

The traditional mode of teaching—through lectures and recitation sessions—is a great way for those with an auditory learning style, but for the estimated 60% of students who learn better when they have visual cues to assist with the learning process being in a standard lecture hall can be difficult. As an instructor, however, you can still stick with the same lecture format and only make a few minor adjustments to cater to those with visual learning styles. No PowerPoints, no charts or graphs, just a change in style...

Although it may seem counterintuitive, there are ways to make a standard lecture more suitable for visual learners, simply by allowing some flexibility in seating arrangements and making a few very small changes to the way course content is delivered. Between these two relatively small alterations, you could radically alter the level of engagement you receive from visual learners and hopefully help them better understand and retain the material.

The first alteration that you might consider making is a change in seating. While this may seem entirely unrelated, this is not at all the case. You see, visual learners, if in a lecture class, like to watch the instructor as he or she delivers the course content. By watching the instructor speak about the material while taking notes, the student can recall points of emphasis based on body language (which we will get to in a moment). However, if your current lecture hall seating arrangements are in a standard set of rows where students need to crane their necks to see you, you might want to consider making it your first item of business to allow them to scatter their desks so that everyone can have a “front row seat” for the lecture. It might even be helpful to blatantly tell them the reason why; “I know that some of you learn better by seeing and while I’m not going to be showing you anything necessarily, seeing me might help you.”

The second alteration might be a bit more difficult, depending on how settled in you are in your

mode of teaching and delivery. Use body language and if you're not shy, don't be afraid to be a little theatrical about it. This not only helps add emphasis for those who are auditory learners as your voice is likely to raise as you make movements to stress your main points, but these acts of emphasis through body language can help a visual learner better *see* what you're saying.

As one of the common misconceptions about the visual learning style goes, visual learners don't learn well by simply sitting and listening to a lecture. This is not at all the case, especially since we need to remember that the visual learning style is a preference, not an end-all format for being able to learn at all. By making sure that students are able to sit in front of the classroom without any obstructions and making it a point to use body language to communicate and emphasize important material, instructors can easily make their lectures more palatable for visual learners.