10 Ways to Make Learning Visual

If learners “see” the point rather than just “hear” it, they are more likely to remember it. There are a number of ways to add visuals to training sessions. Some are commonly employed while others are less frequent.

1. **Presentation slides.** Content presented by slides can be “bulleted” to anchor verbal presentations. It can be enhanced with color, graphics, animation, and audio/video streaming.

2. **Flip charts.** Important issues, questions, or solutions can be recorded on newsprint. Adding color and visual graphics enhances the display.

3. **Objects.** You can utilize props (see “Ten Props That Dramatize Learning,” page 46), job-related equipment, play gear, sculpture, machinery, or any three-dimensional materials that directly or indirectly describe key elements of your subject matter.

4. **Documents.** Use reports, diagrams, charts, maps, pictures, drawings, or other similar images when they help to explain what you are presenting. It’s usually better to have copies for each participant rather than one copy that is displayed or passed around.

5. **Vivid stories.** Tell stories that illustrate the points you are making. The more visual details you include in the story, the more participants will be engaged.

6. **Decorations.** Place colorful items in the training room that are visually stimulating, such as art, crafts, flowers/plants, furniture, banners, balloons, and any other decorative things.

7. **Dramatic activity.** By asking participants to watch and/or participate in dramatizations of real work/life events, they can “see” how key actions unfold.

8. **Demonstration.** Show participants how something is accomplished rather than telling them verbally. Involve them, if possible, in the demonstration.
9. **Simulation.** Let participants experience the nature of events, procedures, and problems on a level that approximates or symbolizes the real thing. The visual aspects of simulations are usually unforgettable.

10. **Mental imagery.** Invite participants to visualize situations, both probable and improbable, by having them create mental images evoked by words.