Book Reviews

Diane P, Janes, Editor

Visual Communicating, by Ralph E. Wileman. New Jersey: Educational Technology Publications 1993. ISBN 0-87778-248-2,147 pages, $34.95 (Cdn).

Reviewed by K. Bruce Lane

With ever increasing numbers of personal computers and graphics software programs flooding business and education sectors, presenters are beginning to consider themselves designers. The result is huge numbers of ineffective attempts at communicating ideas to bored audiences.

Visual Communicating is aimed at anyone who wishes to improve their use of visuals. It is ideally suited as a workbook for beginning students of visual design. It is also an excellent reference for teachers who have had minimum exposure to design and production of educational resources.

The subject matter is basic and well organized with numerous simple exercises for practice. There are five chapters in the book: Chapter One, Introduction, describes the use of visuals, the rationale for their design and development for learning, and describes how visuals affect understanding and learning in an audience; Chapter Two, Visual Stimuli, outlines types of visuals and degrees of visualization; Chapter Three, Visual Thinking, provides tools for visualization of data and information; Chapter Four, Visual Design Considerations, presents a series of questions for evaluation of visuals; and Chapter 5, Field Testing and Rendering Visuals, outlines the process of designing visuals in the context of creating a lesson or presentation.

An appendix contains very useful storyboards and templates for 35mm slides, flipcharts, overhead transparencies, video. A comprehensive glossary, evaluation checklists and bibliography are also included.

My initial response to the book is positive. The concepts are well presented with ample illustrations and opportunities for practice, While

there is little emphasis on theoretical aspects of communicating, this book would be a useful tool as an introduction to the creation of visuals or as a reference for presenters wishing to refresh their knowledge. Anyone who has to create a presentation, whether in the educational system, government or business would find this book useful!

REVIEWER

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