tools of the trade

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Speechmaking


This is a new book that introduces you to the use of visuals for more effective communication. You don’t need visuals to give a good speech. What you do need is a way to grasp your audience’s attention, hold it, and leave them convinced. You want your audience to do more than listen to you. You want them to think about what you have to say because that’s the only way they’re going to accept your ideas, remember them, and act on them.

This is an idea book, and here’s the first idea. You’re going to have some things to say in your speechmaking career that would sound better if they looked better—if they’re easier to understand. Visuals can help.

We’re well into an era of visual images and communication. Audiences expect visuals. We bombard them with visual experiences everywhere we go. Whether or not the image is good, it’s there. It makes communication easier, faster, and occasionally more exciting. It attracts audiences.

But beyond the commercial flash and thunder is an undeniable fact. We do understand and retain more when our visual senses are brought into the act of communication. As speechmakers, we need to catch up with the rest of the world. A good speech can become better communication when words and pictures are joined together. That’s what this book is about. Ideas that are specifically directed to providing visual
images in support of the spoken word ("visualizing" your speeches).

The information in this book will help you. You may not have time to read it at one sitting. Its short commentaries on single topics are arranged in alphabetical order. You can read any one or two of them quickly, but if a particular item doesn't seem important to you right now, you don't have to read it to understand the others. You will find that many of the subjects are cross-referenced for further examination.