AUDIO-VISUAL TOOLS (PLAN A 6.5)

Audio-visual tools are essential components of business presentations. For this reason, they must be carefully selected and prepared. They are mainly used in these situations:

- **lectures or presentations** – Audio-visual tools are used to clarify points, present information and illustrate arguments and processes. Good audio-visual aids should be: interesting, clearly audible and visible, relevant to the topic of the presentation and shown for the time necessary to be seen and understood.
- **round table discussions** – Audio-visual tools are exchanged between the participants to facilitate the flow of information and the decision-making process.
- **meetings** – Short videos or audio recordings, images and photos are usually projected on large screen to facilitate data sharing.

The most common audio-visual tools used at the workplace are:

- **overhead projectors,** to show images to an audience which have previously been prepared on transparencies, although this method has largely been replaced by Interactive Whiteboards (IWB)
- **multimedia projectors,** to display images from a PC
- **DVD/Video,** transmitted by PC or television generally on a large screen
- **whiteboard and flipcharts,** which are still used for brainstorming discussions although they are not electronic tools.

Different types of audio-visual equipment

Audio-visual tools have many benefits, in fact they:

- support communication
- maintain and stimulate interest
- help pass a message as 'A picture is worth a thousand words'
- clarify issues
- clear up ambiguities
- reinforce concepts
- aid memorisation.

However, it is important to remember that they are just tools and that, in order to function well, they have to be checked before the delivery of the presentation. Moreover, it is important to consider the cost of these tools and the fact that the material becomes obsolete very quickly.
The last aspect to consider is the environment in which audio-visual tools are used. In fact, they require:

- some room arrangements, e.g. the size
- adequate lighting
- all the material and resources in place
- all the technical equipment in order
- all correct cables in place.

1 **After studying the page on the left, cover it and try this test. You have to choose the right answer for each question.**

1. Audio-visual tools are mainly used in:
   a. lectures, videoconferences and presentations.
   b. lectures, meeting and round tables.
   c. round tables, presentations and lectures.
   d. lectures, presentations and round tables.

2. Good audio-visual aids should be:
   a. interesting but short.
   b. clearly audible and visible.
   c. interesting, clearly audible and visible and relevant to the topic.
   d. clearly audible and visible and shown the time necessary to see them.

3. Overhead projectors...
   a. are still very popular.
   b. are similar to IWBs.
   c. show images on transparencies.
   d. show images with audio.

4. With flipcharts...
   a. you write on paper.
   b. you cannot turn the pages.
   c. you can make long presentations.
   d. you can show images.

5. Audio-visual tools help...
   a. distract the audience.
   b. stimulate the debate.
   c. maintain interest.
   d. less than words.

6. Audio-visual tools do not...
   a. stimulate interest.
   b. clarify issues.
   c. aid memorisation.
   d. substitute words.

7. Audio-visual tools...
   a. easily become out of date.
   b. are generally cheap.
   c. are more than just tools.
   d. are always in order.

8. The use of audio-visuals requires:
   a. large windows.
   b. appropriate lightning.
   c. white walls.
   d. wireless connection.

ACTIVITIES