

1.13 Visuals Speak Louder

Aim

- To emphasise the power of visual communication
- To help participants learn the basic techniques of visualisation in order to give their communication greater impact.

Materials Required

- CD/Video Player
- Photograph of Diagram of Donkeys

Procedure

- Set up the video tape player and show to the students a video-tape of a cartoon that only uses pictures and sound but not words e.g. pink panther.
- After this ask the students to:
 - * dramatise the video they've just seen
 - * translate the cartoon into a written story
 - * convert it into a radio play

OR

- Ask the students to go through professional magazines and study how many visuals accompany the texts on each page. They could study an average of five pages each.
- If time permits they could contrast this with the magazine of their own institution or any church-run magazines.

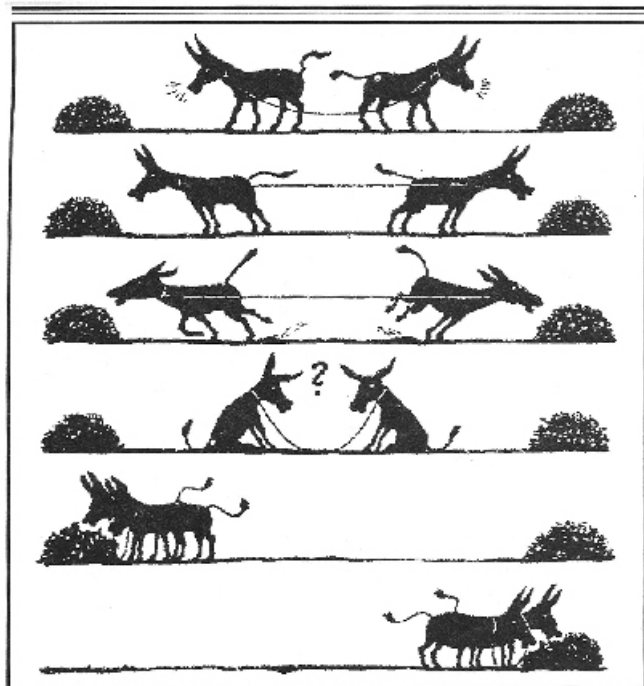
OR

- Divide the students into dyads and give to each group the picture on the following page.
- Ask the groups to study the picture for a minute.
- Assign to each of the groups the following:
 - a) Dramatise the picture
 - b) Translate the picture into a written story
 - c) Convert the picture-story into a radio play

Input

- Visual communication is the conveyance of ideas and information in forms that can be read or looked upon. Primarily associated with two dimensional images, it includes art, signs, photography, typography, drawing, graphic design, illustration, colour and electronic resources.
- Is a picture really worth a thousand words? In this age of multimedia and mass communication, it often seems so. Recent research supports the idea that visual communication can be more powerful than verbal communication, suggesting in many instances that people learn and retain information that is presented to them visually much better than that which is only provided verbally.
- Presenters have more resources than ever available to them for creating and displaying the most visually rich programs possible
- The National Education Association of the US has pointed out that western civilisation has become more dependent than ever on visual culture, visual artefacts and visual communication as a mode of discourse and a means of developing social and cultural identity. And Africa is not left far behind in this respect. This can be seen in the content of magazines and books as well as documentaries.
- What's more intriguing is that there is evidence to suggest that people not only communicate visually now more than ever, they also communicate better when they communicate visually. This is an important revelation to those who create presentations for work or education.
- Psychologist Jerome Bruner of New York University described studies that show that people only remember 10% of what they hear and 20% of what they read, but about 80% of what they see and do.
- Training materials used by the Federal government indicate that the retention of information three days after a meeting is six times greater when information is presented by visual and oral means than when information is presented by the spoken word alone. The same materials also cite studies by educational researchers suggesting that 83% of human learning takes place visually.
- Researchers at the Wharton School of Business compared visual presentations and purely verbal presentations and found that presenters using visual language were considered more persuasive by their audiences, 67% of whom felt that presenters who combined visual and verbal components were more persuasive.

- Studies have also shown that the most compelling communication combines both visual and non-visual content. This is precisely the type of content for which today's presentation software works so well.



Review

1. Visual communication is the conveyance of ideas and information in forms that can be read or looked upon.
2. Recent research supports the idea that visual communication can be more powerful than verbal communication.
3. Studies show that people only remember 10% of what they hear, 20% of what they read but about 80% of what they see and do.
4. Training materials indicate that the retention of information three days after a meeting is six times greater when information is presented by visual and oral means than when information is presented by the spoken word alone. The same material also cites studies by educational researchers suggesting that 83% of human learning occurs visually.

Reflection

According to Paul Martin Lester, something is happening and we are becoming a visually mediated society. For many, understanding of the world is being accomplished, not through words, but by reading images. Do you believe this to be true? How best do you learn? How can you adopt your way of learning to ensure maximum understanding and retention?

Relevant Skills

As individual participants, attempt to make class presentations with the aim of helping the other participants to retain the information.

Resources

BOSCOM-INDIA. 'SHEPHERDS' FOR AN INFORMATION AGE. Matunga: Tej Prasarini, 2000.

References

Ocvirk G. Otto, Robert Stinson, Philip R. Wigg, Robert O. Bone and David L. Cayton. Art Fundamentals. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2002.

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www.hp.com.

