Lesson Note – Presentation Aids

Introduction

When giving a presentation, you hope your audience will be engaged. When we speak, we engage people's ears. When we have presentation aids, we also engage people's eyes. Engaging both the audience's ears and eyes is more effective than just their eyes. That's why presenters use presentation aids.

There are five major types of presentation aids:
1. Props
2. Handouts
3. Whiteboard
4. Video
5. PowerPoint Presentations

1: Props

A **prop** is an object that you show during the presentation as an example to explain something. Here are some examples:

- An ESL teacher brings in some fruits to teach her students about fruits
- A chef has cooking tools to teach people how to cook
- An artist brings example artwork to show people what they will learn

Props are especially useful for instructional presentations where you are to teach the audience something.

2: Handouts

A **handout** is a paper with information and questions on it for the audience to use during your presentation. The information helps them follow along with your presentation, and the questions serve as activities for them to do during or after your presentation.

Handouts are very useful for all types of presentations, especially informative ones where you want the audience to remember what you talked about.

3: Whiteboard

A whiteboard is a blank surface that the presenter can write or draw on during the presentation. Other similar tools are blackboards, flipcharts, and even a blank PPT screen during a virtual presentation.

A whiteboard is useful for keeping the audience engaged and paying attention because they can watch you put things onto the board in real-time.

4: Video

In our modern age, everyone knows what video is. Videos need to be used carefully in a presentation.

Here are two guidelines for using videos:

1. The only reason you should have a video is because the video does something that you cannot do in-person during your presentation.
For example, there is a good TedTalk where a person is encouraging other people to travel to other countries more. At the beginning, he shows a 1-minute minute of his own travel experiences. This is a good use of a video because the video does something he can't do in person, which is show everybody what he saw in his travel experiences.

A mistake people make is using video to do what they are supposed to talk about in the presentation. For example, if a student is supposed to talk about the company Apple, the student finds a video to introduce Apple. That's an incorrect use of video because we want to hear the presenter talk about Apple, not a video.

2. The length of the video should be no more than 10% of your total presentation time.
For example, if your presentation time is supposed to be 10 minutes, then your video should be no more than 1 minute.

5: PowerPoint (PPT) Presentations

PowerPoint presentations have become very common in modern society, and especially in the workplace. Recently, due to COVID-19, PowerPoints have become even more important due to online meetings.

There are 3 common mistakes that people make with PPT presentations:

Mistake 1: They put their script on the slide and just read from the slide.
- Problem: It is super boring.
- Solution: Make the PPT for your audience, not for yourself

Mistake 2: They put too many words on the slide.
- Problem: People can't read all those words while also listening to you speak.
- Solution: Use as little words as possible

Mistake 3: There's too much stuff on the slide
- Problem: People don't know what to look at.
- Solution: Have a good amount of white space on your slide.

You will get to practice making PPTs in-class, and your assignment 2 presentation will need to have a PPT.

Check Your Understanding Questions:

1. When are props useful?
2. What's the benefit of having a handout in a presentation?
3. What's the benefit of having a whiteboard during a presentation?
4. What are two rules about using videos in presentations?
5. What are three common mistakes and solutions in PPT presentations?