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images:

International Facilitator's Companion

The Lecture Illustration Method



imaginal training

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The Theory

Section One: The Theory

Illustrations bring lectures to life. A lecture devoid of illustrations is an exercise in abstraction which will have little impact on the participants and quickly be forgotten. Illustrations directly and indirectly relate the rational content of the lecture to the life situation of the participants and reveal its significance for them.

Learning research has shown that illustrations that communicate the message through more than one of the senses are most likely to have a long term impact on the participants. These channels to the participants' minds are visual, verbal and feeling (emotion, touch, taste, smell).

Visual images are very powerful and people have the capacity to remember them much better and longer than purely verbal images. The basic design principles of visual information are that it must be simple, bold and attractive. In addition the following should be used as guidelines when creating your visual images:

- 1** Images, icons, illustrations (symbols, charts, graphs, etc.) - simple and striking
- 2** Color - bright and attractive
- 3** Lettering - legible and simple
- 4** Space - don't crowd the image, try to leave at least one third of the visual blank.

A presenter should think hard about their visual images and design them to creatively and effectively support their message. The watchwords are - simple, bold, attractive. Finally the presenter should practice using whatever media they have selected so that they are competent with the hardware and professional in presentation.

The most common method of communicating a message is through the verbal or hearing process. According to some sources, purely verbal presentations can be divided into the words of the message, the tone of voice and the body language. Of these three, body language

communicates some 55% of the message, tone of voice 38% and the words only 7%.

However, on its own, a verbal presentation is not very effective. It needs to be combined with one or both of the other processes (visual, feeling). It is important to remember that:

- The hearing process is not just about talking and listening.
- There is more to speaking than just opening your mouth and letting words out.

The presenter needs to experiment with using his or her voice to enliven and focus the message. The voice can be a powerful tool for creating excitement and interest in the message being presented. It does require planning ahead of time and, if possible, practice.

In addition a presenter needs to feel free to use music and other sound effects to reinforce their message. The key here is to make sure that they contribute to the message and do not distract from it. Working creatively through the audio/vocal dimension of a presentation can turn an ordinary presentation into a memorable event.

The most underused processes for reinforcing a presenter's message are those dealing with feelings or emotions. These are twice as powerful as verbal images and can be almost as powerful as the visual communication in capturing the attention of participants and enabling them to remember the message. Experiments with the senses (like touching or smelling) have indicated that the impact of the message can be greatly enhanced by using them also. Introducing handouts or items that can be touched and examined by the participants will ensure a stronger impact than simply describing something. Some presenters have even experimented with smell and found that this also heightens the impact of the message.

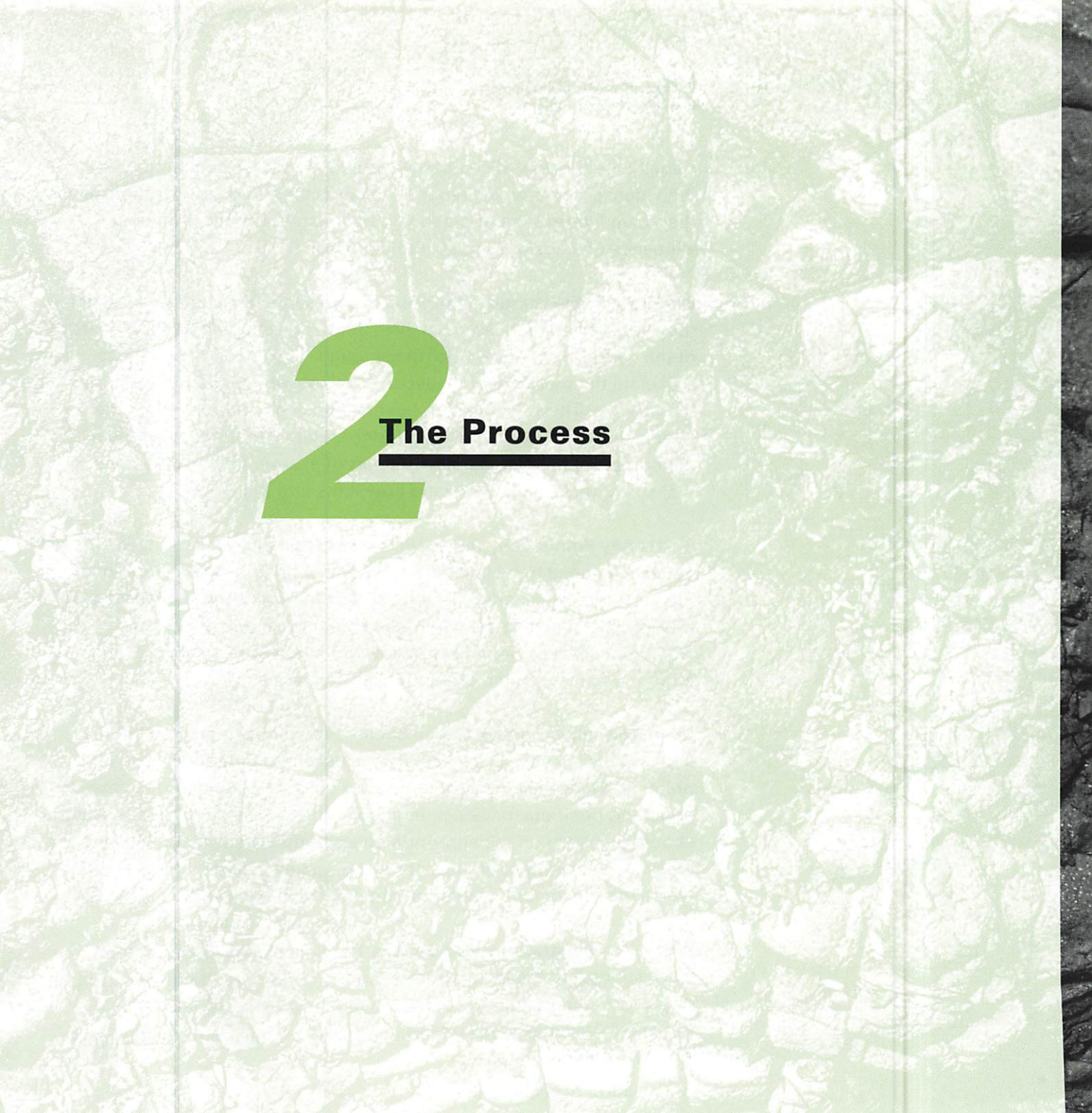
Two of the most powerful ways to invoke the dimension of feeling is through the use of metaphors and parables. Part of the power of metaphors and parables is that they give listeners an objective distance which avoids them feeling personally threatened and encourages them to apply the message to their own situation. A parable is a story which is told to illustrate with emotional impact the message but usually in an indirect manner. A metaphor is a comparison which helps the listeners grasp in a familiar way the meaning and significance of the message. It ties the message to something familiar which then becomes the key to retaining the message.

In selecting illustrations there are a number of factors that should be considered to ensure that your illustrations support and reinforce your message.

- 1** Illustrations should be selected with the audience in mind. You may use an entirely different set of illustrations with one group than with another group. You have to know your audience, decide what is going to be helpful in communicating your message and select your illustrations accordingly.
- 2** Illustrations should also be chosen which enhance and forward the dramatic movement of the lecture. It is not usually helpful to use all of the illustrations that you can possibly find of your lecture topic. You need to focus your illustrations and use only those which fit the audience and make a contribution to the flow and movement of the lecture.
- 3** All of the illustrations need to be pulled through your own life. It is all right to steal illustrations (stories, symbols, etc.) from other people but if you cannot share them with personal conviction, then they will not communicate with power and reinforce your message. You need to be able to tell 'the story' with personal conviction and authenticity. This is what gives it power and what will make a lasting impression on the participants.

- 4 Finally you need to choose those illustrations relative to the quality of clarity you are out to achieve. You do not need quantity, you need quality. It is possible that one illustration is so good that you can use it throughout a whole section or maybe even the whole lecture. One good illustration powerfully presented will have the impact that gets your message through while a host of illustrations poorly presented will only confuse the participants.

Illustrations are like the blood flowing through the veins of a lecture. They carry the life force of the lecture and bring power to the message of the lecture. Without illustrations lectures can be wooden and dead events which leave participants bored and frustrated. With well thought out and presented illustrations participants are energized and impacted with a message that is clear and applicable. Learning is thus more likely to happen - behavior is more likely to change.

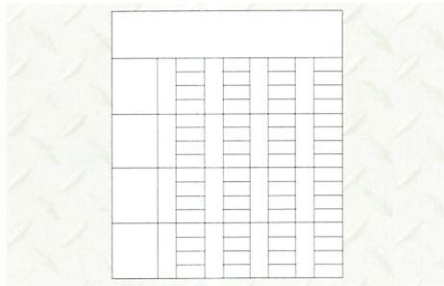


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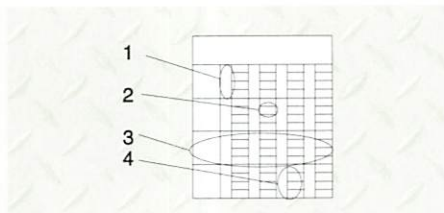
The Process

Section Two: The Process

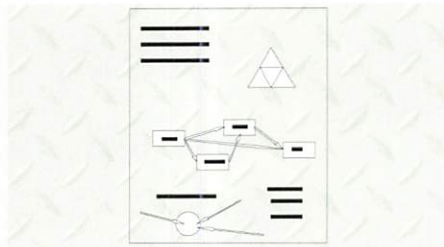
Usually the process of creating illustrations for a presentation is an individual process which requires the presenter to create for themselves their own internalized or personalized illustrations. The following sequence of steps will assist in this process.



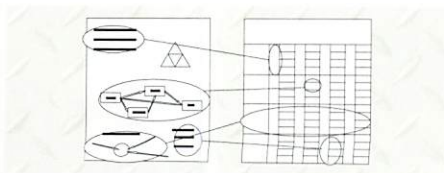
Understand the Lecture's Purpose The presenter must make sure that they fully understand the objectives of the presentation and the content of the various sections of the presentation. They need to be able to articulate the message of the lecture with power and conviction for themselves. They also need to learn as much as possible about the audience (educational level, experience relative to the topic, gender, culture, etc.). If the presentation is part of a larger course they need to make sure that they understand how it fits into the whole.



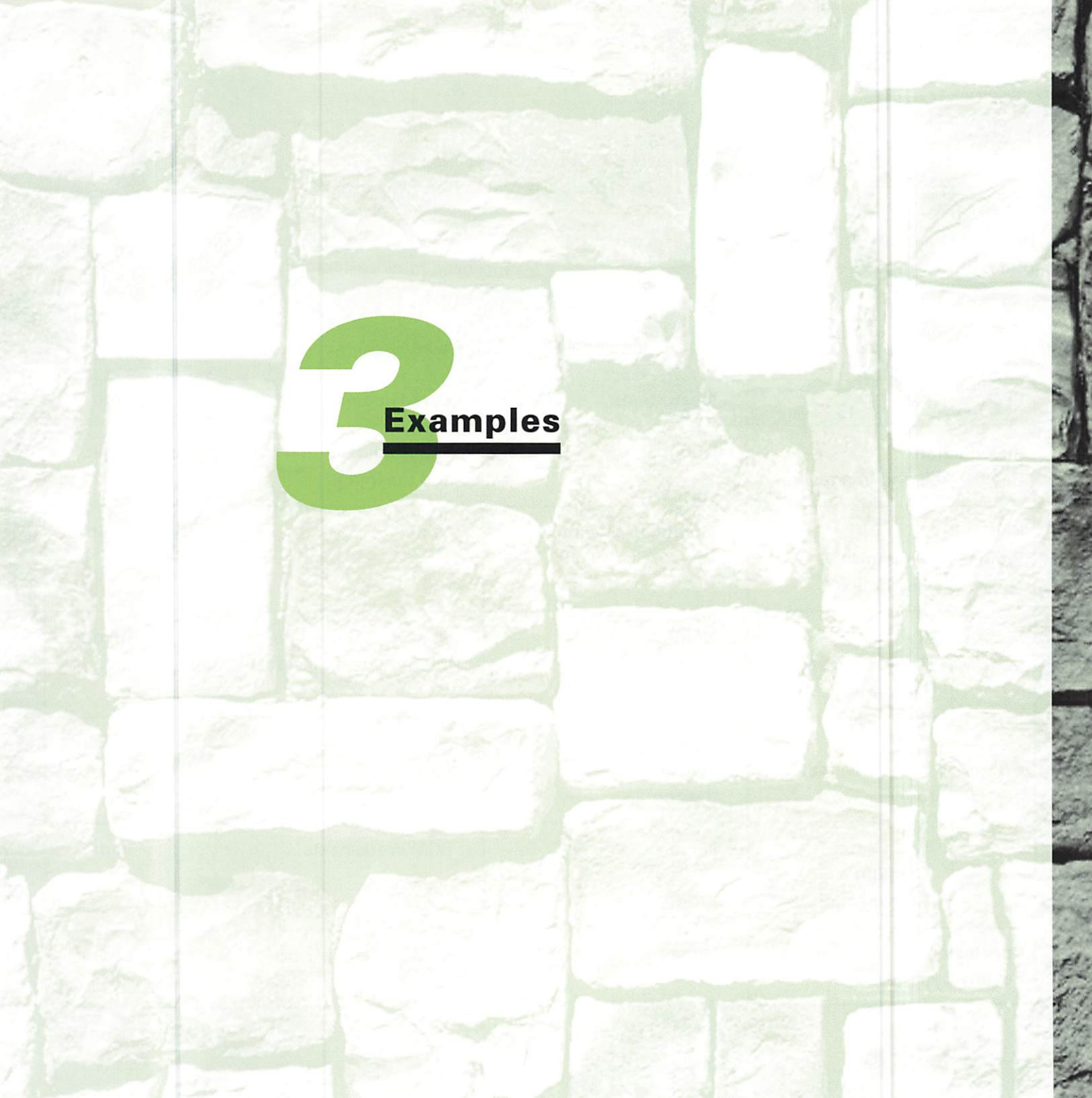
Select Key Points They then need to decide what points of the lecture are critical and need to be illustrated. Not every point needs illustration. Those points which are most critical to communicating the message to this specific audience are where the presenter should focus the illustrations. A few great illustrations are much more powerful than a lot of poorly focused and awkwardly delivered ones.



Brainstorm Illustrations The presenter should now make a list of the illustrations (visual, verbal, feeling) that seem to fit the message and points of the lecture. They should write down everything that comes to mind and not judge or select until the brainstorm is done. The selections should be based on the appropriateness of the illustration relative to the message and content of the lecture, the audience and the degree to which the presenter has internalized it and can tell it with authenticity.



Weave the Illustrations into Lecture The final step is to weave the illustrations into the lecture format and to make sure that they contribute to the flow and movement of the lecture. If possible the presenters should practice their presentation and work on the drama and focus of their presentation.



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Examples

Lecture Illustration Worksheet

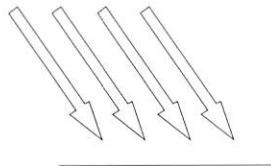
Lecture The Basic Conversation Method

Rational Objective: To understand the basic structure of the BCM and its relation to the way people think.

Existential Aim: To become interested in a structured approach to discussions.

Audience: Young experienced trainers from small Polish business schools.

Lecture		Illustrations	Board Image	Time
Introduction Review ALC and Image		None	The Adult Learning Cycle and the Image	5 min.
Key Points	I Dynamics of Perception	The topless waitress	None	8 min.
	II The Conversation Dynamics	None	Objective, Reflective, Interpretive, Decisional Image	10 min.
	III The Conversation Style	Examples from conversations in the course	None	10 min.
	IV Creating a Conversation	None	BCM Worksheets	10 min.
Conclusion Review Dynamics		None	BCM Dynamics	2 min.



[illegible]



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When Appropriate

Section Four: **When Appropriate**

The Lecture Illustration Method can be used any time a facilitator or trainer finds that they have a presentation to prepare and deliver. This method can be used regardless of the content of the presentation, the background of the participants or the setting of the presentation.



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How to Develop

Section Five: How to Develop

This booklet assumes that the presenter has completed a detailed plan for what is going to be said. The 4x4 and brief method is one way of doing this. When that intellectual preparatory work is done, it's time to develop the illustrations.

Good lecture illustrations and images should be collected and kept even when it is not clear which lecture they will be used in. Over time, hundreds or even thousands of them can be acquired. They can come from a wide variety of sources, personal experience, films, books, other lecturers, technical journals, classical literature, newspapers and magazines.

Use the lecture illustration form which has a place for the Rational Objective and Existential Aim of the talk. It also has a box where you can describe the audience.

Then each of the lecture points has a place for a verbal illustration, board image and time. The key points of the lecture should be selected. If the 4x4 method is used, a key point can be a sub-point or even a sub-sub-point of one of the 4 major points, or it can be one of the major points. Put the lecture point to have illustrations and images in the first column. The top and bottom boxes are for the introduction and conclusion respectively.

If the lecture is to be given a number of times to a wide variety of audiences then lecture illustrations and images should be developed for each of the 16 sub-points or even each of the 64 sub-sub-points. The particular illustrations and images to be used would then be selected for the audience and the situation in which the lecture is being given.

The illustration can be a story, parable, metaphor, verbal image, example, or poem. Whatever engages the emotions of the student and helps them

understand the point you are trying to make. Put a holding phrase in the boxes for each of the points. It is wise to write out the illustration on a separate sheet of paper and to check to see if it is consistent with the lecture point.

The board image is what you will draw on the board or show on a slide or overhead projector. The least effective visual images are key words. Drawings, charts, pictures, graphs are all more effective. Visual images that you can build on or add to can also be quite powerful.

On a white/black board or flip over, this can be accomplished by adding parts to the drawing as the lecture is given. If this medium is used a single sheet of paper turned sideways can be used to create an overall picture of all of the images to be used. Their placement on the paper would test what the board would look like. When selecting colors remember that black and blue stand out and that red and green tend to recede from the viewer.

With a overhead projector sheets can be laid over each other to build an image or separate sheets with the additional parts made. Sheet after sheet with lists of key points are boring and not very effective. Drawings can be simple.

The time is the amount of time you plan to spend on each phase of the lecture.

Check if the illustrations are useful. Questions that might be asked are:

- What is the point the images and illustrations are actually making?
- What is helpful about the illustration or image?
- What are its drawbacks?
- What could be done to improve it?



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Worksheets

Lecture Illustration Worksheet
Lecture _____

Rational Objective:		Existential Aim:	
Audience:			
Lecture	Illustrations	Board Image	Time
Introduction			
Key Points	I		
	II		
	III		
	IV		
Conclusion			

Lecture Illustration Worksheet
Lecture Put the name of the lecture here

Rational Objective: Put the Rational Objective of the lecture here.		Existential Aim: Put the Existential Aim of the lecture here.		
Audience: Put a brief description of the audience here.				
Lecture		Illustrations	Board Image	Time
Introduction Put the key introductory point here.		Put the verbal illustrations in this column.	Put the board images in this column.	Put the amount of time in this column.
Key Points	I Put the key points in this column.			
	II			
	III			
	IV			
Conclusion Put the concluding point here.				



Tips for Developing and Using

Section Seven: Tips for Developing and Using

- 1** Keep the vocabulary simple and the structure of your sentences clear.
- 2** Plan the arrangement of your visual symbols on the board if you are using a white/chalk board.
- 3** Overhead projector slides should enhance what you are saying, not repeat it.
- 4** Decide how much time you have for the lecture and stick to it.
- 5** Make sure that your illustrations are not culturally or otherwise offensive, which will distract from your message.
- 6** It is sometimes helpful to brainstorm illustrations with colleagues just as long as you can make them your own (tell with conviction).
- 7** Make sure that your illustrations are consistent in terms of the messages they are communicating.
- 8** If you are working cross-culturally, make sure that your images communicate in the other cultures as you intend.
- 9** Combining a good story with a powerful visual image will greatly increase the impact of both the story and the image.
- 10** If you choose a dramatic image (a story with an exciting event in it) you should be prepared to 'be dramatic' when you present it.
- 11** You should always be yourself in using illustrations. Personal authenticity is always more powerful than phony enthusiasm.

- 12 Always select illustrations because they contribute to the presentation, not because they are your personal favorites or you enjoy telling them.
- 13 Always practice your illustrations (if it is an image - can you draw it quickly and well or do you need to prepare it ahead of time? if it is a story - can you tell it quickly and clearly focusing on the key elements to make your point?)

8

References

Section Eight: **References**

Memories Are Made of This, John Townsend & Adam Gee, (Melrose Film Productions, Inc.), 1994.

Course materials of the Global Academy of the Institute of Cultural Affairs.