear

Visualizing helps understanding, saves time and anchors the information. That's why we have chosen "Visualization" for this edition. We have consciously left out the presentation foundation: Audience analysis, storyline and facts. If those aren't correct, then the most colourful visuals will help as little as the best gestures and the most brilliant rhetoric. Many visual "aids" are really visual hindrances for both presenter and audience.



If you create bullet charts – Keep them short and simple!

63 80% of all slides are text, not pictures. Often due to time constraints nothing else is possible. But good bullet charts work well as support for both presenter and listener.

The difficulty lies with the tool itself: In PowerPoint it's so easy to produce apparently clear text charts. Here's what you need to know so that the slides really support you and your message:

- **Telegram style** is best, otherwise you'll simply read your text out loud – boring. Make your font size at least 24-pt. and limit yourself to 50 words max.
- **Build in facts and figures.** Your key messages need to be concrete – avoid "wishy-washy" words such as "a few," "many," "most," "very," "for the most part..."
- **Clearly structure your charts.** Use your imagination with your bullet points; ✓ → ★+ (be careful with "–" Do you really want a minus?)
- **Put a clear message in the title;** if necessary, use a complete sentence. Just putting in the theme (e.g. "Situation") is not enough!

In our Effective Business Presentations seminar, the participants learn to appreciate the effectiveness of concise bullet charts for both themselves and the audience.

In your presentation, only use animation for a reason and only animate each bullet if you are going to say more than one or two sentences. Recommended animation: "Wipe from left"



Colour power – Use colour to empower your message, not confuse it!

64 Colour is very important in helping you get your message across – but you need to use it wisely. What should you watch out for?

Colours help your presentation in four very real ways: to help orient the audience, to emphasize or contrast and to help set the mood. Finally colour also helps to make your slides more attractive. But what should you watch out for?

- **Colours help orient.** Whatever belongs together should have the same colour – not only on one slide but throughout the presentation. Colour your bullet points, too.
- **Contrast and Harmony:** Readability is foremost, but please avoid attacks on the eyes. Yellow, turquoise or orange on a dark background is enough. White is too brutal! And white doesn't need an aggressive black – charcoal grey works better.
- **Keep your colour associations clear!** Colours have meanings for certain viewers: e.g. red = minus (At PepsiCo the colour of the archrival). Quite neutral are black and blue (the colour of ink).
- **Don't trust your monitor** – Everything looks great on your PC screen, but the delicate colours disappear completely on the projector, for instance.

If your CI doesn't define your colours, stick with charcoal grey, blue and red on white for most business presentations.

Basic colour combinations and usage is looked at in all our seminars where we talk about visual aids.



Graphic continuity – Variation Yes, Confusion No.

How often have you watched a presentation and wondered how many different shows were thrown together to create this one? What was the presenter thinking when they put it together?

In our basic seminars, the trainers are happy when participants bring along good ideas for pictures; Continuity is dealt with in the advanced seminars and in coaching situations.

Of course you can't invent a new slide show each time – you need to take advantage of material available. OK, but the slides need to relate to each other and help guide the listeners:

- **Work with your “master” (template).** Slides that were created using a master can easily be imported to another master and the slides then look like they all came from one clear structure.
 - **Build in graphic orientation with colour:** a recurring object which acts as an index on the slides, e.g. a colour-coded bar, lets both you and your audience know where you.
 - **Transition slides:** “Bumper Slides”, like chapters in a book, create a very clean, simple transition from one major section of your presentation to the next. The agenda slide can be used: dim all other points but the one you will talk about next.
 - **Repeat elements:** Use the same symbol of, for example, a PC throughout. Bullet points: keep them consistent as well as picture frames, etc...
- Keep in mind that what the audience sees is not only each individual slide, but also the presentation slide show as a whole. This is the only way to build trust.



Presenting your case – Emphasizing your message effectively

It's not just what you say, but how you say it that really helps get your message across.

If you want to emphasize an important point, fact, or figure, here are three good techniques to help you:

- Highlight a point
“I'd like to **stress** the following point...”
“I'd like to **draw your attention to** this next figure...”
“I'd like to **point out how** fast we have achieved...”
“I'd like to **underline** the effectiveness...”
- Use “What...” to lead in:
“**What we really need to look at is...**”
“**What we should do is** replace the part that ...”
“**What we shouldn't forget is** that last year...”
“**What is most important is** that...”
- Ask rhetorical questions:
“**So, just how effective is this?** Well, let's look at...”
“**Where do we go from here?** Well, the first step is ...”
“**So what are the reasons for this?** Well, first of all...”
“**Have we achieved our goal?** We are 20% above last...”

Our international English seminars focus on the non-native speaker of English. The goal is to forget the grammar and concentrate on the message, while giving you the tools to make you fluent.

These phrases help you sound more communicative and give you the natural flow that native English listeners expect.

Questions, Ideas & Tips ...

You'll find this edition at www.hps-training.com

Owner & Publisher: HPS GmbH

Editor: Charles La Fond, charles.lafond@hps-training.com

Adresse: HPS Hierhold Presentation Services GmbH

Mariahilferstrasse 32, 1070 Vienna

Tel: +43 1 524 17 17 - 0

Fax: +43 1 524 17 17 - 101

Subscribe: Please give us a call or send us an e-mail at

headoffice@hps-training.com for your free copy

