

A**DISCUSS**

- 1 The visuals get progressively more information-loaded. Visual a is OK, but if you display all the bullet points at once, you'll still have to give your audience a few seconds to read them before you speak – and by then they'll already know what you're going to say.

Visual b actually contains more information, but because it's more visual and less textual, it may be easier to get a quick impression.

Visual c is starting to look confusing. Even an audience familiar with the process the flowchart describes will have to spend some time working it out, while you stand around doing nothing. If you step in to explain it, they won't know whether to look or listen.

Visual d is totally ineffective – there are too many segments in the chart, the 3D effect makes it even harder to understand and there's a paragraph of explanatory text to read!

RECALL

- 1 Giving your audience more information than they can easily absorb.
- 2 If it takes your audience more than five seconds to work out what your graph is about, you've definitely got too much information.
- 3 Technical audiences tend to be data-hungry – they want to see all the figures. Resist the temptation to show them all in one visual.
- 4 A cross between a slide and document – too detailed to be a good slide, but not detailed enough to be a good document.

B**VIEW**

The four ways of avoiding data-dumping Mark talks about are: keep most of your data in reserve (and/or put them in an accompanying report), have more slides (with less on each), use the reveal and/or zoom functions on your slideware (to direct your audience's attention to what you're talking about), and put complex data into a memorable context.

REFLECT

- 2 Technical audiences who are familiar with the topic of your presentation may be able to provide their own context, so be careful not to patronise them with silly analogies. On the other hand, a really good context is always memorable.

C**REFLECT**

- 1 People understand new information better when they can relate it to old information or put it into a framework they know. Extremely large and small figures in particular are outside many people's frame of reference.
- 2 If the visual you use dramatically illustrates the context you're going to put your data into, it will make the reference even stronger.