

Aids to Instruction

The Benefits

The instructor's main function is to help his class to learn. This learning can be greatly assisted, and the problems of communication largely overcome, by the correct use of instructional aids which have been specially selected to facilitate learning.

In addition to this, there is a bonus - adding variety and interest to instruction. The importance of appealing to more than one sense, particularly sight. In the learning process cannot be over-emphasized.

The Real Thing

At some time in training the 'real thing' must be used. However, there are circumstances which may prevent its use especially in the early stages of formal training. In addition the size and complexity of the 'real thing' may not make it an ideal learning aid.

Models

Where the desired 'real thing' is unavailable or unsuitable, a model can be used. An appropriate model is seldom obtainable ready-made. and must usually be designed - and often manufactured - by the instructor himself. It is important that the students are able to see whatever detail is being taught.

When making or designing models for use as training aids, instructors should remember that good and consistent use of colour can simplify understanding of the item or its method of operation. The instructor must remember to relate the model to the 'real thing' in size, colour, construction and operation.

Wall Charts

Wall charts can be used for two purposes, either for a specific period of instruction or to provide background and motivating information on long term display.

Flap Sequence or Drops

A series of interrelated wall charts mounted on a common axis in which each successive chart increases in complexity (or shows component parts progressively building up to the whole item) is called a flap sequence. The use of colour, layout, type of labeling and symbols must be consistent through the sequence. Sheets of plastic transparent film are required.

Display Boards

These can be used during instruction to:

1. Display prepared material.
2. Build up notes and diagrams.
3. Explain points.

This can be done by writing directly on to the surface of the board or by affixing prepared material to the surface. This latter technique allows for movement, use of overlays and revealing techniques.

When using boards the following rules must be adhered to:

- a. Print headings or emphasize by underlining or using different colours.
- b. Write or print notes considering size and style carefully. Avoid pronounced slope and flourish and make sure that everything is visible and legible.
- c. Use inverted commas, underline or box the vital facts or keywords to make them stand out.
- d. Use only standard abbreviations and make sure each student knows their meanings.
- e. Choose colour that can be seen. Also consider colours available to the students if they have to copy from the board. Remember conventional colours. e.g., electrical colour codes.

The Overhead Projector

The overhead projector is used to project an image on a screen and can be used to achieve the same effect as a wall chart or display board (see above). The great advantage is that the instructor remains facing the class when writing or drawing on the film or indicating a feature on a pre-prepared projector.

Still Projectors

Their use is similar to that of the overhead projector. Some have remote control. The slides or filmstrips require careful preparation and sequencing and, unless rear projection facilities are available, require a darkened room. Filmstrips and slides can provide visual impact and realism to an instructional period. An episcope can project photographs on a screen to be seen by cadets directly or the instructor can trace his own diagrams by sketching round the image. Still projectors can also be synchronized with sound.

Audio Aids

Sound recorders are appropriate for situations where an appeal to the sense of hearing is critical in the learning process. They can be used on an individual or group basis. Record, replay and monitoring facilities can be used.

Motion Pictures

The cine film has an advantage over the still film in that it can portray movement. This adds realism and demonstrates action. Additional care is required in preparation and use, as a film rarely stands by itself, but needs a planned introduction and consolidation to ensure cadet participation and to assess learning. Cine film has the following advantages over other aids:

1. Small objects and demonstrations can be magnified.
2. Costly, large scale demonstrations can be recorded.
3. Noisy, dangerous or inaccessible equipment can be viewed.