

PUBLIC SPEAKING SKILLS



Table of Contents

Section A: Fundamentals Of Public Speaking

Chapter 1: An Insight into Public Speaking

Chapter 2: Public Speaking and You

Chapter 3: Your First Speech

Chapter 4: Inculcate Confidence while Speaking

Chapter 5: Overcoming Your Fear

Section B: Preparing Your Speech

Chapter 6: Picking a Topic

Chapter 7: Knowing Your Audience

Section C: Developing Your Speech

Chapter 8: Organizing Your Speech

Chapter 9: Outlining Your Speech

Section D: Presenting Your Speech

Chapter 10: Preparing Your Visual Aids Effectively

Chapter 11: Delivering Your Message Effectively

Chapter 12: Questions

Section A:

Fundamentals Of Public Speaking

Chapter 01 - An Insight into Public Speaking

Communication is a vital key in this new century. It gives an edge to keep abreast with the fast pace of the times. Public speaking definitely works towards this goal.

The diversity of opinions today, which are often controversial, has increased the need for public speaking. People need to voice out their views to function well in society. For some four thousand years, public speaking has been the key in building and keeping a democratic society and way of life. Its influences are vast and affect almost all aspects of life, such as the way we think or act. It is also used in court proceedings, in congress, and even in the plain setting of a classroom.

Speaking in public can sometimes be a real challenge, if not a source of embarrassment; not only to normal people, but even to persons of high rank such as scholars, doctors, artists and entrepreneurs. They may have hesitations in facing an audience, often accompanied by sweaty palms, stuttering, and the tip-of-the-tongue phenomenon. These dilemmas often cause untold problems to the speaker (especially in self-expression) and unpleasant effects to the audience.

You probably got this book because you are up for a speech delivery soon and you need valuable tips. Or perhaps, you saw the link between success and effective speaking, and have realized this can help you. Hopefully this book would do just that.

Technical terms or jargons in public speaking are explained here, and in a humane way, to help you grow as a good public speaker.

There are scores of books on public speaking. But few really give practical help. This book aims to do what other books have not in terms of giving direct beneficial information.

Careful thought has been given to people who really love to speak publicly but do not have the luxury of time to prepare for such. This will help you make your next speech

a great one, and become better with each succeeding speech. It aims to help people write and deliver an interesting, clear, and cogent speech quality. This book also tries to answer the questions and fears of the occasional speaker.

Included also in this book is a summary of experiences in public speaking, and how they have led to success.

Aristotle said “a speaker needs three qualities – good sense, good character, and goodwill toward his hearers.” Thus, public speaking is also about developing speakers, and ultimately, decent human beings.

Whether the speech is short or long, the same rules apply, like the rule of *preparation*. The habit of preparing makes good speakers. Some would say that they speak from “inspiration,” when in fact they have been preparing their speeches all their lives.

Chapter 02 - Public Speaking and You

Some people are born speakers. Most are not. Hence, you are not alone when you say that you do not enjoy making speeches and speaking in front of a large audience. Stage fright is inevitable. Actors are always nervous to a certain degree before every play.

Perhaps you think your career does not entail public speaking. Well, this is where you're wrong because no matter what your job is, public speaking ultimately will come into the picture in some ways. This chapter, therefore, focuses on the significance of public speaking in our daily lives and on some specifics of the communication process.

Four General Types of Public Speakers

CATEGORY	CHARACTERISTICS
The Avoider	<i>Does everything possible to avoid facing an audience.</i> In some cases, avoiders seek careers that do not involve making presentations.
The Resister	<i>Becomes fearful when asked to speak.</i> This fear may be strong. Resisters may not love to speak in public, but they have no choice. When they speak, they do so with great reluctance.
The Acceptor	Can do presentations but is not that enthusiastic to do them. Accepters occasionally give presentations and feel good about them. Occasionally the presentations can be quite persuasive, and satisfying.
The Seeker	Always looks for opportunities to speak. Seekers understand that anxiety can be a stimulant that fuels enthusiasm during

	presentation. Seekers work hard at building their professional communication skills and self-confidence by speaking often.
--	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

What Roles Can Public Speaking Play in Your Life?

Success in public speaking can open a whole world of opportunities for you. It can help you conquer new frontiers. It can broaden your horizons through personal development, influence, and advances in your profession.

1. Public Speaking Improves Your Personal Development

In Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs, realizing man's self-worth ranks the highest. Giving speeches helps the speaker realize self-worth through the personal satisfaction he experiences whenever a good speech is given. The speaker becomes more confident especially when the audience responds positively. It also reduces anxiety when asked by an authority to speak in front of some people.

There was once a student who dropped a course five times because he hated speaking in front of the class. But after a self-study on building up confidence, he decided to give public speaking a try and was successful. In fact, he came to enjoy the experience and even volunteered to give more speeches.

Through public speaking tools like research, conceptualization, and organization, you have a systematic and effective way of presenting your ideas; and thus, you will be able to express yourself better. You will also become more open to other people. Furthermore, speaking skills put you in a more significant role as you talk with people of high standing. Lastly, public speaking satisfies your sense of achievement when the

audience accepts you warmly. This reflects your level of communication skills and acumen. All these contribute to your self-esteem.

2. Public Speaking Influences Your Society

It is not only you who can benefit from the art of communication but society as well. Most governments heed the voice of their citizens; with proper communication skills, you can represent the public in voicing out your rights and opinions.

An example of this would be a community discussion. Usually when a neighborhood holds regular meetings, it discusses certain issues or courses of action. In the discussion, various opinions are expressed and there you have a clear interplay of public speaking.

People from all walks of life need to speak in public, whether formally or otherwise. From kids reciting in school, to folks in a town meeting, to citizens voicing out national issues; from a plain market vendor, to a president of a company. There is really no way you can avoid public speaking.

3. Public Speaking Advances Your Profession

Public speaking can help in your career, and eventually, your finances. Usually, success is gauged by answers to questions like, “How long have you been in your job?” or “Do you hold an MBA degree or something similar?” However, researchers have proven that the best indicator of success in any profession is whether the person is often asked to give speeches. Those who give more speeches tend to have higher salaries than those who give less or no speeches.

Take this average engineer. She enrolls in a public speaking seminar that teaches two hours a week for six weeks. After two months, she is promoted to senior engineer! Her boss has been noticing her superb presentations.

The longer you work for an organization and the higher you climb the organizational ladder, the more your boss will ask you to preside over meetings and to give talks to the staff and subordinates or the clients. The higher your position, the more your responsibilities in leading people under you; and the more you must speak effectively. A manager once said, “From the chairman of the board to the assistant manager of the most obscure department, nearly everyone in business speaks in public or makes a speech at some time or the other.”

Aside from big organizations like IBM and General Motors, small organizations and businesses in the country also need workers who are good public speakers. Take the high school coach, for example. If he is not persuasive enough to tell the school board that new gym equipment is needed, the school athletes might have to bear with the old gym equipment.

In the same way, if parents are not convincing enough when they complain about a school dress code, their children may end up still wearing uniforms in school. If salespeople cannot explain their products with a convincing sales pitch, then fewer people would buy their products. This is also true for nurses, doctors, firemen, police personnel and other professions. Even employees of General Motors meet regularly to make group decisions that they will present formally to management.

The bottom line is this: Whichever road you take, you will encounter instances that require you to speak in public.

Chapter 03 - Your First Speech

Imagine you're in a classroom. Who do you think speaks excellently? You may select those who look smart or those who often recite in class. You may think that these people are actually more confident than you think they are. Or perhaps, they are born speakers and you are not.

Well, it may surprise you that they're probably thinking the same thing about you! They may also feel that you are a born speaker and envy you because they have fears in public speaking. Some may have special interests in public speaking, but most people do not know anything about it.

Then again, you may actually be a good speaker without realizing it. It pays to find out by actually doing it and by seeing yourself doing it. You may be just like this student during his first speech in class.

He needed to prepare a long speech. Two weeks before, he had started writing his speech. He could not sleep at night. In fact, the night before his speech, he did not sleep at all. However, when he finally did his speech and saw it on video, he realized that it was not as bad as he expected it to be. He did not experience the usual symptoms of speech anxiety, such as going blank while speaking, or speaking very softly and hearing chuckles in the audience. Through the video, he discovered that he has actually improved in public speaking.

If no video of your speech is available yet, you can watch yourself speak formally in front of a mirror.

Preparing Yourself to Speak

Here are the basic rules of public speaking:

- *Gain an understanding of who you are.* Discover your own knowledge, capabilities, biases and potentials.

- *Gain an understanding of your audience.* Ponder upon what the audience wants to hear, what provokes their interest, what they believe in and what they want to know.
- *Gain an understanding of the situation.* Consider how the setting of the place and other unforeseen factors could affect the way you deliver your speech.
- *Anticipate response from the audience.* Make sure you have a clear purpose in mind so that the audience will respond in the way you want them to.
- *Search for other sources of information.* There might be more materials available for you to make your speech more colorful.
- *Come up with an argument that is reasonable.* Make sure that the purpose of your speech is supported by clear and reliable data to formulate a sound argument.
- *Add structure to your message.* Organize your ideas so that the audience will not have a hard time following and digesting your ideas.
- *Talk directly to your audience.* Make sure the language you are using is one that your audience is comfortable with. Consider the occasion in delivering your speech.
- *Gain self-confidence through practice.* It is only through practice can you effectively present your speech. Master the flow of your presentation by repeatedly rehearsing it. That way, you can have command over your speech.

Becoming a Good Public Speaker

You have probably heard professors give boring and monotonous lectures. Dull presentations clearly point that a lot of people do not give much importance to good speeches. These speakers may even be unaware that they are boring or ineffective because they lack knowledge about the basic characteristics of a good speech. Hence, to prevent this pitfall, you must remember some basic principles.

1. Respect the variety of the audience.

Good speakers do not look down on their audience. They consider the audience as equals. They know that the listeners have different backgrounds; hence communicating to each of them effectively would also entail different methods.

Before actually organizing a speech, you have to take into consideration your audience. Consider such things as age, gender, and cultural backgrounds. What do they know about your topic? What are their beliefs and values? By looking at these factors, you can choose a topic that suits them and style your speech in the way you feel would be most effective.

The whole experience can be more enjoyable if you prepare well for the individual and cultural differences of your audience. For example, will both male and female listeners appreciate the information you will prepare? Would your Hispanic audience be comfortable with the language you're using as much as the Native Americans would? Would some of your comments offend the senior citizens while addressing the younger generation? The more you know about the audience, the better the chances that you will capture their attention and the more you can make your speech fit their situations. They would feel comfortable listening to you and you would have a better interaction with them.

2. Know as much as possible about listening.

Successful communication does not only depend on good speakers; it depends on good listeners as well. It is a two-way process. If the speaker prepares a very polished speech, it would be useless if the audience does not listen. Know also how to “listen” to the gesticulated reactions of your audience. How comfortable or uneasy they look speaks volumes in terms of their interest or comprehension.

3. Organize carefully to improve understanding and recall.

The best presentations are those with interconnected ideas that flow smoothly from one idea to the next. It is effective because the listeners will be able to follow your arguments and will not get confused along the way.

Three parts of a well-organized speech:

- *Introduction:* Capture the attention of your audience, boost their interest, and give them a background of your topic.
- *Body:* Start with your main ideas. Keep them organized and support them with visual and verbal aids as much as possible.
- *Conclusion:* Provide a recap of all your points and join them together in a way that will create an impact on your listeners, making them remember your points.

4. Use language effectively.

Keep it short. The simpler the language you use, the more powerful and interesting your speech will be. Too many words expressing a single idea will only confuse the audience and will make your argument weak. By keeping it short but accurate, your audience will remember what you will say and they will appreciate it.

5. Sound natural and enthusiastic.

The problem with first timers is they either memorize the speech verbatim or rely on too many flashcards for their notes. These can make the speaker sound unnatural. Talk normally to people so they would listen more to you. By being natural and enthusiastic, it would be like discussing a favorite subject with your friends. Basically, avoid putting up a “speaking disguise” when you talk. Treat it like an ordinary conversation with your usual companions.

6. Use high-quality visual aids.

A simple text containing key phrases and pictures is an example of a visual aid. Usually, visual aids (Chapter 10) can be anything that supplements your speech. It will greatly help your listeners to follow the flow of your ideas and to understand them at a faster rate. It also gives credibility to your speech, which makes you feel more relaxed and confident throughout. However, avoid making poor visuals because they become more of a distraction than support. Treat visual preparations with equal importance as the speech preparation itself.

7. Give only ethical speeches.

Accuracy is very important. It would be difficult for your audience to make informed choices if the information you give is false or vague. Research to ensure credibility and clarity. Avoid plagiarism, falsification and exaggeration of your information. Also, when trying to persuade, do not manipulate, deceive, force, or pressure. Develop good arguments through sound logic and concrete evidence. This is ethical persuasion. Once information is falsified, it becomes unethical because it prevents listeners from making informed choices.

Basically, good speakers aim to change the beliefs, values, or attitudes of the audience through clean persuasion.

Chapter 04 - Inculcate Confidence while Speaking

No matter how interested and experienced we may be in public speaking, anxiety cannot be avoided. We experience it especially as the day of the speech gets closer. We start to ask questions that make our stomachs churn. For example: Will the audience like me? Will my mind go blank when I begin to speak? Have I prepared adequately? If the thought of delivering a speech makes you nervous, you are not alone! According to a commonly quoted survey, more people are afraid of public speaking than they are of dying. People who experience a high level of apprehension while speaking are at a great disadvantage compared to more conversational, confident people.

Individuals who confidently express themselves are viewed as more competent. They also create a better impression during job interviews and are more likely to be promoted than apprehensive people.

Confidence develops a positive impression while anxiety creates a negative one. When we speak, we are communicating in three ways - verbally, visually, and vocally. Our verbal delivery may be clear and well organized; but when we are anxious, the audience will likely notice more our negative vocal and visual signs (for example, lack of eye contact, poor posture, hesitant delivery, and strained vocal quality). Yet, when we are confident and our verbal, visual, and vocal signals are in unity, we look more credible.

If we want people to believe us when we speak, if we want to improve the impressions we make, we need to boost our confidence. This chapter will give you some tips on how to manage speech anxiety to give more confident and professional deliveries.

Call it speech anxiety, stage fright, or communication apprehension; you have to understand it for numerous reasons. First, speech anxiety can incapacitate you. Second, misconceptions about it can strengthen your anxiety. Finally, knowing the strategies for managing speech anxiety can help lessen your apprehension.

Factors Contributing to Speech Anxiety

Speech anxiety is not new – it's been around for as long as people have been talking to one another. Most speakers who have experienced speech anxiety know the importance of being calm and confident when speaking.

Some feel nervous while others stay calm and relaxed when speaking. Factors in speech anxiety differ from person to person. But general factors apply to all of us.

Knowing the causes of speech anxiety is the first step in managing it effectively.

Many anxiety-generating factors affect nearly all of us, including:

- Poor preparation
- Inappropriate self-expectations
- Fear of evaluation
- Excessive self-focusing
- Fear of the audience
- Not understanding our body's reactions

Strategies for Managing Speech Anxiety

Every speaker has to know the different strategies available for managing speech anxiety. As you give speeches, you learn strategies that work especially for you. Let's look at some strategies that have been very effective to many speakers.

1. Be Well-Prepared and Practice Your Speech.

Nothing can make you feel more anxious than knowing that you are not well prepared. After all, isn't your anxiety all about looking stupid in the eyes of your audience? Poor preparation will guarantee this.

To prepare adequately, first, try to know your listeners beforehand (if possible) and organize your speech and visual aids for this specific group.

Next, prepare easy-to-follow notes. Using these notes, practice your speech three or more times from start to end – speaking out louder each time. Mentally thinking through your speech is not the same thing as actually speaking in front of the audience. For instance, if you will be standing during your speech, stand while practicing. If you will be using visual aids, practice using them. As you practice, time yourself to check if you have to shorten or lengthen the speech.

Lastly, expect possible questions and prepare answers for them. Knowing that you are well prepared will help lessen much of your apprehension.

2. Warm Up First.

Speakers are no different from singers who warm up their voices, musicians who warm up their fingers, or athletes who warm up their muscles before a performance. Before giving a speech, you'll need to warm up your voice and loosen your muscles. Various techniques can help you do this. For instance, try singing up and down the scale, the way singers do before a concert. Read aloud a note or a page from a book, changing your volume, pitch, rate, and quality. Do some stretching exercises such as touching your toes and rolling your head from side to side. Practice different gestures such as pointing, pounding your fist, or shrugging your shoulders. Just like musicians and athletes, these warm-up exercises will help you relax and will make sure that you are prepared to present at your very best.

3. Use Deep Breathing.

One fast way to calm your anxiety is through deep breathing. This involves taking in deep breaths through your nose, holding it while you count to five, and then slowly exhaling through your mouth. As you exhale, think that the pressure and nervousness are slowly draining down your arms and out your fingertips, and down your body and legs and out your toes. Repeat the procedure a second or third time if necessary.

4. Prepare an Introduction That Will Relax You and Your Audience.

Most speakers find that once they get a favorable audience reaction, they will relax. This is why several speakers begin with humor – it relaxes them and their audience. If a humorous introduction is improper or you are uncomfortable with humor, sharing a personal experience is another alternative. Whatever you prefer, make your initial moves work so you can feel comfortable throughout your speech.

5. Focus on Meaning.

Rather than worrying about how you look or sound, or about whether you are impressing your listeners, focus your energy on getting your meaning across to your audience. In other words, be sure your listeners are following the order of your speech and understanding your ideas. Pay close attention to their nonverbal feedback. If they look confused, explain the concept again or add another example. A speaker who is focusing on the audience soon forgets about being anxious.

6. Use Visual Aids.

Visual aids (Chapter 10) make listening easier for your audience and increase your confidence as a speaker. They make it practically impossible for you to forget your main points. If you're unsure of the next point, just put up your next visual aid.

Moreover, using visual aids such as posters, flipcharts, or actual objects not only can add eye-catching movements to your presentation, but can also keep you fully engaged in your presentation, so you'll be bothered less by your appearance.

7. Develop a Positive Mental Attitude.

With positive imagery, you develop a positive, vivid, and detailed mental image of yourself. When you visualize yourself speaking confidently, you become more confident. In your mind, you can simulate feelings (of pride, for instance) even when no real situation exists. Obviously, positive imagery alone will not give you the outcome you want unless you prepare and practice your speech.

Positive self-imagery can be used in many aspects in life. It can help us manage apprehension in job interviews, problem-solving discussions, testing situations, or any circumstances in which our confidence needs a boost.

To succeed in public speaking, you have to visualize yourself as a successful speaker. No amount of talk, encouragement, or practice will make you successful if you deem yourself an anxious or ineffective speaker.

Chapter 05 - Overcoming Your Fear

You will benefit at the beginning of your speech if you free yourself from two misconceptions:

1. Effective speakers are born, not made; it is hopeless to try being one if you were not gifted with a God-given ability.

For most people, fear and nervousness are impossible to overcome; it is useless to even try.

Let's take a look at each of these false assumptions.

Are Good Speakers Born and Not Made?

You don't actually believe this, or you wouldn't be reading this book. Everyone is born a baby, and babies can't speak. The "born speaker" myth is an alibi for not attempting. People who believe it simply want to save their face from the disgrace speech blunder may bring. It is a fact that practice makes perfect.

A speaker is one who speaks to others for a reason. When you were two or three years old and first said, "Mommy, I need a glass of water," you were making a speech. Actually you've been making speeches from the time you could talk; the difference is that you didn't treat it then as what you now dreadfully call "speech."

You can become a good speaker if you have these tools:

1. A voice.
2. Basic language construction: i.e., a working vocabulary and grammar.
3. Something to say.
4. A need to express your ideas to others.

You have been using these tools for years. You have been saying

something to others, several times everyday, and under these conditions, you call it “conversation.” Conversation is talking to a few. Public speaking is, essentially, talking to a larger group.

Your audience is merely a group of individuals. You can talk easily with one or two individuals. So just think of public speaking as talking to individuals all at the same time - or talking to the group as to one person.

Can You Conquer Fear?

There are three solutions to help you reduce fear and make it work for rather than against you:

1. Accept it as nature’s way of helping you.

You don’t need to be terrified of fear when you accept it as nature’s way of protecting you and helping you. Recognize it. Don’t condemn yourself for having it. We all feel fear. Whether your fear stems from the thought of standing alone by yourself on stage before hundreds of people, or even from the thought of getting upstage to speak, *keep in mind that you are responding normally.*

Athletes are nervous before an important competition; musicians tremble before a concert; performers experience stage fright. Seasoned speakers never get rid of apprehension before speaking, nor do they want to. An experienced actor once said: “I used to have butterflies in my stomach every time I stand in front of an audience. Now that I know how to make them work for me, they fly in formation.”

Knowing that you are subject to a normal and common human response, you can drive out the strongest factor contributing to your fear: *You can stop condemning yourself for being unusual.*

Psychologists tell us that fear is not the real obstacle. We feel awkward or ineffective because we think fear is improper. It is not fear itself but your feeling about it that disappoints you. Franklin Roosevelt's note on the speech of Henry Thoreau sums it up: "We have nothing to fear but fear itself." As soon as you know this and recognize it, you are on your way to self-mastery.

Fear is nature's way of preparing you for danger, real or fancied. When you face a new or different circumstance, or when many are watching you and you don't want to mess up, nature does something great to help you, if you recognize the help rather than being disappointed by it. Nature adds the adrenaline in your blood stream. It speeds up your pulse and your responses. It increases your blood pressure to make you more alert. It provides you with the extra energy you need for doing your best. Without the anxiety there would be no extra effort. Identify fear as a friend. Recognize it and use it well.

2. Analyze Your Fear.

Your next step in mastering fear is easy and effortless. Analyze your type of fear. Fear is a tool for protection. What are you protecting? You are worried about your self-esteem. In public speaking there are only three dangers to self-esteem:

- a) Fear of yourself – fear of performing poorly or not pleasing your self-esteem.
- b) Fear of your audience – fear they may tease or laugh at you.
- c) Fear of your material – fear you have nothing sensible to say or you are not well prepared.

Fear of yourself (a) and fear of your audience (b) are very much connected. It is possible to be pleasing yourself while failing to satisfy your audience. Aiming

for audience approval is often a better alternative because, if you succeed, you are in fact also pleasing yourself.

But in aspiring to satisfy your audience you must never compromise your message. Sometimes you may have to give a message to people you know are particularly opposed to it. This calls for courage. Don't fear to disagree. Good speakers have done so and have proudly walked off the stage successfully. Honest beliefs equip a speaker and give force to the speech.

3. Make use of what you have learned.

You now know that fear, nature's secret weapon, can actually help you succeed. You found you were not really afraid of fear but of yourself, your audience, and your material. Now, use your knowledge. Here's how you can:

a. Hide your negative feelings from others. If you lack self-confidence, hide it. Letting the audience know it won't help you in any way. Never discuss it. This will just make you feel worse. Act confidently. It will rub off on you. You will look the way you feel. Ever heard of the scared boy who walked past the cemetery one night? As long as he walked casually and whistled merrily he was all right. But when he walked faster, he could not refuse the temptation to run; and when he ran, terror took over.

Don't give in. Stay calm and relaxed. Enjoy your talk and your audience.

b. Assess your condition reasonably. Think of the reasons why you were called to speak. Among other possible speakers, you were chosen. Whoever asked you had confidence in you, or you would not have been chosen.

You are thought of as a competent, good speaker. And you know your topic.
You know more about it than your listeners do.

Your assessment reveals that you are prepared to do well and that you have the benefit over your listeners. When you accept this, your confidence will show to your audience. It will make them believe in you and in your speech.

c. *Assess your audience reasonably.* They want you to do well. Listeners suffer along with a speaker who is having difficulty delivering, and they do not enjoy suffering. They would much rather react and criticize; that would give them a good time. So consider your audience rather than yourself. Win their interest, and you will be more confident, and everybody will be happy.

Another way of putting this: Focus on a good message and speech delivery. You will make the audience happy with this and you will succeed in your mission. Do the first well, and the second will follow.

d. *Assess your material reasonably.* Fear of speech material is the easiest to conquer since the solution is simple: knowledge and preparation. Knowledge and preparation dispel fear, but by themselves they do not automatically assure the delivery of a successful speech.

A good start is when you recognize you don't need to be afraid – of yourself, your audience, or your material. And as you succeed in making speeches, you will soon say, “*I can do it because I have done it often.*”

Section B:

Preparing Your Speech

Nine Basic Steps in Preparing Your Speech

1. Select your topic.
2. Determine your exact purpose.
3. Identify your speech objective/s.
4. Analyze your audience.
5. Plan and organize your main ideas.
6. Organize your introduction and conclusion.
7. Prepare an outline.
8. Prepare your visual aids effectively.
9. Practice your speech.

Chapter 06 - Picking a Topic

In some instances, speakers are given a specific topic. But, most of the time, you will be given a general type of speech with the choice of specific topic left up to you. Once you have identified what type of speech you will be making, follow these guidelines in choosing a specific topic:

- *Choose a topic you already know a lot about.* You will feel much more relaxed and confident talking about something you know about instead of browsing the Reader's Digest and selecting a topic that you know nothing about.
- *Choose a topic you are interested in discussing.* You may know a good amount about many topics but you may not be very interested in them. Avoid these topics. It is hard to interest the audience in a subject matter that doesn't interest you.
- *Choose a topic that you can make interesting and/or beneficial to your listeners.* Your audience doesn't have to be interested in your topic before you speak but they must be when you are finished speaking. If you analyze your potential listeners, you must have a somewhat good understanding of their interests.
- *Choose a topic that suits the requirements of the assignment.* Be sure you know the type of speech, the time constraints, and any other requirements, and choose your topic accordingly. You may also want to conduct a self-inventory to help you come up with possible topics. Ask yourself the following:
 - What are my intellectual and educational interests?
 - What do I like to read?

- What interesting things have I learned from television?
- What particular courses, or topics covered in courses, have specifically interested me?
- What are my career goals? What do I hope to do in my life?
- What are my favorite leisure activities and interests? What things do I do for fun that others might like to learn more about or take part in?
- What personal and social concerns are significant to me?
 - What is going on in my life that bothers or affects me?
 - What is happening outside my immediate world that is unfair, unjust, or in need of improvement?

Narrowing Down the Topic

Once you have chosen your general topic, you are ready to narrow it down on the basis of your listener's interests and needs. Here are the steps to follow in narrowing down a topic:

1. Choose potential speech topics (from self-inventory).
2. Consider situational factors.
 - *Familiarity*: Will my listeners be familiar with any information that will help me select a topic?
 - *Current events*: Can I select a topic to emphasize current events that may be of significant interest to my audience?
 - *Audience apathy*: Can I encourage my audience to be less apathetic toward vents that are totally relevant to me?
 - *Time limits*: Do I have enough time to discuss the topic sufficiently?
3. Consider audience factors.

- *Previous knowledge*: What do my listeners already know?
- *Common experiences*: What common experiences have my listeners encountered?
- *Common interests*: Where do my interests and my listeners' meet?
- *Relevant diverse factors*: How diverse are my listeners?

4. Select your tentative topic.

Some examples of narrowing down may be seen below:

GENERAL TOPIC	NARROWED DOWN	NARROWED DOWN FURTHER	NARROWED DOWN EVEN FURTHER
Career Choices	career choices of graduates of top American schools	career choices of graduates of top American schools in the last 5 years	factors affecting the career choices of MBA graduates of Wharton School of Business in the last 5 years
Southeast Asia	security problems in Southeast Asia	roots of terrorism in Southeast Asia	cooperation among governments of Southeast Asia in addressing the problems of terrorism
Housing	housing projects in the last 10 years	housing projects in City X	financing problems in the housing projects in City X

Determining Your Exact Purpose

The basic purposes of public speaking are to inform, to instruct, to entertain, and to persuade. These four are not mutually exclusive of one

another. A speaker may have several purposes in mind. It may be to inform and also to entertain. Another speaker may want to inform and at the same time convince, stimulate, or persuade. Although content, organization, and delivery may have two or more purposes, most have just one central purpose.

Speeches that *inform* offer accurate data, objective information, findings, and on occasions, interpretations of these findings. Those that *instruct* teach the audience a process or a procedure based on information provided in the speech. Those that *entertain* provide pleasure and enjoyment that make the audience laugh or identify with delightful situations. Finally, speeches that *persuade* try to convince the audience to take a certain stand on an issue, an idea, or a belief, by appealing first to reason through logical arguments and evidences, and to the emotions by moving statements.

Identifying the Objectives of the Speech

An objective is more limited and specific than a purpose. It may target behavior or thought. What does the message communicated in the speech expect to accomplish? What response does it invite from the audience? Does it want to convince the listeners to support a cause by joining a movement? Does it want the listeners to buy a certain product or use a certain service? Does it want the listeners to modify their behavior through a process presented? Does it want to move the listeners to laughter and later to reflection about a significant social issue? Does it want to provide accurate and credible information to lead them to a decision? As answers to these questions are given, speech objectives can be identified and stated. Here are some examples:

Topic	Purpose	Objective/s
A Call for Support for Dependence of Old Age	to persuade	The speech will seek pledges of effort, time, or money to help establish an institution to support dependency of old age.
Why My Goal in Life Is to Become a Lawyer	to inform	After hearing my speech, the audience will understand why my dream is to become a lawyer.

Chapter 07 - Knowing Your Audience

The more you know about your audience, the better you will be able to connect your topic to them. Audience analysis is not difficult. It basically requires knowing your audience well so you can organize your verbal, visual, and vocal delivery to suit their situations. When analyzing an audience, you aren't trying to deceive, control, or force them; you are just making sure your speech suits them and keeps them interested.

Speeches need to be audience-centered; so audience analysis is a must. Design presentation – content, organization, and delivery – is influenced by the kind of audience expected at the presentation so make sure they understand the meaning and significance of the message. For effectiveness, a speaker should know the following:

1. Who are the listeners?

Try to take note of the general age, range, male-female ratio, educational background, occupation or profession, race, ethnic background, religion, geographical or cultural environment, civil status, income level and assets, group and organizational memberships, etc. of your audience.

2. What do they want from you?

Are they there to receive instructions? Do they want current issues explained? Do they also want to have fun? Do they need information? Have they come on their own or were they required to attend?

Voluntary audiences are likely to be homogeneous; they have things in common. Classroom students make up an involuntary audience; they are heterogeneous. They vary in many ways.

3. What is the size of the audience?

How large is the audience? Is it an audience of 20 or 200? In a classroom, you would be speaking to around thirty students. But in other settings, you may be speaking to a smaller group (like a buzz group) or a bigger group (like a rally).

Audience size may add to anxiety and may affect speech delivery, more so in the use of visual aids, the type of language you use, and so on. Overall, you want to speak more formally with larger groups.

4. Where is the venue of the presentation?

Will the venue be a room? What kind of room will it be - a conference room, a hall perhaps, or a small meeting room?

When you speak in a classroom, you are speaking in a familiar, comfortable setting. You know whether there is an overhead projector, whether the lights can be dimmed, and so on.

As you do speeches, you will learn more about other settings for public speaking, like outdoor stages, or mall and hotel lounges. You may be curious to know how it feels speaking while standing at floor level. Try to learn about podiums, technological support, microphones, the sound system, and so on.

Audience analysis can be done before the presentation, though most times it happens during the presentation itself. A sensitive speaker receives a great deal of information from listeners as the talk is being given. Often, the cues are

nonverbal, such as attentiveness, facial expressions, restlessness, passiveness, or apathy. When these signs show, he can be flexible enough to adjust or modify to do a better job. Shifting places, gestures, voice changes, or maybe even audience involvement can prove to be useful. Here's an example of audience analysis:

Topic: A Call for Support for Dependence of Old Age

Purpose: To Persuade

Objective/s: The speech will seek pledges of effort, time, or money to help establish an institution to support dependency of old age.

Audience Analysis:

1. Who are the listeners?	<input type="checkbox"/> Heads/officers of civic, religious and business communities in the city <input type="checkbox"/> Almost equal ratio of men and women who are professionals, with high educational attainments and high earning capacity, leaders in their specific fields, dominantly Christian audience with 65% Catholics, 85% married, American and American-Chinese, some Asians <input type="checkbox"/> Active in social and civic works <input type="checkbox"/> In touch with current political, social, and religious issues <input type="checkbox"/> In touch with prevailing business and government situations
2. What do they want from you?	<input type="checkbox"/> Basically interested in a topic that is relevant to their group or organization <input type="checkbox"/> Desire to get more information about dependency of old age, and to know more about what the speaker is going to propose/request <input type="checkbox"/> Want enough bases to decide whether or not to support Came in response to a formal invitation
3. What is the size of the audience?	<input type="checkbox"/> 50 people
4. Where is the venue of the presentation?	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium-sized case room with fixed upholstered seats in a semi-circle <input type="checkbox"/> 2-ft elevation in the front for the speaker <input type="checkbox"/> Very good acoustics <input type="checkbox"/> Electronic devices for presentations

Section C:

Developing Your Speech

Chapter 08 - Organizing Your Speech

A lot of speakers cautiously choose their topics, select a concrete purpose, look for good supporting resources, and yet never experience success in public speaking. It may be partly due to misfortune, but it is mostly attributable to how they have outlined and organized their thoughts.

It is like writing an essay. You need to start with a thesis and decide the main points that will clarify or develop it. Organizing, therefore, is stating the thesis of the speech and listing down the main ideas that will be used to support it.

Organizing the Introduction of Your Speech

The beginning of your speech is essential. It gives your audience their first impression of your subject, purpose, and main point. But your beginning must do more than help them to understand your speech. It must also catch their interest. It is not sufficient to say, “Today I am going to talk about why the school needs a new basketball gym.” It’s difficult to captivate the audience using this statement. The introduction needs to be planned so that listeners want to pay attention to your speech, consider you as a credible speaker, and have some notion of your speech’s focus and objective.

A lot of good speeches fall short because of their confusing and boring introductions. If you do not get off to a good start then chances are, your audience may “tune you out,” like a radio listener who simply changes channels to get rid of silly programs. Just because people sit as part of the audience does not mean they intend to listen – except that you should make it impossible for them not to.

Effective introduction includes capturing the attention of your audience. When you get up to speak, the audience will usually give you their full attention. But that attention is short. Below are ways of maintaining audience attention:

- *Establish common ground.* Listeners are more likely to pay attention to speakers with whom they share common experiences, problems, or goals.
- *A startling statement or statistic.* Use intriguing or startling statements or statistics that arouse curiosity. For example, “950,000 people in the Middle East may not be able to eat three meals a day in the year 2010.” or “Dinosaurs aren’t extinct. Every time you see a songbird, you’re looking at a survivor from the Paleozoic era.”
- *A story or a brief anecdote.* An interesting story – whether it is emotional, humorous, puzzling, or intriguing – commands attention. The story can be factual or fancied. It can be a personal experience, or it can be something you have read. For example, “An interesting thing happened on my way here today.” or “The first time I jumped out of a plane...”
- *A rhetorical or actual question.* Rhetorical questions don’t ask for immediate responses. Instead, they are aimed to get the audience thinking about an issue or concept. For example, “Did you know that you lose ten billion skin cells everyday?”
- *A quotation.* You can use the words of a famous performer, author, athlete, or singer or other renowned and highly esteemed figures to get the audience’s interest and attention immediately. For example, “When I was a small child, I heard a wise man say....”

- *Use humor.* Some speakers love to start a speech with a humorous anecdote, but you have to handle humor with care. Regardless of how funny a story is, it must be appropriate to the point you want to make. Merely telling a few jokes is not a good way to introduce a speech, and a joke that falls flat is humiliating. Humor should never be rude and should never be intended to ridicule someone or something, so you have to be cautious.

You can use several of the above simultaneously. For instance, you might tell an interesting story that also establishes common ground and piques curiosity.

Pausing after telling a compelling story, asking a rhetorical question, or sharing a memorable quotation may help audience members reflect what you are about to say. In whatever technique you use, be sure it attracts in the sense that a magnet attracts. The important factor here is capturing and maintaining the listeners' interest and attention.

An effective introduction gets attention and generates audience interest on the topic. It also creates appropriate expectations by preparing the listeners to receive the message. What three distinct parts make up the introduction?

- a) **The opener** – This is the first sentence. It can be a quotation, a startling statement or statistic, or a brief anecdote. This opening should be short, interesting, and appropriate to the topic.
- b) **The topic** – This is simply stating the title of the speech. Say it directly as: “I have been asked to speak about _____.” or “I have chosen to speak to you about _____.”

- c) **The agenda** – This briefly explains your points of view or what you will be discussing.

Here then is an example of an introduction:

(1) Good afternoon, everyone. (2) It's a pleasure to be here with you today. (3) I have been asked to introduce myself and been given 3 minutes to do this. (4) There is not much I can tell you about myself in that length of time; so, what I will do instead is to start with my topic which is *The Increasing Involvement of Women in Social Issues Today*. (5) I feel very strongly that women's response to current social issues are evident in, one, the way she deals with home and domesticity, two, her participation or support of community-based groups for change, and three, her involvement in national issues through a stronger sense of awareness of these issues.

Sentences 1-3 are the **openers**, sentence 4 is the **topic** and sentence 5 is the **agenda**.

In effect, the introduction is brief, direct, and should get the audience's attention while preparing them for what is to follow. In an interesting manner, an introduction clearly establishes the topic and sets a guide on what the audience can expect from the speech.

Organizing the Body of Your Speech

At this point you're set to organize your main ideas and provide visual and verbal supports. The body of your speech is its meat, and you should put the major points you want to expound in this portion of your speech. These main points should be simple, declarative sentences so that they are easily recognized and remembered when people leave your speech. These points need support,

elaboration, clarification, and evidence. These can come in the form of specific and concrete details, comparisons, examples, and illustrations.

There are several steps you can do to make your main points memorable:

1. Limit yourself to no more than three to five main points.
2. Keep your main points brief and use parallel structures when possible.
3. Arrange your material so that you cover your most important point either first or last.
4. Make your main points memorable by creating your own rhyme or acronym when possible.

Organizing the Conclusion of Your Speech

A lot of speakers don't actually conclude their speeches – they merely stop talking. Others may fall through their concluding paragraph, decreasing the success of the speech.

The concluding paragraph is very essential. It gradually ushers the audience back to an overall assessment of the discussion. Of course, a competent discussion in the body will give the speaker more leeway to device a conclusion to this effect.

No speech is complete without a concluding remark since the conclusion ensures all ideas were understood and remembered. It provides the needed closure. It's very likely that some might have missed, have misunderstood, or have forgotten a point (perhaps they were unfocused or they were daydreaming for a while). Without a conclusion, we cannot correct these problems. A conclusion is also essential because listeners like and need closure. Without it, they may feel like vacationers left adrift after a pleasure cruise – much of the enjoyment created by the cruise is lost.

Conclusion is particularly significant if you have a question-and-answer period at the last part of your speech. Provide a brief summary before the question-and-answer and another one after it to tie up any loose ends and to redirect attention back to the main points presented in your speech.

But like the beginning, the ending should be relatively brief, preferably not more than one-seventh of the whole speech. Most devices suggested for beginnings are appropriate for endings. The shorter you make your ending, the more forceful it will seem to your audience, and the more easily they will remember it.

Here are some techniques to make effective conclusions:

1. Summarize what you have told your audience – your main points and ideas.
2. Issue a challenge to your audience.
3. Make an appeal to your audience for action.
4. Visualize the future.
5. Include memorable quotations.
6. Refer to the introduction, i.e. return the audience to your opening statement.

Since conclusions are so essential and potentially memorable, they should (1) be brief, (2) never ramble, (3) not introduce new information, and (4) be constructed carefully. As you can see, the conclusion of a speech is too crucial to take lightly. If you make your conclusion carefully, then you will end your speech with a strategic close and produce a final positive effect.

If you see that time is running out, don't remove your conclusion. It is better to shorten your final point (or even leave it out completely) than to exclude your conclusion. If you time your speech while practicing, you won't have to be bothered

about time problem. The time to conclude is when the audience wants more and not when the speaker has exhausted them.

Chapter 09 - Outlining Your Speech

What is your reaction the moment you hear the word outline? If your instant reaction is a negative one, perhaps you have never actually learned how to outline properly, or maybe your previous experiences with writing have re-established less-than-fond memories. Whatever the reason, you are not alone – a lot of people hate outlining. This hatred is unfortunate, because when applied properly, outlines can save you much time and can help you develop a great deal of better speech.

Basic Principles of Outlining

Outlining will not only help you see the general idea of your speech. It will also help you subdivide the body of your message into sub-topics according to the order of their significance. Outlining always helps - sometimes a little, sometimes a lot – but it always helps.

I. What Is an Outline?

- A. An outline is a system of note-taking that shows how somebody has organized a group of ideas.
- B. It also shows how these ideas are related to one another.

II. Steps To Follow When Outlining

- A. Try to discover the most important idea or the main idea.
 - 1. You should write this as a title or thesis statement.
 - 2. Think in exact terms when outlining.
- B. Look for major ways to develop or subdivide the main point. (This will provide you with the major headings of your outline.) Consider signals or transition words to indicate:

1. Chronological order
 2. Enumeration
 3. Cause-effect relationships
 4. General to specific/easy to difficult
 5. Comparison-contrast
- C. Try to stress details.
1. Stress what you think is important or complicated and in need of more detailed explanation.
 2. Always try to connect these details to the major points.

III. Notation In Outlining

- A. The size of the indentation and the notation used are determined by the importance of the idea.
1. The most important or primary ideas are placed to the farthest left and are noted with roman numerals (I, II, III, etc.).
 2. The next most important ideas (the major details) are placed below the primary ideas and are noted with capital letters (A, B, C, etc.).
 3. The minor details are placed to the right below the major details and are noted with plain numbers (1, 2, 3, etc.).
- B. All ideas of the same importance should have equal indentation, with all major or main ideas being assigned with roman numerals and being farthest to the left.

- C. You may write items in an outline as either phrases or sentences, but the entire outline should be one or the other. In other words, don't mix phrases and sentences in the same outline.
- D. Always capitalize the first word of each item in an outline.
- E. Always place a period after each notation symbol (numbers and letters) in an outline.

IV. What are the Advantages of Outlining?

- A. It is easier to identify problems.
- B. It is less difficult to ask for sensible evaluations.
- C. There is less temptation to memorize your speech.
- D. Flexibility is increased.

Section D:

Presenting Your Speech

Chapter 10 - Preparing Your Visual Aids Effectively

One of the easiest methods to guarantee a successful and effective speech is to use interesting and powerful visual aids. Unfortunately, a lot of speakers either don't use visual aids at all or use overcrowded, difficult-to-read visuals that make it almost impossible for the audience to understand the visuals' content, to listen to the talk, and to take down notes all together. Poorly designed visual aids compel listeners to decide between listening to the speaker or reading the visual aid – and you know which they will select. Thus, when preparing your visuals, remember that if listeners will take much longer than seven seconds to grasp the content, they will possibly fall into a reading mode. When listeners are thrown into a reading mode, they hear almost nothing the speaker says.

Audiovisual aids may be used to reinforce, explain, or further clarify the main points. These aids range from simple flipcharts or graphs, to slides or videotapes. Communication effectiveness is frequently enhanced by the use of more than one medium; and where the presenter opts for visual aids, they must show the relevance of their use to the message.

Functions of Visual Aids

Visual aids, when used effectively, can help a speaker communicate better and can help listeners understand better. Visual aids engage the senses (what we see and what we hear) and help clarify, support, and strengthen the message. Visual aids are so effective that most speakers use them.

Let's consider the ways in which visual aids can improve your presentation. Visual aids can:

- provide support and emphasize main ideas
- facilitate understanding
- encourage emotional involvement
- aid with delivery
- add to your credibility
- decrease your nervousness because they give you something to do with your hands, they draw audience attention away from you, and they make it almost impossible to forget what you want to say.

Listeners also benefit from the effective use of visual aids. Such aids can:

- help separate important from less important information
- add interest and color
- improve audience memory

Chapter 11 - Delivering Your Message Effectively

After all the preparations that go into your speech, you eventually present yourself to the audience. You may have spent days or even weeks to analyze your potential listeners, select your topic, organize and rehearse your speech. But you will finish your speech delivery in just a few minutes. Nevertheless, the actual delivery is the highlight and finale of the public speaking experience.

Delivery is one of the most obvious parts of public speaking, and one that attracts the initial attention of both the speaker and the audience.

If one were to ask a listener what he thought of a speech that had just been delivered, the reply would be something like: “I think she has a very pleasant voice;” “I think he should have moved around more;” and “I couldn’t always hear her.”

Obviously, delivery is not everything in public speaking. A good delivery cannot compensate for a poorly prepared message, or one lacking in substance. Despite that, most of us know the significance of delivery, and at times it scares us. We may feel pretty at ease preparing the speech, conducting the research, organizing and outlining our ideas, and so on.

However, when faced with the actual “standing and delivering,” we may become very nervous. The more we know about delivery, the better our chances of doing it successfully. Delivery may not be everything in speech development, but it is a very obvious and important part.

Take for instance, the case of a famous talk-show host - Oprah Winfrey. Oprah's show still leads the talk-show ratings. How does she do it? She is enthusiastic, interesting, powerful, persuasive, caring, and – most important of all – believable. She appears as if she is speaking directly to each of her audience; she is real, and she is believable. She does more than just organize convincing ideas; she presents her thoughts in a believable way. She knows how to connect with her audience by communicating with them verbally, visually, and vocally. And so can you.

Your delivery isn't more essential than what you have to say, but without good delivery your listeners may never hear what you have to say. To make your presentation believable, you must practice.

Visual Delivery

Because the first impression comes more from what the audience see than from what they hear, we will first talk about visual delivery – particularly, how to appear to your audience. As a public speaker, your physical appearance, posture, facial expressions, eye contact, body movements, and gestures all influence your audience's perception.

The audience judges your **appearance** as a hint to your position, credibility, and knowledge. Unless you are sure about what is suitable for the audience and the occasion, the safest thing to do is to dress conservatively.

Good posture is nothing more than standing straight and having your “chest out” and “stomach in.” Proper posture makes the speaker look and feel comfortable, and aids voice projection and poise.

Move around occasionally. **Body movement** can add interest, energy, and confidence to your presentation. To add emphasis, try moving at the beginning of an idea or at a transition between ideas. If you are using a projector and transparencies, be sure what is shown coincides with what you are saying.

Gestures are movements of the hands, arms, head, and the shoulders to help you communicate. They play an important role in public speaking, but they must enhance communication and not hinder it. Try making the gestures when rehearsing a speech. Practice before a mirror, even to the point of exaggerating. Then adapt your gestures to a point where they are appropriate and natural. However, gestures should be spontaneous. Too many gestures may distract the audience.

One kind of gesture is **facial expression**. This reveals your attitudes and feelings. Let your face glow with happiness or burn with enthusiasm. Avoid wearing the deadpan poker face that reveals nothing. This doesn't mean that you will always give vent to your feelings in a bombastic and extravagant manner. A good speaker expresses views and feelings with appropriate restraint.

Eye contact is a very important factor in getting and holding attention. Look at your listeners directly, not above them or at the floor or ceiling or out of the window; otherwise, you lose your contact with your audience and their attention strays off.

Here are some questions you might consider in order to guide your visual delivery:

- Do I gesture enough? Too much?
- Does my body movement reinforce the flow of my speech?
- Are my gestures disturbing in any way?

- Am I depending so much on any one gesture?
- Does my face express the meaning or feeling I am trying to convey?
- Are there different gestures, body movements, or facial expressions that might express my intended meaning more effectively?

Vocal Delivery

We all like to have an effective voice. Voice is essential in communication; only through it can any speech delivery be accomplished.

An effective voice is conversational, natural, and enthusiastic. It is pleasant to hear without even intending to. The audience will listen more if you speak as you do in a normal conversation.

Sounds have four fundamental characteristics: volume, pitch, rate, and quality. If any of these is faulty, distraction results. Important announcements are uttered in a slow manner and with a relatively low pitch, whereas jokes or other light remarks are uttered in a rapid fashion with a relatively higher pitch.

1. Volume

A well-modulated voice is important to be an effective speaker. Many people have very soft voices, which can be due to shyness or lack of training or lack of practice in voice projection. People with soft voices are often regarded as dull. A person who wants to develop an attractive, pleasing, and dynamic personality should undergo training in voice projection.

There is no hard and fast rule about the degree of loudness that should be used on different occasions, but an effective voice must be as loud as the specific speaking situation requires. If you are speaking to a group, every member of the audience with normal hearing and concentration should be able to understand

your statements without straining their ears and without getting irritated because of an excessively loud voice. Good speakers fit voice and actions to the words used, to the situation, and to their personalities. An important principle in speaking clearly is that consonants should be pronounced well. Vowels are easier to pronounce, yet consonants give intelligibility to speech.

A voice that is dominated by intellect rather than emotion tends to be moderate in pitch as well as in loudness. This does not imply that intellectual efforts are devoid of feeling. It just implies that intellectual efforts accompanied by vocalization are not normally characterized by the exaggerated range and intensity of feeling exhibited in emotional behavior alone.

2. Pitch

Pitch is the general level on a musical scale of the voice in speech. If a person is habitually tense, the voice is often in a higher pitch level than that of a habitually relaxed person. Pitch may either be high, medium, or low; or we may use such terms as soprano, alto, baritone, or bass for vocal pitch.

Natural pitch in speaking is important for an effective voice. One who speaks unnaturally will be ineffective, disagreeable, and uncomfortable.

3. Rate

There are three rates or tempos in speaking – slow, average, and fast. A markedly slow speaking rate indicates solemnity, sorrow, or depression. A marked increase in rate is suggestive of happiness, joy, elation, or anger. Words or phrases that are spoken more slowly and more emphatically are considered more important and more intellectually significant than rapidly pronounced words.

However, a sustained, unchanging rate of speaking is discouraged regardless of feeling, mood, or purpose because it is monotonous.

Changes in rate can be achieved by the rate of articulation or by the use of pauses. The use of pauses is a very useful technique for separating or grouping phrases, for creating dramatic effects, and for emphasizing ideas. As a general rule, the use of a comma is a sign for the reader or speaker to pause. But in some instances, long sentences without commas should also be divided according to thought content by a pause to give time for breathing and for the listener to grasp fully what is being read or said.

Dramatic effect can be achieved by speakers who pause after a rising inflection, thereby creating suspense; after which the expected outcome follows to the satisfaction of their listeners. Effective speakers, however, should avoid pauses showing that they don't know what to say next. Speakers who know how to pause with intent and without fear are respected speakers.

4. Quality

Voice characteristics (or voice timbre) and voice attitudes (or voice color) come under the general term of voice quality. A person's voice can be categorized as pleasant or unpleasant depending upon its timbre and color or quality. What is voice quality? This term is hard to identify and no attempt will be made to define it here except to show its relations to other factors and how to achieve this. Vocal quality is related to resonance and to the avoidance of undesirable vocal aspects such as excessive nasality and breathing. It is also related to feeling and mood.

Verbal Delivery

Besides being greatly conscious of your visual delivery (you and your visual aids) and vocal delivery (your manner of speaking), the audience will focus on your verbal delivery (the language you use and the way you construct sentences). Listeners prefer speakers who use a more informal language than what is usual for written reports. For instance, in oral speech, it is more appropriate to use short, simple sentences, and it is not always required to use complete sentences. Moreover, it is absolutely acceptable to use personal pronouns such as *I, we, you,* and *us* and contractions such as *I'm* and *don't* – forms that are frequently avoided in formal written reports.

One mistake is to use long or extremely technical terms or jargon to impress the audience. Even though you are speaking in a professional setting, don't think that your listeners use or understand the same technical words or jargon that you do. The best language is *vivid and colorful* (paints a picture for the audience), *concrete and specific* (gives details), and *simple* (is easy to understand).

Putting your ideas into simple, easy-to-understand language that suits the contexts of your audience and is vivid, specific, and bias-free can be difficult at the start. As you practice on the essentials of delivery, however, remember the rules discussed here and your language and style of speaking will progress.

Methods of Delivery

There are four methods of delivering a speech: impromptu, manuscript reading, memorization, and extemporaneous.

1. The Impromptu Speech

Of the four methods, the impromptu speech requires the least preparation. With very little advance notice, the speaker is asked to speak for a few minutes on a specific subject.

Try to apply the following principles or rules in giving an impromptu speech.

1. Formulate the central idea. Don't try to discuss the entire subject. Limit yourself to a specific aspect that you can discuss in a few minutes. *Be sure you know the idea you want to present before you start.*
2. Open your talk with a sentence that says something. Don't be apologetic. Begin with a bang, and go straight to the point.
3. The body of your speech must be unified. You can give examples, illustrations, comparisons, and contrasts to help explain your key sentences. Be as concrete and specific as possible.
4. Conclude on a strong note. You can repeat your key sentences, but rephrase them. Restate them briefly but clearly.

Here are other guidelines with regards to giving an impromptu speech:

- Expect the possibility that you might be called on to speak, so make some preparations early.
- Maximize whatever small amount of preparation time you are given to your benefit.
- Practice active listening.
- Manage speech anxiety by reminding yourself that no one expects you to be perfect when you are asked to give impromptu speeches.
- Use the fundamental principles of speech organization.

- Consider the impromptu speech as giving a golden opportunity to practice and develop your delivery.

2. The Manuscript Speech

A manuscript or read speech is one that is written out and read word for word during delivery. When the occasion is a solemn or historic one, the read speech is the most appropriate. Persons of prominence read their speeches for accuracy and precision. This kind of speech lacks spontaneity and naturalness that the impromptu speech or the extemporaneous speech has. The speaker reading the speech should maintain rapport with the audience.

Here are some guidelines in giving a manuscript speech:

- Use a manuscript for the right reasons.
- Use good oral style.
- Practice intensively.
- Look for opportunities to move and gesture.
- Use your voice effectively.
- Remain flexible.

3. The Memorized Speech

This method of delivery is good only for elocution pieces. Like the read speech, it lacks spontaneity and naturalness. In addition, human memory might fail the speaker during the delivery and can cause great embarrassment. This type of speech should not be used in public speaking classes.

Here are some guidelines in giving a memorized speech:

- Stay focused on your specific purpose and on the key ideas you want to convey.

- Speak in the moment.
- Practice, practice, practice!

4. The Extemporaneous Speech

This method is recommended for public speaking classes. It is not read nor memorized. It has spontaneity and naturalness. The speaker also has time to prepare the ideas embodied in it, though the language is formulated at the moment of delivery. This speech is also practiced but the words and arrangement of words are changed to something better and more effective. In rehearsing, the speaker is simply guided by a mental outline. If notes are held, these simply contain quotations from famous authors and speakers that help expound the ideas. The speaker doesn't memorize the speech but knows from memory the order of ideas to achieve unity, organization, and clarity in speech.

An extemporaneous speech:

- Requires careful preparation.
- Is based on a key word outline.
- Allows the speaker to remain direct, involved, and flexible.

Practicing Your Speech

At times, most speakers read through the outline silently a few times and think they are all set for a delivery. Nothing could be farther from the truth. If you have not practiced your speech aloud several times, most likely you are not prepared to speak. There is a great difference between reading about how to deliver an effective speech and actually doing it. The only way to convert what you have read into what you can do is to *practice* it. Keep in mind that your objective is to

sound confident and be natural – just like talking to friends. If you have been envisioning yourself giving a successful speech, you have taken a crucial first move towards confident delivery. Good or bad speeches are a matter of habit. Habits are formed and developed through constant practice.

Feeling confident while speaking is one of the advantages of practicing.

The best outcomes are achieved if you prepare in two ways:

1. By envisioning yourself giving an effective and successful speech, and,
2. By actually practicing your speech aloud.

Here are pointers when practicing your speech.

- First, read through your speech silently several times until you are ready to begin. However, doing this is not practicing speech delivery. It may help you check for problems of organization and may help you familiarize yourself with the material, but it won't help in any way with your vocal and visual delivery and will only help a little with your verbal delivery.
- Practice delivering your speech aloud with your notes and outline. There is no alternative for practicing out loud – standing on your feet, using your notes and visual aids, practicing your gestures and eye contact, and speaking aloud.
- Stand straight, if possible, before a full-length mirror placed at a distance where your audience would be.
- For the first rehearsals, use your outline until you are sure of your main points and their order.
- After the first rehearsal, pause and ask yourself if the order you followed is the best order of ideas possible, if the material you gathered is enough,

if the way you expressed your ideas is the best, and if your choice of words is appropriate.

- Practice your speech aloud all the way through – noting parts that are rough, rereading your notes, and then practicing once more.
- Divide the speech into parts and practice major sections, such as the introduction, several times repeatedly.
- Repeat the practice session as many times as needed until you have gained self-confidence and self-assurance, taking note of the proper enunciation and pronunciation of your vowels and consonants, appropriate pausing and phrasing, stress, optimum pitch, and volume.
 - When you are reasonably sure of your major headings and subtopics and their order, you may set aside your outline and practice with only your notes. (Notes here mean saying quotations from famous authors and speakers that you would like to quote to drive home a point.)
- Always take breaks. Avoid practicing so much at one time that you begin to lose your energy, voice, or concentration.
- Practice alone at first. Record (either audio or video) your speech and play it back in order to get feedback on your vocal delivery. Avoid dissecting your delivery. Concentrate on major concerns.
 - If possible, visit the room where you will speak and practice using the equipment there or practice in a room similar to the one in which you will be speaking. If your practice room does not have the equipment necessary for using your visuals, simulate handling them. If you are giving a manuscript speech, make sure that the manuscript is double- or triple-spaced in 14 or 16-point type. Place manuscript pages into a stiff

binder. Practice holding the binder high enough that you can glance down at the manuscript without having to bob your head.

- When you begin to feel comfortable with your speech, practice in front of a small audience (friends or family members). Ask them for specific comments and feedback on your verbal, visual, and vocal delivery. Practice making direct eye contact and using gestures. If you have a video camera, let a friend film you so that you can observe yourself. If you discover any awkward spots in your speech, decide how to modify the speech to smooth them out.
- Over a period of time, practice your speech over again several times, all the way through, but guard against memorization. Note that practice doesn't mean memorize.
- Make sure to time yourself several times. If your speech is too long, make appropriate cuts. For example, you might cut a portion that is less important, use fewer illustrations, edit long quotations, or plan to tell the audience that you will be glad to address an issue more fully during the question-and-answer period. Note that, if your speech is too long or too short, you may violate the audience's expectations and damage your credibility.
- At least once before the actual speech (two or three times would be better), practice using your visual aids with all the needed equipment. Videotape yourself if possible, or ask a friend to observe one of your final practices.
- Try to get enough sleep the night before your speech. On the day of the speech, get to the venue early so that you can compose yourself. Check

to see that your notes and visuals are in the proper order, and read through your outline one last time.

Bear in mind that no one expects you to be perfect. If you commit a mistake, correct it if necessary and proceed. Then forget it. If you have practiced until you feel comfortable with your speech and have envisioned yourself giving an effective speech, you should feel enthusiastic and confident.

Response to Audience Questions

The key to successful question-and-answer periods is to actually know your topic and expect questions from the audience. One of the most frustrating things about speaking is having to eliminate so much vital information (both personal and research-based) from your speech because of time constraints. But, if you are preparing a question-and-answer period to go with your speech, it is almost impossible to know everything about your topic. The more you know, the better your answers will be.

Besides knowing your topic, expect several questions that you think your audience may ask and prepare one or two visual aids to use when answering these questions. Before preparing entirely new visuals, see if one or more overlays (for instance, one with a line graph that contains new information) could be included to a visual that you want to use in your speech. The overlays would be used only during the question-and-answer period. Certainly, it's always possible that none of these questions will be asked. But just in case, you can impress your audience tremendously.

The following suggestions may help you with your question-and-answer period. If you conduct audience questions well, you can make your message more convincing.

- Listen attentively to each question asked.
- If appropriate, repeat the question before answering it so that everyone can hear it and keep track of what is going on.
- Rephrase any confusing or negative questions in a clear and positive way.
- Think a moment before answering each question. If you don't know the answer, say so, and refer the questioner to someone in the audience who does know. Or, tell the person that it's a good question and that you will find the answer and let that person know in the next meeting.
- Do not allow one person to dominate the forum period.
- If you think a question is irrelevant or will take too long to answer, thank the person for the question and mention that you will talk with that individual personally about it after the period.
- Don't try to fake your way through a response.
- Don't argue or get angry or defensive while answering questions. What you say during the question-and-answer period will influence the audience's overall judgment of your credibility and your speech.
- If appropriate, actively encourage listeners to participate.
- If you expect a hostile audience, avoid a question-and-answer period in any way possible. If not, mention in your introduction that there will be a short question-and-answer period at the end of your speech and ask the audience to write out questions during the speech. After your initial

conclusion, collect the questions, select three or four good ones, and answer them – ignoring the less desirable ones.

- Watch your time, and end the period with a final conclusion that refocuses audience attention and puts a pleasing closure on your speech.

Chapter 12 - Final Questions

Q: How do I manage fear, apprehension, stage fright, and speech anxiety?

A: Gradually. These are very usual situations even for experienced speakers. Increased nervousness and rapid heartbeat before a speech are the coping mechanisms of the body. The more experienced you become, the better prepared you will be. Every one of us experiences this so it is good to breathe out the accumulated carbon dioxide in your lungs and breathe deeply before you begin your speech. Beginning your speech slowly helps decrease nervousness.

Q: How do I capture and maintain the listener's attention and interest?

A: Remember the following:

- Establish eye contact with the audience.
- Do not talk if someone is walking down the aisle or if there is audience movement.
- Make appropriate pauses for the audience to catch their breath.
- Use interesting and powerful visual aids.
- Talk from personal experience and tell stories.
- Make your speech concise.

Q: How do I know when the listeners are bored and inattentive?

A: Observe the following:

- A lot of listeners sit with their arms folded.

- Vacant looks – no smiles or nodding of the head.
- Most of the people are yawning.
- Polite coughs which are more than usual.
- Nonverbal gestures like audience frequently looking at their watches, biting their nails, shuffling their feet, looking at each other, and worse, starting to exit the venue.

Q:How do I develop my self-confidence?

A: Practice. Practice is the key. Look for every chance to give a speech. The more you face the audience, the more you will develop self-confidence. Begin with very short speeches that last three to four minutes. Always bear in mind that a short speech can barely go wrong. Impromptu speeches make good practice. Concentrate and be natural. Do not try to pretend to be someone else. Master your topic. Believe in yourself. If you don't, no one else will.

Q: How much information must I gather for a speech?

A: Your experience is your guide. Some need 60 minutes of information for a 5-minute speech. You will have to read widely. At times you have to conduct some research. The most important information is your personal experience.

Q: Can I memorize a speech?

A: Yes, you can. But don't. Never memorize a speech. You are bound to miss out a line or two and worse, your speech will likely be insincere. Your listeners will discover anyway. Memorizing stops you from being natural. If you like, you may memorize a specific poem or a memorable quote.

Q: Can I read a speech?

A: Yes, you can. But don't. That is the best technique to bore a listener. The only instance you read a speech is when you do it on behalf of someone else. Even when you do that, make it brief or summarize it. At the end of the summary, give out the entire speech in the form of a handout. The written language and the spoken language are different forms of expression. What is beautifully written may not sound beautiful when it is spoken.

Q: Can I use notes during a speech?

A: Yes, you can. But be sure that they don't appear bulky. The worst thing a speaker can do is to pull out pages and pages of notes before a speech.

Preparing 3" x 5" index cards is all right. Be sure your entire speech does not go beyond seven cards. A single sheet of paper with an outline of your speech is still the best. Be sure the letters on that single sheet are big enough to read.

Q: How do I develop my speech?

A: Never talk about one idea too long. If you have three ideas, allot equal time to each. The transition from one idea to the next must be smooth. Listeners must not wait too long for the next idea.

Q: During an open forum, what do I do when a person gives a speech rather than a question?

A: It is your responsibility to interrupt and say, "Excuse me, what exactly is your question?"

Q: What do I do when I get a hostile question?

A: Be cool. Be courteous and disagree with a smile by saying, “Perhaps I was not clear.” or “It’s possible you misunderstood.”

Q:What do I do when someone has many questions in one question?

A: Answer them one by one and begin with the easiest.

And lastly...

Take time out to listen to as many speeches as possible. A good listener is a successful communicator. Don’t forget to take down notes when you listen to these speeches.

Recognize speeches that you like and those you can’t stand. Examine the speeches you like, and there you will learn useful and helpful tips to develop your speech. Examine the speeches you dislike, and there you will learn what you should prevent.

Communication is as greatly a manner of listening as it is of speaking.