

Visual Presentations

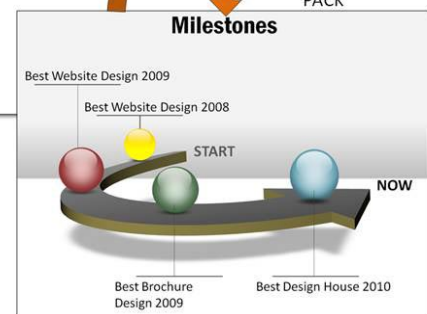
From Text based Slides to Simple Powerful Diagrams in 3 easy steps

BEFORE



AFTER:

USING DIAGRAMS FROM
POWERFUL DIAGRAMS
PACK



BEFORE

Growth

Year	
2006	Started with a small capital fund
2007	Clientele of 10 companies
2008	Clientele of 15 companies. Manpower size 5
2009	Included print design in our portfolio. Clientele of 25 companies
2010	Manpower size 12. Clientele of 40 companies [including international clients]

AFTER:

USING DIAGRAMS FROM
POWERFUL DIAGRAMS
PACK



ABOUT VISUAL PRESENTATIONS

Audiences today are tired of the usual text based slides. They don't have the time or inclination to 'think' and process complex information. They want you (the business presenter) to take the extra step to make your message simple and memorable for them.

This book gives you a powerful skill to attract and retain audience attention in a business presentation. You'll learn to create simple powerful diagrams from text based slides. This invaluable skill can make a big difference to your business and professional career.

No matter what type of presentations you create:

- Presenting a complex strategy to top management
- Exciting a team about the new incentive plan
- Making a business presentation to clients
- Convincing an audience to try your product or service,

...the skill you're about to learn can make a significant difference to the effectiveness of your message.

This book has no fluff or superficial thoughts. In the next 100 odd pages, you'll learn a simple and repeatable process to create visual diagrams. While I have referred to PowerPoint®, the concept works perfectly well with any presentation software or even as a drawing on a flipchart.

I have taught this process to hundreds of business professionals in my workshops over the years, with remarkable results. You can trust the process to make a difference to your presentations.

M.S.Ramgopal

M.S.Ramgopal | Presentation Process | Website: www.presentation-process.com

Visual Presentations

From Text Based Slides to Simple Powerful Diagrams in 3 easy steps

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Dedication

*This book is dedicated to my wife and partner in business.
Thank you Arte, for all your support!*

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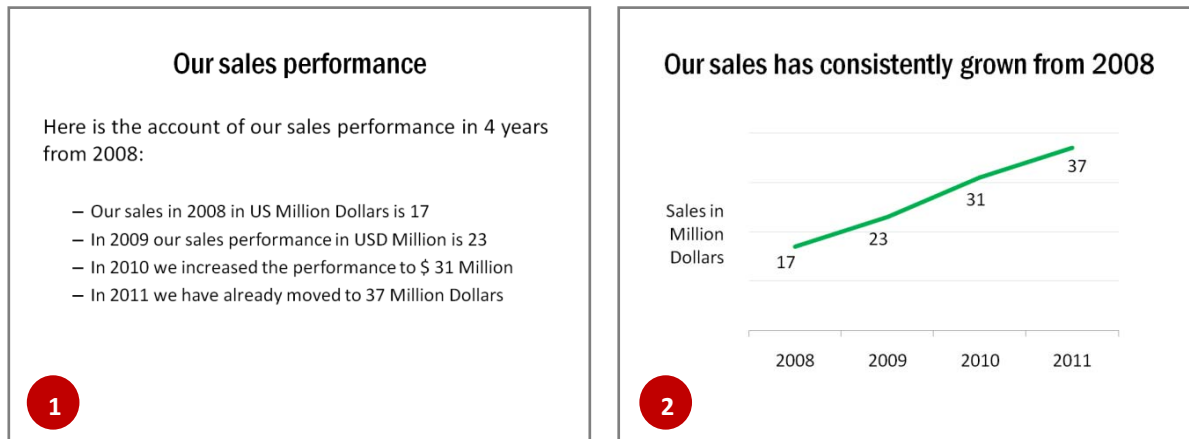
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1. INTRODUCTION

Here are two slides that present the same information. Which one is easier for you to understand?



I am sure you chose the second slide. Take a moment to think about **the reason why** you chose the second slide.

Here is the difference:

The first slide provides **data** as text. The second slide provides **information** as visual. It captures **the relationship between the numbers** and makes the message relevant to you.

This eBook helps you represent your ideas visually by capturing the relationship between objects in a systematic way.

Why capture relationship between objects?

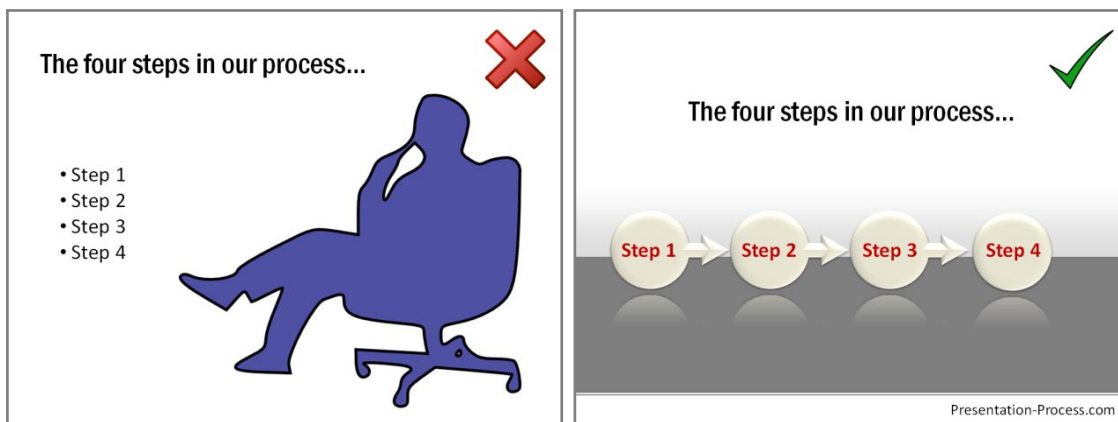
Our mind doesn't think or retain information as bulleted lists. It stores information as connection between ideas. A good visual presentation captures this connection clearly.

This helps your audience 'get' your message and retain your information for a long time. The clarity they get helps them pass on your message to others without any loss of critical information.

Since most business decisions are made by a group of people, this clear relay of information converts to more business for you.

What kind of visuals should you use?

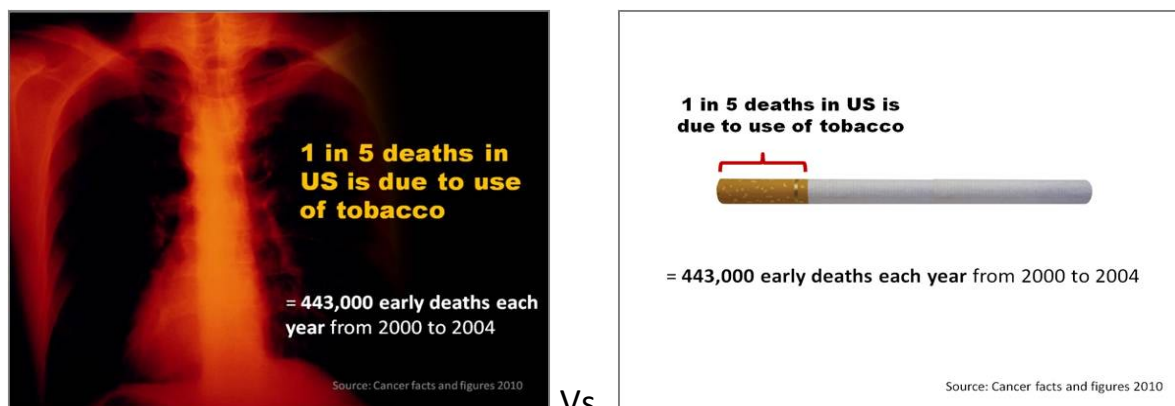
Take a look at these two examples:



The one on the left uses a picture to 'set the mood'. The slide on the right helps you visualize the relationship between objects. Choose the second type in your business presentations.

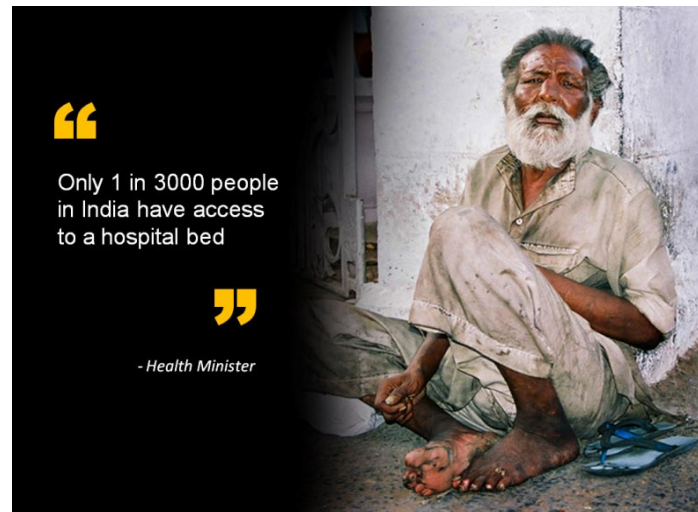
Remember, your audience doesn't visualize a suited business executive thinking seriously in an arm chair, when they think about a four step process. They want to figure out how the four steps are related. Help them make the connection. Unless your message is emotional in nature, pictures that set the mood distract your audience.

Here are two more examples that clarify the idea:



The slide on the right focuses on the message and not on the 'beautiful picture'.

Please don't think that I am against using 'Photos' in presentations. When it comes to capturing emotions, 'A picture is worth thousand words'. Take a look at this slide for example:



Nothing could've captured the spirit of the quote better than this touching photo.

But, when it comes to capturing concepts and ideas, 'A diagram is better than a thousand bullet point slides'. Pictures and diagrams have their own place in your presentations.

Your diagrams need not look beautiful to enhance your audience understanding. Even a scribble on a flipchart will do the trick. The point is to focus on the message and not on the aesthetics.

Remember, using visual diagrams is not a luxury but a necessity, if you want your presentation to be effective.

Let's see how to visualize your ideas in the next chapter...

“WHEN IT COMES TO CAPTURING
CONCEPTS AND IDEAS: A DIAGRAM IS
BETTER THAN A THOUSAND BULLET POINT
SLIDES.”

2. Why use a diagram?

There is a difference between the audience for a business presentation and the audience for any other type of presentation. The difference is...

Business audience is decision oriented

If a presentation needs to get results, it should help the audience make their decision clearly and quickly. For that, the information needs to be easy to absorb, easy to connect and easy to remember.

The problem with bulleted text on slides...

Take a look at the following text based slide:

The way people read web pages...

- Most people have a strange habit when it comes to reading on the net. They don't follow any specific order in reading the pages. They read in a random order.
- Author can't control the order in which readers access information
- Readers may go from the first page to the fourth page and come back to second page
- In a printed version, it is much more possible to sequence the information

Was it easy for you to 'get' the message? Was it easy for you to relate to the information? Was the presentation memorable?

NO.

The reason is - there were 3 major issues with the bulleted text format. They are:

1. Unnecessary words overshadow the core message

For example, in the following bullet point...

- Most people have a strange habit when it comes to reading on the net. They don't follow any specific order in reading the pages. They read in a random order.

Keywords are:

- ~~Most people have a strange habit when it comes to reading web pages on the net. They don't follow any specific order in reading the pages. They~~ read in a random order.

Gist: People read web pages in random order.

The remaining 'unnecessary' words made it difficult to find the core idea.

2. The presentation format didn't help you visualize information

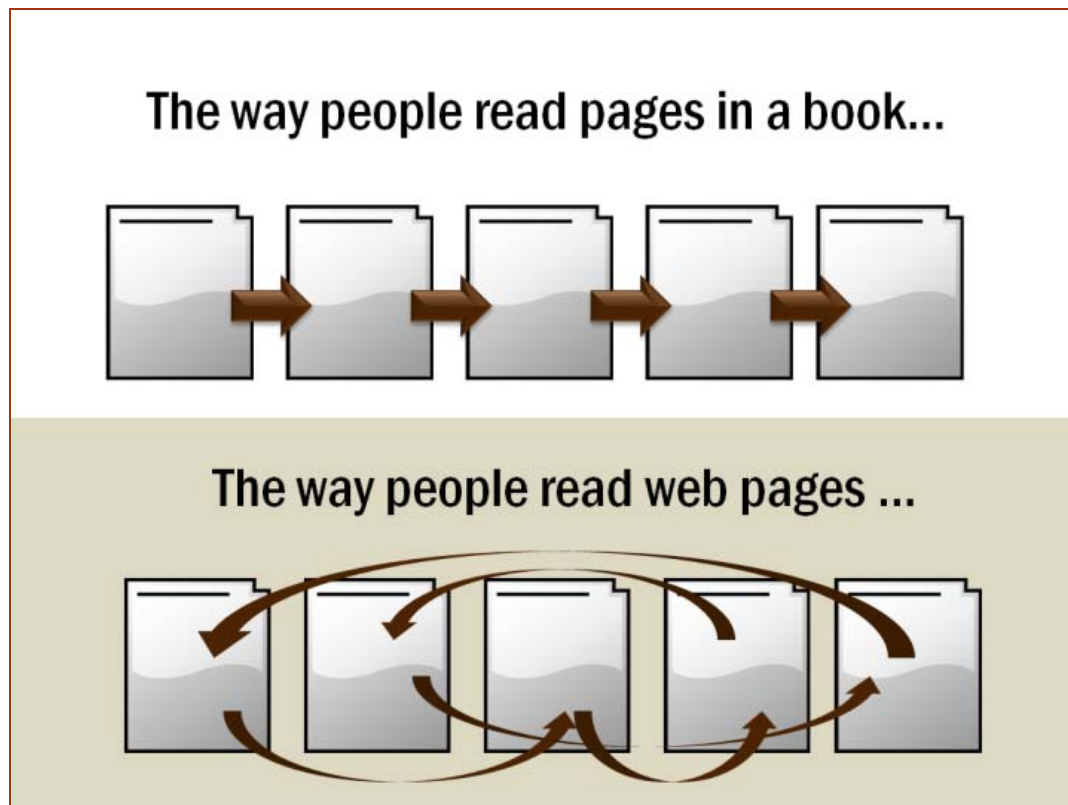
Whether you like it or not, you constantly organize and visualize the information you receive. You want to know how the ideas connect to each other and relate to your interest. The slide you saw didn't help you make the connection.

3. There are no visual cues to hang on to

Words are mere symbols. They don't stay in the mind for long. It is the picture those words paint that stay with you. It is possible to paint a picture with simple visual cues. Since the slide didn't have any visual cue, your mind struggled to hold on to the information.

Now, consider the alternative way to present the same information...

1. With a visual diagram...



As you can see, there are no unnecessary words. The core message is captured clearly. The connection between ideas is portrayed elegantly. There are simple and relevant visual cues to serve as memory hook for the audience.

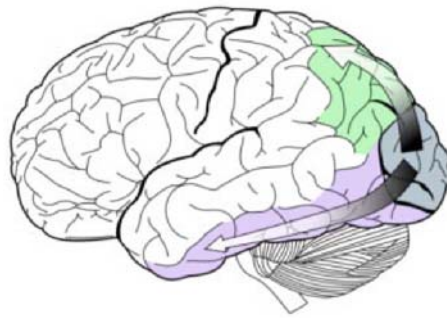
The visual not only makes it easy for the audience to absorb the information, but also helps the presenter to explain and strengthen the argument. In this book, we'll make the transition from complex text to simple visuals in clear and repeatable steps.

Before that, it is time to learn the...

“A VISUAL NOT ONLY MAKES IT EASY FOR THE AUDIENCE TO ABSORB THE INFORMATION, BUT ALSO HELPS THE PRESENTER TO EXPLAIN AND STRENGTHEN THE ARGUMENT.”

3. Science behind the power of visuals

Your eyes are the primary source of information for your brain. You are wired to absorb far more information from visual cues than from any other senses.



What studies reveal...

Cognitive studies show that over 75% of sensory stimuli are received through sight. A study done as recently as in 2008 suggests that listening skills improve when words are supported by strong visual stimuli (BMC Neuroscience (2008, August 12) - Sound Adds Speed to Visual Perception).

If you go back to human evolutionary process, you'll find that we learned to communicate with pictures and gestures long before we invented words. The proof is these cave drawings from prehistoric times:



www.hmc.org.qa

Even today, our mind translates words into visuals before processing its meaning.

What this means to a business presenter...

What this means to you as a business presenter is that visual slides help your audience process and retain your information better.

Visuals are processed faster than words and also aid in retention of information.

Support your visual slides with clear and simple words.

It is found that visuals are processed by the right (creative) part of the brain and words are processed by the left (logical) part of the brain. When you use the combination of words + visuals you make your message more understandable and memorable.

Since most business decisions are made long after you make your presentation, better retention of information means more business to you.

In this eBook, you'll learn useful information about visual representation of information. You'll learn a simple and repeatable process that delivers results every time.

Before you learn the right way to use visuals, it is essential to be wary of the ineffective way use of visuals. Let's explore it in the next chapter.

4. Ineffective way of using visuals

Ineffective visuals result in business presentations like these:



Enough said. Please don't use unprofessional clipart in your presentation.

Don't use pictures for decoration ...

Most people today realize that 'clipart' is clichéd. But, what is worrying is – those pointless clipart images are getting replaced by pointless 'high-resolution cute photos'. Today, slides like these are admired for their design excellence:



The problem is - the emphasis is placed more on 'cuteness of pictures' instead of 'clarity of message'. You may need to follow a different approach when it comes to your business presentations.

Here is a simple test to know if your slide is visual or not:

Remove the image from your slide. If there is no difference in the clarity of message conveyed, the image was unnecessary in the first place.

So, what is the right way to use visuals?

Use them to illustrate your ideas than to decorate your slides. Diagrams have the power to communicate your ideas in a matter of seconds. So, let's learn **the right approach to creating diagrams**.

“MOST BUSINESS DECISIONS ARE MADE
LONG AFTER YOU MAKE YOUR
PRESENTATION; BETTER RETENTION OF
INFORMATION MEANS MORE BUSINESS TO
YOU.”