

PUBLIC SPEAKING 101

Topic

Choose a topic that you are excited by. If assigned, take an angle that interests you. State this topic clearly and succinctly.

Purpose Statement

Is the general purpose to inform or to persuade? Write a purpose statement indicating exactly what you hope accomplish.

Central Idea

The central idea is a concise statement of what you expect to say. It sums up your speech in a single sentence.

Ask yourself the following questions:

- (If for an assignment) Does my purpose meet the assignment?
- Can I accomplish my purpose in the allotted time?
The average person speaks at a rate of 120 to 150 words per minute. That means that a ten- minute speech will only consist of 1200-1500 words. That is not much time to develop a very complex point/topic.
- Is the purpose relevant to my audience?
- Is the purpose too trivial or too technical for my audience?

Audience

Ask yourself the following questions:

- To whom am I speaking?
- What do I want them to know, believe, or do as a result of my speech?
- What is the most effective way of composing and presenting my speech to accomplish that goal?
- How will I gain initial credibility with my audience?
- Complete an audience analysis. Take into account: size, physical setting, disposition toward the topic (interest, knowledge, attitude), disposition toward the speaker, disposition toward the occasion

Introduction

There are four main objectives to accomplish at the beginning of a speech:

1. Get the attention and interest of your audience.
2. Reveal the topic of your speech.
3. Establish your credibility and good will.
4. Preview the body of the speech.

Tips on Preparing the Introduction:

- Keep it brief. It should not make up more than about 10 to 20 percent of your speech.
- Be on the lookout for possible introductory materials when researching. Collect good quotes, stats, and stories related to your topic.
- Be creative. Experiment with two or three different openings. To gain the favorable attention of your audience, one or more of the following are recommended: relating to the audience, showing importance of the topic, making a startling statement, arousing curiosity or suspense, using a quotation relevant to your topic, humorous anecdote, telling a dramatic story, posing a question (maybe rhetorical), or using visual aids for illustration.
- Think about the exact wording of the introduction after you have finished the body of the speech. When you know your main points it will be much easier to preface them.

Organization

- Determine the main points then carefully select and arrange the main points to form the skeleton of the speech body.
- Fill in the skeleton of main points with your supporting materials.
- Use connectives to link thoughts:

Transitions are words/phrases that indicate when a speaker has completed one thought and is moving to another.

Previews let the audience know what the speaker will discuss in more detail.

Summaries remind the listener of what s/he just heard.

Signposts are brief statements that indicate where you are in the speech.

- Follow the standard organization for presentations—tell them what you are going to tell them, tell them, tell them what you told them (preview, elaborate, summarize).
- A common sequence used in persuasive speaking is Monroe's Motivated Sequence Pattern

STEP

- ☐ Attention
- ☐ Need
- ☐ Satisfaction
- ☐ Visualization
- ☐ Action

FUNCTION

- to get audience to listen
- to get audience to feel a need or want
- to tell audience how to fill need or want
- to get audience to see benefits of solution
- to get audience to take action

IDEAL AUDIENCE RESPONSE

- "I want to hear what you have to say"
- "I agree. I have that need/want"
- "I see your solution will work"
- "This is a great idea"
- "I want it"

Tips on Preparing Main Points

- Keep main points separate.
- Try to use the same wording pattern for main points.
- Balance the amount of time devoted to main points.

Supporting Your Concepts

Tips on Using Examples:

- Use examples to clarify your ideas.
- Use examples to reinforce and evidence your ideas.
- Use examples to personalize your ideas.
- Make your examples vivid and richly textured.

Tips on Using Statistics:

- Use statistics to quantify your ideas.
- Use statistics sparingly.
- Identify the sources of your statistics. Be sure to use reliable, unbiased resources.
- Explain your statistics.
- Round off complicated statistics.
- Use visual aids to clarify statistical trends.

Conclusion

Your closing remarks are your last chance to reinforce your ideas. This final impression will linger with the audience. The conclusion should do two things:

1. Let the audience know that you are ending the speech.
2. Reinforce the audience's understanding of and/or commitment to the central idea.

Delivery

Write a *speaking outline* from which you will deliver the speech that is plainly legible, as brief as possible, contains cues for delivering the speech. Be aware of:

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| • Volume | • Personal Appearance |
| • Pitch/Tone | • Bodily Actions |
| • Rate | • Gestures |
| • Pauses | • Facial Expressions |
| • Articulation | • Eye Contact |

Practice

- Go through your outline. Too long? Too short? Are the main points clear? Are supporting materials convincing?
- Practice the speech aloud several times using only the speaking outline. Gain control of ideas rather than learning word for word. Practice with visual aids.
- Polish and refine your delivery. Practice in front of a mirror. Record and playback for verbal elements.
- Give your speech a dress rehearsal under conditions as close as possible to the speech scenario.

Developing Confidence

- Prepare thoroughly.
- Visualize yourself giving a strong, effective speech.
- Concentrate on communicating with your audience instead of worrying about your nervousness.
- Work especially hard on your introduction. A good introduction will help calm you down and build your esteem for the rest of the speech.
- Make eye contact with members of the audience so that you see them as individual people interested in your message, not a mass of faces.