

Helpful Hints Regarding Overhead Viewgraph (or 35 mm slide) Presentations
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1. Each slide should have a main point - maybe two but not more. The slides should be specifically made for the talk you are to give.
2. When a slide is presented - draw attention to it by saying what it shows: data, an instrument, theory, prediction. Use a mechanical or laser pointer to point exactly to where they should be looking.
3. Proceed to discuss the slide in detail - pointing to every feature you want the audience to see. Start with the main ideas and then proceed to the details, finally making the exact point you want to make. If it can't be made with the slide, then the slide is no good. If it takes too much discussion, you need more slides.
4. Don't assume the audience will recognize the slide and see on it what you see and come to the same conclusion you come to just by looking at it. Therefore don't show a slide and let the audience's eyes wander over it wondering what the point is.
5. If a particular slide is too detailed, then introduce it with a few earlier slides, or explain it with a few later slides.
6. Sometimes it's appropriate to show the detail of a slide by expanding a section of it in the upper corner of the slide, i.e. a complete schematic of the optical system might show the detail of the sample illumination in a small box.
7. If you intend to return to a slide or viewgraph, it is advisable to have a duplicate in its place. This prevents shuffling and getting things out of order. NEVER jump ahead to get a slide or viewgraph you intend to show later.
7. Each slide should be complete enough to show all and tell all to an informed observer. Therefore it should contain a title or identification, proper labels and arrows, carefully drawn elements, components, identified light rays, electrical wires, important constants, etc.
8. In general, it is not good to read from text while the audience is looking at the slide. The discussion should be spontaneous, rehearsed and thought out enough so that you can present all the points by looking at the slide. If the slide is properly prepared, it will have all the necessary information on it. Therefore it will remind you of what you should say and you won't forget anything.
9. Slides should not contain too much detail. If they do - such as long lists of numbers, names, tables, etc. indicate on the slide the special features you will call attention to, i.e. - the third row; or item 7, 8 and 9 etc. The audience will not be able to read let alone sort out all the information.
10. Each slide is important otherwise it shouldn't be shown. Therefore, treat each slide with dedication, making it clear why you are showing it. Some slides might be projected for only 10 seconds, some for 2 minutes. However in general the audience should be made aware of all the important points on the slide. General, all-purpose slides are often not very useful.
11. It's OK to Xerox good pictures, tables, etc. from printed material. However often it is better to copy them and draw your own to make the pictures special.
12. Make sure all lines, printing, etc. can be seen and read by everyone in the room. The slide must be of high quality and the only way to make sure is to project it under the same conditions that it will be shown.
13. Be aware of the time limits - 10 minutes, 30 minutes, 1-hour talks. **Practice your talk at least 3 times before presenting it.** A general rule: Show one slide/viewgraph per minute.

Most important - do not overstay your welcome!

Preparation of Viewgraphs and Slides for a Presentation

To prepare viewgraphs you should have the following materials: Transparencies, compass, ruler, templates - angles, circles, squares, rectangles ellipses, etc. - colored pens, scotch tape, rubber cement, acetone, alcohol, Kleenex

1. Prepare each viewgraph by first rough drawing it on lined engineering paper. This sets the size, shape and relative proportions of the items in the figure. Label all necessary items in the figure.
2. Review each figure to see if it contains the necessary information.
3. Review the entire set of figures to see if they tell the whole story.
4. Redraw each figure more carefully on engineering paper paying attention to details.
5. Add label boxes, arrows, pointers, script, text to make each figure clear.
6. Trace the final figure on to white Xerox paper using a lettering pen that gives sharp dark lines.
7. This final copy should represent the figure you intend to project on to the screen.
8. Check it carefully for spelling errors, accuracy, clarity, completeness. Does it show what you want it to show?

At this point if there is a major error on a figure you can correct it with white-out or by boldly cutting the bad section from the figure and pasting in a new section. Use Scotch tape to fasten the pieces securely so they don't move or get stuck in the Xerox machine.

9. You can make the final transparency two ways:
One is to trace the figure on to a transparency.
The other is to Xerox it on to a transparency.

In either case beware of the size of the figure on the transparency. Some overhead projectors have a square 8 x 8 format and a full 8 x 11 page will be too large to project. Therefore you should draw your figure inside the 8 x 8 boundary or reduce it on Xeroxing into an 8 x 8 format.

10. If you trace your figure on to the transparency you can use different colored pens to emphasize certain features on the figure: script in blue, line drawings in black, graphs in green, curves in yellow etc. With care you can make an attractive and very informative view graph using colors. You can choose permanent or water-based pens. I choose permanent since the figures are durable and still can be corrected with acetone or alcohol.
If you Xerox on to a transparency the entire drawing will be black so you will need dotted, dashed, broken lines to distinguish different curves on a graph etc. However you still can add color to the Xerox copy using pens to emphasize certain features. Xeroxing is faster while hand tracing is more artistic.
11. Put the viewgraphs in order, number and put a protective white sheet of paper between each one. Punch holes in the whole set and put them in a notebook.

Some comments:

If you must return to a previous viewgraph in your talk it is advisable to make a second copy and put it in the proper place. This prevents shuffling and mixing and hunting for previous viewgraphs which can take time and cause confusion.

Make Xerox copies of each viewgraph and keep them in the note book. They are handy to show people without a projector and easy to Xerox if some one wants a copy.

Some times it is handy to use half sheets of transparency for the talk. This preserves sheets and reduces the amount of information that is shown on the screen. Putting a full transparency on the screen and then covering up what you don't want them to see is annoying to some people.

The technique described above is much faster and more artistic than what can be done on a computer. Bad figures generated by computer graphics are distracting and offensive to the eye.