

OVERHEAD PROJECTOR TIPS

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The overhead projector is a very versatile and effective training aid when used correctly.

As with any piece of equipment, you should familiarize yourself with the actual projector you'll be using since different models vary in design and operation. You should also rehearse using actual transparencies that you'll be using in your program. Some basics of usage include:

- ALWAYS ensure that you have a spare bulb or backup projector before starting the program.
- Before participants arrive, check the focus of the projector by projecting a transparency image then viewing it from different locations in the room.
- Position the projector to allow a clear line of vision to the screen.
- Don't stand in between participants and the projection screen or between the projector and the screen.
- Select the appropriate type of projector. Generally, you'll want a model that projects the light from underneath the transparency instead of bouncing it onto the transparency, then back up to a mirror (portable types). The latter creates a glare in the trainer's eyes and prevents viewing of uncovered lines of text when using the revelation technique.
- Show one piece of information at a time. Use the revelation technique to accomplish this. To do this, place a piece of paper (typing or copies paper works well) beneath the transparency on the viewing surface. As you are ready to discuss an item, move the paper down slightly to reveal that point only.
- Ensure that the screen is set up at a 90-degree angle to avoid the "keystone effect" of having the projected image wider at the top of the screen than the bottom.
- Dim lights nearest the screen to ensure a sharper image and reduce glare on the projected image.
- Prepare an introductory transparency for you presentation (You might have your name, corporate logo, date or other information on it).
- When preparing transparencies, use upper case for title lines and upper and lower case for text. It's easier to read.
- Transparencies should follow a standard format. Either all printed vertically or horizontally.
- 1/4-inch lettering is usually large enough. A quick rule of thumb -- place the page of text which you'll use to make the transparency on the floor and stand above it. If you can read it easily, it's probably large enough to be seen for up to 50 feet when projected.
- Include graphics, if possible.
- Limit lines of text to 8-10 and words per line to 6-8 to avoid looking too busy.

- When using, paraphrase the information by reading from the transparency, not the screen. This keeps you facing you audience.
- If you want to emphasize a key item, point to the transparency with a pen, pointer, or other similar item rather than trying to stretch to reach it on the screen. Once you've finished with the pointer, PUT IT DOWN!!
- Time the usage of transparencies so that you display only those items that you're actually addressing. A maximum suggested length of viewing time is about three to four minutes.
- If you find that the topic generates considerable conversation, turn the projector off (remember -- light attracts attention and so does the buzz of the motor), discuss the issue, then turn the projector on again. This also helps extend bulb life.

Bob Lucas B.S., M.A., M.A, CPLP is an internationally-known author and learning and performance professional. He has written and contributed to thirty-one books and compilations. He regularly conducts creative training, train-the-trainer, customer service, interpersonal communication and management and supervisory skills workshops. Bob can be reached at blucas@robertwlucas.com or through his website www.robertwlucas.com. Follow his blog at www.robertwlucas.com/wordpress and like him at www.facebook.com/robertwlucasenterprises