



Communication
SUCCESS

BEGINNINGS

VIDEO 8: PRODUCE YOUR VISUALS

KENNEDY:

Welcome back!

You're making great progress on your talk... You have your two-column script ready to go and you've identified the Meaningful Media you want to make.

Now, let's talk about putting your visuals together.

Before we start, I'd just like to point out that because of all the work you did on your Purpose, Strategy, Messaging, Experience Arc and Script, your supporting media will come together more efficiently and effectively.

Bad or ineffective visuals are usually the result of a "slides first" mindset, where a speaker makes his or her slides, or more likely gathers up a collection of slides from different decks, and then tries to figure out what to say. It's messaging your visuals.

You, on the other hand, are visualizing your messages...

you have a clear set of messages which you will enhance and strengthen with visuals. Do you see the difference?

I ask my clients, who is working for whom? Are your slides working for you? Or, are you working for your slides? As you would guess, your slides don't pay well at all.

Joking aside, the ultimate gauge of success is whether your visuals support your purpose... that they deliver meaning and value to your audience... And that they add to the experience (remember the need for emotion?).

Here are my top Meaningful Media attributes:

First, your slides should aspire to be art. Most of us are not artists, but we should not be satisfied with dull or confusing visuals.

One approach is to follow the Rule of Thirds... If you divide your slide into thirds both horizontally and vertically, there are four points where the lines intercept. These are "magic spots" to use to create balance and help your audience focus.

Next, put your headers to work by making them your conclusions. So, instead of just stating a topic, like "Q4 Results." Give it more meaning... "Best Q4 Ever!" Or, Q4: Oh, oh... We're In Trouble!"

Then, "bucketize" your supporting content. I recommend having no more than three bullets (yes, you can do it!).

Keep them general and then you provide the details to your audience. Also, instead of bullets, think boxes.

Even better, lose the boxes and bullets entirely and use something worth a thousand words, a picture. Pictures are easier and faster to understand than a slide full of bullet points. They connect with an audience in a way that words can't.

The final Meaningful Media attribute is... Simplicity. A simple slide is always better than a busy slide. As Pablo Picasso said, "Art is the elimination of the unnecessary."

The Visuals Tool will provide a "mini design school" for your slides.

You can use a pre-designed template in PowerPoint or other software to get you started.

There is also a design checklist for you to use while you're creating your slides and again while you're reviewing them and double checking that you really have created slides that aspire to be art.

The tool also includes resources for finding stock images.

You're nearly done with developing your content for your talk. I'll see you next time to discuss another critical step in the preparation process... Rehearsal. Thank you.