Reaching People

Department of Information and Agricultural Journalism

press
publications
radio
television
visual aids

Agricultural Extension Service University of Minnesota

October 25, 1977

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IT TAKES ALL KINDS TO MAKE A WORLD, OR A GOOD EDUCATIONAL TEAM--The problem often is we don't know ourselves . . . what type of person we are. Recently I attended a workshop entitled "Project Prof," taught by a team of Michigan State University teachers, researchers, and extension specialists.

All of us took a "psychological" test to determine what type of person we were. The nice part of it was that all of us can be different in our personalities and outlook and still contribute greatly to our mission of education. In fact, for best results in many programs our "teams" might be most successful if we make use of the distinct attributes or even quirks each of us has.

The tests we took were based on the work of psychologist Karl Jung. Four general classes emerged. You can guess what class you are, but you won't really know until you've taken the test. The classes and the characteristics follow:

Academic types--High achievers as students, believe knowledge is important for its own sake, want to know meanings, more future oriented, pay more attention to inner principles and are less influenced by opinions of others.

Pragmatists--Believe knowledge useful, stress practical aspects of subject, sociable, action-oriented, good on facts and details, emphasize use of materials, do a good job of taking in opinions and may be influenced by others, jump into new situations confidently.

Innovators--Usually have a different idea or way of doing things, sociable, action-oriented, believe knowledge important to innovation, love to solve problems, tend to overlook details or supporting data, jump into new situations enthusiastically, often don't finish or lose their enthusiasm, always look to tomorrow as different.

Careful Compilers--Quiet, less interactive, conscientious, good at facts and details, interested in idea beyond the job, often want to wait and sleep on an idea, want to be comfortable with facts, hate superficiality, value privacy, don't push for fast decisions, scholarly in a practical way.

As you look over these classifications you'll find you have characteristics of many of the types. However, often you'll find, too, your characteristics seem to cluster in a group or type.

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The instructor pointed out that committees and teams often should be made up of many different types of persons to take advantage of their unusual capabilities. For example, to bring about a change, it is wise to have innovators for ideas, pragmatists to gather opinions, careful compilers to pull together or provide data, and academicians to look at the long-run possibilities and principles.

What or who are you? Whatever you are, you're useful as long as you recognize others exist and carry on important functions, too.--Harold B. Swanson

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WOMEN'S VOICES MORE ACCEPTED--Women's voices as on-air reporters and newscasters are becoming more and more acceptable and impressive, according to Iowa State University researcher Marianne L. McManus, and reported in the February issue of HUMAN BEHAVIOR. The public's ear seems to be tuning itself in to the change rather well. Earlier similar studies had shown that both men and women rated a male-voiced message higher. This time, however, men gave the highest rating on most of the scales to the male voice, while women rated the female voice higher. Men and women rated the two voices equally intelligent and believable; however, while the men thought the two voices were equally sincere and attractive, the women considered the woman's voice to be more forceful and compelling than the men did.

Although her research was limited to only one male and one female voice, and two separate political-announcement messages presented to university students, the results suggest, McManus believes, "that the population in the 1970s may be ready to receive women as equally creditable sources of information," especially considering the fact that one-half the audience may identify more closely with a female voice.--USDA Research Information Letter, June 1977

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WE'RE IN AN INFORMATION SOCIETY--Over half of our nation's wages and nearly half of its national product deal with information, goods, and services. That's the conclusion of economist Marc Uri Porat who has devoted many years to the study of the "information" society. We're not sure what Dr. Porat includes in our information society, but it seems that it must include extension, research, and college staffs everywhere.--Harold B. Swanson

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RADIO REACHES--Don't underestimate the power of radio. It is probably the most cost efficient way extension has of reaching the public. While visiting KQAD, Luverne, I noticed radio listening surveys pinned to the bulletin board. The figures showed there were 383,398,000 radios in the U.S. or about 5.3 per home. Of the total, 10 million are out-of-home radios and 95 percent of all cars have radios. Morning drivers (6-10 a.m.) totaling more than half the adult population, listened. The driving-while-listening dropped to 35 percent from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., 41 percent from 3-7 p.m. and 22 percent from 7 p.m. to midnight. The report said 84 percent of the population age 12 and older listened daily and 97 percent listened weekly. Consider the fact that fewer people subscribe to newspapers and extension usually has limited access to television. Doesn't this make radio look even better as a way of disseminating educational information to the public? Remember many listeners catch your show while driving or eating or preparing meals. This should influence subject matter and program length.--Janet Macy

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Publications and Direct Mail

October 1977

NEW PUBLICATIONS

Designs on Older Women. Extension Bulletin 405. Reprinted from Purdue University clothing publication of the same name. Descriptions and drawings delineate. 20 pages. Available.

Feeding the Ewe Flock. Extension Folder 345. Robert M. Jordan. Comprehensive folder includes aspects to consider; problems likely to be encountered; nutrient requirements of the ewe, useful feed composition data; characteristics of feedstuffs for sheep, which covers legume hays, grass hays, haylage, corn silage, corn stover, soybean straw; and byproducts such as beet pulp, beet molasses, sunflower hulls, and wheat bran, protein supplements, urea, and mineral supplements; pastures; mineral deficiencies and toxicities. Gives rule of thumb on basic information about feeds and feed requirements of the ewe. 12 pages. Available.

REVISED PUBLICATIONS

Know Your Minnesota Apples. Horticulture Fact Sheet No. 24. Shirley T. Munson, L. B. Hertz, and Cecil Stushnoff. Lists variety, season of use, characteristics, and use of apples and includes some recipes. 2 pages. Available.

Keeping Cut Flowers and Flowering Plants Longer. Horticulture Fact Sheet No. 45. Harold F. Wilkins and Terry Gilbertson. Explains how to care for cut flowers and flowering plants. 2 pages. Available.

Pruning Fruit Trees. Extension Folder 161. Leonard B. Hertz. Describes correct pruning with illustrations and text. 12 pages. Available.

Correcting Iron Chlorosis in Soybeans. Soils Fact Sheet No. 27. Gyles W. Randall. Discusses the procedures, results, and conclusions of adding iron materials to soybeans deficient in this material. Experiments were conducted in south-central Minnesota. 2 pages. Available.

1976-77 Rural Planning Directory--Minnesota. Special Report 43. Robert W. Snyder. Lists offices and current officers involved in planning in Minnesota's 87 counties. 40 pages. Available.

REPRINTED PUBLICATIONS

Freezing Foods for Home Use. Extension Bulletin 244. S. Munson, J. Winter, M. Hamre, C. E. Allen.

Care of House Plants. Extension Bulletin 274. Richard Widmer.

Livestock Judging. Extension Bulletin 340. Charles Christians.

Forages for Beef Cows. Extension Bulletin 380. Harley Otto.

Apple-Crabapple-Pear Varieties for Minnesota. Extension Folder 303. Leonard Hertz.

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Criteria for Successful Meetings. Communication Bulletin 11. Harold Swanson.

Test Your Discussion Leadership. Communication Bulletin 14. Paul Cashman.

Discussion Traps: Avoid Them. Communication Bulletin 15. Ron Brown.

Before You Write. Communication Bulletin 19. Harold Swanson.

Speeches of Introduction and Presentation. Communication Bulletin 26. Paul Cashman, Harold Swanson.

How to Clear Brushland with a Bulldozer. Agricultural Engineering Fact Sheet 13. Donald Bates, Winton Fuglie.

Miscellaneous Shade Trees. Arboretum Review 19. Leon Snyder.

Flowering Crabapples. Arboretum Review 19. Mervin Eisel.

House Plant Insect Control. Entomology Fact Sheet 47. Mark Ascerno.

Metric Measure for Home Recipes. Food Science and Nutrition Fact Sheet 28. Mary Darling, Deborah Wardle.

A Guide for Planning Your Daily Food Needs. Food Science and Nutrition Fact Sheet 31. Muriel Brink, Mary Darling.

Wood as a Fuel Resource. Forestry Fact Sheet 9. Lewis Hendricks.

Homemade Maple Syrup. Forestry Fact Sheet 11. Marvin Smith.

Wild Rice--How It Grows, How to Cook It. Home Economics Fact Sheet 21. Verna Mikesh, Sheryl Nefstead.

Fruits for Minnesota. Horticulture Fact Sheet 3. Leonard Hertz.

Ground Covers for Rough Sites. Horticulture Fact Sheet 27. Margaret H. Smithberg, Albert G. Johnson.

Diseases of Peony. Plant Pathology 10. Ward C. Stienstra, F. L. Pfleger.

Raising Geese. Poultry Fact Sheet 44. Melvin Hamre.

Fertilizers--Facts vs. Opinions. Soils Fact Sheet 19. C. J. Overdahl, W. E. Fenster, C. A. Simkins.

Comparison of a Soil Conditioner and a Specialty Fertilizer. Soils Fact Sheet 22. Curtis Overdahl.

THE COMMUNICATIONS SCENE

Department of Information and Agricultural Journalism
Agricultural Extension Service
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

No. 65

THE MANY LANGUAGES WE SPEAK

By Harold B. Swanson, Professor and Extension
Communications Specialist

Today each of us speaks many languages. And by that we don't mean English or French or German or Swedish or Spanish or a specific Indian tongue. For better communications it's important for us to realize that we do speak in many ways. Here's why. Sometimes what we say is hard to understand, or leads to misunderstanding, because others aren't familiar with our terms, our slang, or the special meaning we put on certain words, symbols or even facial gestures.

With that let's look at several of these languages we use.

First, of course, there is the basic English we learned in school. All of us use this basic language, and most of us understand it fairly well.

Out of this comes a second language, our informal spoken language. It's often laced with slang and words we wouldn't use in more formal settings.

Then there is still another set of related languages. These are the languages of location. There are those "accents" we hear so often. Of course, an "accent" to us may be anything different from our own way of speaking. We have the languages of the South, of New England, of the Midwest, and the famous "Brooklynese," to mention only a few. There are other regional or locational differences, too. When a Texan and a Minnesotan talk about 98° temperature, it's hot to the Minnesotan but not unusual to the Texan. Or, as I once heard, getting a job done fast means different things in different areas. In Maine it may mean three months and in Chicago it may mean before noon.

We also have different languages in different kinds of work--in different vocations and professions. For example, I'm personally involved in three different areas of work: agriculture, journalism, and education. There's a different language for each.

I've coined the term "agri-language" to describe the language farmers and others in agriculture use. There are many technical specialized terms that few people except those in agriculture understand. Examples are stress-resistant corn, fertilizer carryover, pre-emergence treatment, hydro-static. And words like double cross have different meanings for farmers and for their city cousins. Agri-language is changing rapidly, and frankly I have trouble keeping up. For example, I've never had much to do with irrigation, and so I'm lost when an irrigation farmer starts talking c.f.m.'s, which means cubic feet per minute.

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As communicators we have to speak still another language. In talking to newspaper people we can use terms such as news hole and camera ready copy. Radio and television workers, too, have special languages. We hear terms such as dissolve, fade, bridge, spot, location, actuary, sequé, to mention only a few.

Educators have their own language, sometimes to the distress of school boards, P.T.A.'s, and students themselves. Educators use terms such as curricula, learning objectives, instructional resource centers, evaluation. By evaluation, for example, we don't mean test for students but methods whereby we can be judged as to our teaching effectiveness. In our classes we ask students to mark us as well as our marking them. That's quite revealing.

Still another important language is that of sports and recreation. Unless you're a sports fan you won't know what a Texas leaguer or a blitz or a spare or strike is. And, of course, a strike means different things in baseball, bowling, and fishing.

If you happen to be a square dancer, the terms allamande left, grand square, do-si-do, and yellow rock are familiar, but only square dancers know what they're all about.

In closing let me mention another language--the silent language. The silent language is what we say by expressions on our face, a lifted eyebrow, twisting hands, nervous shuffling of our feet, our handshakes, and even where we stand or sit in a room or at a table.

The importance of mentioning all these languages is that our messages may come out different to different people. So as we speak it's good to remember that our language may be different and often is misunderstood by others.

October 1977

THE COMMUNICATIONS SCENE

Department of Information and Agricultural Journalism
Agricultural Extension Service
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

No. 66

COUNTY EXTENSION AGENTS--SKILLED COMMUNICATORS, EDUCATORS

by Harold B. Swanson, Professor and Extension
Communications Specialist

Have you ever thought of your county Extension agents as communicators--as writers, speakers, discussion leaders, counsellors? They are. In fact, the county Extension agent has always had to be a good communicator. And when you get down to it, being a good communicator is part of the job of being a good educator...and Extension is education.

I was reminded of this again as those of us in the University Agricultural Extension Service met for our "Annual Conference". Every year there is emphasis on communications. Most of our listeners are familiar with county Extension agents and their work. These agents, who are faculty members at the University of Minnesota, are supported by a staff of specialists and administrators on University campuses. This support staff has specialized knowledge of agriculture, forestry, home economics, family development, 4-H and youth development, rural development and veterinary medicine. It's always pleasing to see the interest our county faculty has in doing a better job of communicating, informing, teaching.

Now to be more specific. Agents do a great deal of writing for local newspapers and radio stations. Nearly two-thirds of our county offices have regular columns in local newspapers. This is a good way to bring new information on many subjects to Minnesotans. In addition, they provide regular news stories which are carried in papers or aired on local stations. Hardly a day passes without important information being provided this way. All this takes writing skill. Extension agents have or are developing this skill so they can be more effective professionals.

Turning to the electronic media, we find that about three-fourths of our county Extension offices have regular radio programs--some every day. The total number of times Extension programs are played in Minnesota exceeds 40,000 each year. The total airtime is about 60 hours a week. About two-thirds of these programs originate in county offices or at local stations. One-third originate from the St. Paul Campus studios, either "live" or as taped programs like this one.

Many county Extension agents also have regular TV programs on several local stations.

As we talk about stations, it's appropriate to thank the many radio and TV stations for the major contributions they make to education. They carry many regular educational features not only for us in Extension but also for others in education. They play an an important role in education. Unfortunately, they sometimes don't get the credit they deserve.

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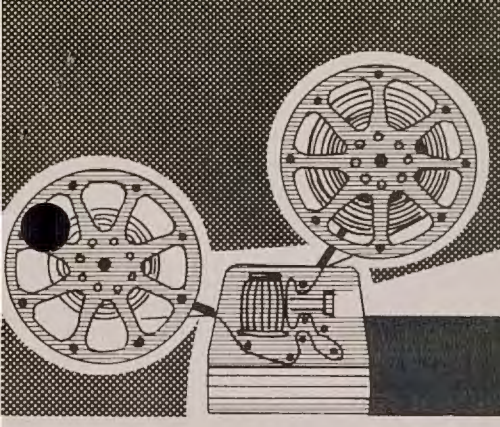
Thus far, we've emphasized the importance of the mass media. But county Extension agents are skilled communicators in many other ways. For example, many people don't ordinarily think of telephone calls and visits as communications. They definitely are. We estimate that our county and our campus-based offices receive over a million calls and visits for information every year. That's a real challenge to agents and specialists. It requires tact and a human approach. It requires clear communications. What's more Extension staff has to be up-to-date on a myriad of subjects to handle these calls and visits. It's no easy task.

Then, too, there are many meetings, seminars, and workshops that agents and specialists conduct. Every year a million and a half to two million people attend Extension events. Really they're really short, informal classes where Minnesotans can discuss and often get answers to their questions and problems. If we were to convert the time agents and specialists spend in the events with various publics, it would amount to the equivalent of teaching over 20,000 full time college students--one of the largest schools or colleges in the state.

Another communications activity of county offices is distributing and using the over 1,000 different publications prepared by Extension staff. These provide citizens everywhere a ready access to up-to-date material. Most county Extension agents also have regular newsletters to homemakers, farmers, 4-H leaders and members, and many other specialized audiences. Agents spend a lot of time preparing and distributing good information through these valuable letters.

Now we can add to these jobs agents have as writers, broadcasters, speakers, lecturers, discussion leaders, and counsellors many other communications activities. So perhaps we could add another name for county Extension agents. That name would be county communicator-educators.

October 1977



visual aids TIP SHEET

Minnesota Agricultural Extension Service

October 1977

Artwork - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -	(612) 373-0712
Emergency Bookings - - - - - - - - - - -	(612) 373-1252
Equipment - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -	(612) 373-1254

NEW FILMS ADDED TO THE AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION LIBRARY

#3062 A LIFE IN YOUR HANDS -- 15 min., color, Advanced Coronary Treatment Foundation (ACT). (TV-$4.50) Explains CPR, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, which is applied to people whose heart and breathing stop because of heart attack, drowning, accidental electrocution, and food which gets stuck in the throat. For adolescent or adult audience. 1976

#3063 PAINLESS SEWING: HOW TO SEW FAST -- 27 min., color, Auteur Films Ltd. (not TV-$6.00) Presents basic sewing techniques that allow for speed without reducing quality. Includes cutting tips, efficient sewing machine techniques, and some fast methods that don't require the machine. Shows organization of space and tools in a sewing area. For intermediate to advanced sewer; adolescent or adult audience. 1977

NEW SLIDE SETS ADDED TO LIBRARY

#126 WOOD FOR FUEL -- 37 slides, color, cassette tape (automatic, inaudible 1000 Hz pulses, time 7:00), Neil D. Anderson, assistant extension information specialist, University of Minnesota. ($1.75) Presents information on preparation of wood for use in wood furnaces. Includes splitting and stacking. Compares the equivalent heating values of common home heating fuel to wood. Forestry Fact Sheet 9, WOOD AS A FUEL RESOURCE, and Extension Folder 323, USING WOOD STOVES AND FIREPLACES SAFELY, are recommended for use with this slide set. Order from your local county agent or the Bulletin Room, Coffey Hall, 1420 Eckles Avenue, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN 55108. 1977

#128 FAIR MANAGEMENT -- 65 slides, color, Wayne H. Hanson, assistant program leader, agriculture/related industries, University of Minnesota. ($1.75) Gives ideas on new exhibits, exhibit arrangements, advertising, fair buildings, involvement of individuals and groups, and fair operations. For fair board officers, directors, superintendents, and 4-H leaders. 1976

#131 THE 4-H SYSTEM -- 84 slides, color, cassette tape (automatic, inaudible 1000 Hz pulses, time 10:30), National 4-H Council. ($1.75) Describes 4-H's organization--the role and responsibilities of leaders and professionals at the club, county, state, and national level. For leader training, especially new leaders, to help them understand the co-operative nature of the 4-H system. 1976

#133 SHADE TREES FOR SOUTHERN MINNESOTA -- 57 slides, color, cassette tape (automatic, inaudible 1000 Hz pulses, time 22:00), Jane P. McKinnon, extension horticulturist, University of Minnesota. ($1.75) Suggests a variety of shade trees to plant to replace lost elms. Includes information on care of trees and gives hints on landscaping. 1977

#156 WEED IDENTIFICATION AND CONTROL IN SMALL GRAINS-- 44 slides, color, cassette tape (automatic, inaudible 1000 Hz pulses, time 12:30), Paul E. Groneberg, assistant agronomist, pesticide training and Gerald R. Miller and Oliver E. Strand, extension agronomists, University of Minnesota. ($1.75) Shows characteristics of common grassy and broadleaf weeds in small grain fields in Minnesota. Discusses herbicides used for weed control in small grains and their effectiveness on specific weed species. 1977

#166 THE REPORTER'S WORLD -- 56 slides, color, cassette tape (automatic, inaudible 1000 Hz pulses, time 14:00), Cornell University. ($1.75) Explores the basics of news writing and provides an opportunity to test skills. Covers organization, the lead and body, words and phrases, and the mechanics of writing. For beginning writers or as a refresher for skilled writers. 1976

...Neil Anderson, Don Breneman and Gail Tischler

Agricultural Extension Service, University of Minnesota

ArtTips

October 1977

USING VISUALS--What does your mind see when the word "visuals" is mentioned? Overheads and slides? For many people, these are the most common visuals, but do you ever teach with flip charts, posters, large drawings, models, actual materials, or enlarged black and white or color photographs? These are also effective visuals.

When choosing what kind of visuals to use, keep in mind:

Your audience--Are they young, with a short attention span? professionals? unfamiliar with the subject matter?

Your subject matter--How complex is it? how visual is it?

The location of the teaching--Is it outside? in a small room? can the room be darkened? how far will the farthest person be sitting?

After analyzing your audience, subject, and space, the possibilities of visuals should be narrowed. For example, a lecture on tractor safety while repairing the engine might best be illustrated to a small group with an actual tractor. However, a group of 50 would need to view slides in a classroom to learn the same material. If the subject were tractor safety to avoid tipping over, a model of the tractor would be a better visual.

A lecture on fabrics would be more effective if samples of fabrics were passed around than if slides were shown.

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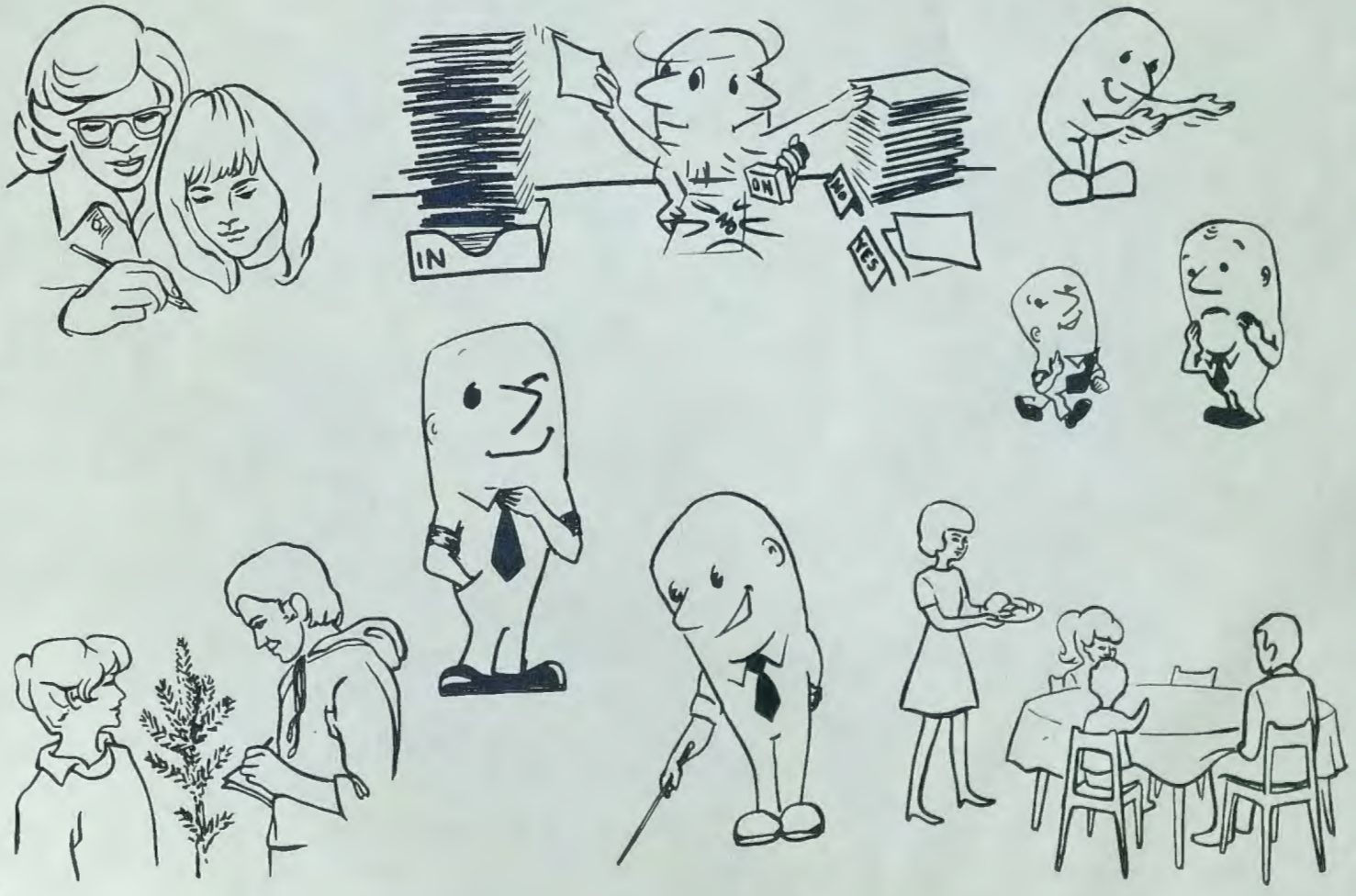

KEEPING YOUR VISUALS SIMPLE--Projected visuals, flip charts or posters should only have one idea per visual. Less complicated visuals are more likely to be read. They should not have so much information that they tell the whole story by themselves. Visuals should support, not replace, the instructor.

WORDS AND PICTURES--Illustrations and key words combine to make more effective visuals than pictures or words alone. Words should provide information the picture cannot. For example, the words on an overhead picturing bread, milk, an apple, and a steak should not just identify the foods. It would be more effective to read, "Representatives of the Four Food Groups," or even better, "A balanced diet consists of foods from each of these food categories." The visual alone still doesn't tell the whole story. The instructor can describe further each food group and name other sample foods.

WORDS ON YOUR VISUAL--Be brief! Edit and edit again. You need not use complete sentences. Only key words are necessary; the lecturer will fill in detail.

Make your letters at least 1 inch tall for every 25 feet of viewing distance. Don't underestimate. Find out how far from the visual a person in the last row will be. If it's 50 feet, your letters should be at least 2 inches tall. Making your lettering large enough often forces you to keep words brief.

Here are some rules of thumb for projected visuals. If you can easily read a slide by holding it up to the light, it will probably be read okay by your audience. Lettering on an overhead should be ¼ inch high, or large enough to read if it is on the floor at your feet and you are standing. If it isn't readable, leave it on the floor and make another overhead.