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Made For You

A Public Speaking Guide

Manifest Your Voice

Team Manifest

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1 Preparing For Your Speech

1.1 Understanding Your Audience

- Know your audience. This includes understanding their age range, educational background, and reasons for listening to your speech.
- Consider their wants and needs. Rather than focusing on your own desires, think about what your audience wants and needs to hear from you.

1.2 Planning Your Content

- If need be research your topic thoroughly and gather all the necessary information you will need to support your arguments.
- First, make sure that you [plan](#) your communication appropriately. Use tools like the [Rhetorical Triangle](#), [Monroe's Motivated Sequence](#), and the [7Cs of Communication](#) to think about how you'll structure what you're going to say.
- Most speeches have three main parts: the introduction, the body, and the conclusion.
 - The introduction is where you connect with your audience and outline your topic.
 - The body is where you include all your supporting evidence and build intensity.
 - The conclusion is where you remind your audience about the big picture: Why your subject is important. Conclude your speech with a summary and a strong statement that your audience is sure to remember.
- Inject a funny/interesting anecdote in your presentation, or a story that provides a personal touch or a concise quotation. Again, however, always make sure your story is relevant and on point.
- Audio visual aids help enhance or clarify your content or capture and maintain your audience's attention. Too many can break the direct connection to the audience, so use them sparingly.

1.3 Practice, practice, practice

You simply cannot be a confident, compelling speaker without practice.

1. Start by reading your speech out loud several times to get familiar with the content.
2. Practice delivering your speech in front of a mirror or video camera. This will allow you to observe your body language and make any necessary adjustments.
3. Record yourself delivering the speech and listen to the recording to identify areas where you can improve.

1.4 Overcoming Nervousness

Here are some pointers on how to overcome nervousness in public speaking:

- Change your mindset: Instead of thinking about your nervousness as a negative thing, try to view it as a source of energy that can help you perform at your best. The [Inverted-U Model](#) shows that a certain amount of pressure enhances performance.
- Practice: The more you practice your speech, the more comfortable you'll be with the material and the less nervous you'll feel.
- Use positive self-talk: Use affirmations to raise your confidence, such as "I am going to do well."
- Visualize success: Imagine yourself giving a successful speech in front of a receptive audience.
- Focus on your breathing: Take deep breaths to calm yourself down and slow your heart rate.
- Warm up your body: Do some light stretches or exercises to release tension and get your blood flowing.
- Connect with your audience: Make eye contact with members of your audience and engage them in conversation before and after your speech.
- Remember that it's okay to make mistakes: Don't put too much pressure on yourself to be perfect. Mistakes are a natural part of the learning process.

1.5 Set Up

Be sure all necessary equipment is set up and in good working order prior to the presentation.

When preparing and delivering a speech, it's easy to focus on your words. Yet how you deliver those words is equally important.

2 Delivering Your Speech

2.1 Appearance

- The way your audience perceives you is of utmost importance, dress appropriately.
- Be solemn if your topic is serious. Present the desired image to your audience. Remain calm.

2.2 Eye contact and Facial expressions

- Eye Contact: Look straight into the eyes of a person in the audience for 3 seconds at a time. Have direct eye contact with a number of people in the audience, and every now and then glance at the whole audience while speaking.
- Avoid: Avoid looking down on the ground, over the heads of your listeners, or out the window. Avoid reading word-for-word from your notes or slides. Instead, make a list of important points on cue cards, or, slides and refer to them when/if necessary.
- Facial Expressions: While facial expressions, like all nonverbal support, can bring a speech to life, take care to stay natural and authentic. For example, a smile at the beginning of your speech, or widened eyes and raised eyebrows can signal the importance of words and phrases.

2.3 Body Language

Even if we don't speak, we communicate through our appearance and body language.

2.3.1 Example Gestures

Some examples of gestures to use in public speaking are:

- When counting (e.g., first, second, third), use your fingers to indicate each number.
- When discussing measurements (e.g., three feet), use your arms to show the length.
- When using phrases like “on one hand...on the other hand,” support your words by first turning one palm up, then the other.
- Phrases such as “we don’t know whether...” can be visualized by a shoulder shrug.
- Stepping back before your conclusion can visually signal that your speech is coming to an end.

2.3.2 Gestures To Avoid

Here are some body gestures to avoid while public speaking:

- Turning your back to your audience.
- Putting your hands in your pockets, on your hips.
- Locking your hands behind your back.
- Clasping your notes or holding on to the podium. It’s better not to use a podium at all.
- Folding your arms. This communicates coldness rather than openness and will disconnect you from the audience.
- Using nervous mannerisms (e.g. shifting your weight from foot to foot, twisting your hair, scratching your face, rubbing your hands together, or playing with an object e.g., a pen).
- Rocking back and forth.
- Standing too stiffly or slouching or leaning too far back
- Glancing at the clock frequently.
- Checking your phone.
- Tapping your foot or fingers.
- Sighing or making other negative sounds.

- Interrupting your audience.
- Speaking too quickly or too slowly.
- Gestures should be conscious and purposeful. Don't use too few or too many gestures. Aim for a medium amount and use them in a natural manner.
- Being overly repetitive with your gestures. Vary your gestures.

2.4 Engage Your Audience

- Participation: Ask questions and encourage participation. Engage your audience by asking leading questions or encouraging participation in the form of discussion or Q And A.
- Connect: Appeal to their values and interests. Connecting with your audience on an emotional level (personal experience, storytelling, relatable things) can make your speech more engaging and memorable.
- Language: Use language that your audience will understand. Avoid technical jargon or overly complex terminology that might confuse or alienate your listeners.
- Humor: Tell jokes and be funny, if you can. But be careful, Humor can easily turn offensive or fall flat if you don't know your audience.
- Be Authentic: You will establish better credibility if your personality shines through, and your audience will trust what you have to say if they can see you as a real person.

2.5 Vocal Behavior

2.5.1 Pitch

Vary the tone of your voice and dramatize if necessary.

2.5.2 Speaking Rate

Try to vary your rate throughout your speech.

1. You may want to speak more slowly at the beginning of your speech, for instance, to give your listeners an opportunity to get used to your voice. You may also want to slow down when discussing important points.
2. Exciting narratives and accounts involving actions or adventure are examples of times when a faster rate of speech is appropriate.

2.5.3 Pauses

Don't be afraid to gather your thoughts.

- Pauses are an important part of the conversation, and they make you sound confident, natural, and authentic.
- Unintentional ones (e.g., when our memory fails) can interrupt the flow of your speech and throw you off track. You can continue by paraphrasing the last sentence you said if the silence was too long.

2.5.4 Filler Words

Some filler words that should be avoided: um, er, well, okay, you know, something like that

2.5.5 Volume

Make sure that everybody in the audience can hear you without straining even those sitting farthest away from you.

3 Information

3.1 Sample Speeches

Watch these speeches and focus on the content, body language, and expressions employed.

- Structured speech: [Link](#)
- Delivery: [Link](#)

- Connecting With Audience: [Link](#)
- Spontaneous Speaking By Stanford University: [Link](#)

3.2 Checklist

- ☐ I researched the topic thoroughly.
- ☐ I planned and organized the speech with the audience in mind.
- ☐ I consciously selected effective language.
- ☐ I rehearsed speech sufficiently.
- ☐ I practiced techniques for reducing communication anxiety in case of nervousness.
- ☐ Before delivering a speech, I took time to set any equipment up.
- ☐ During the speech, maintained constant eye contact with all parts of the audience.
- ☐ I supported verbal messages through appropriate nonverbal behaviors (including gestures and body movement).
- ☐ I varied pitch, rate, and volume.
- ☐ I used attractive and professionally prepared audiovisual support in the presentation.
- ☐ During the question-and-answer session, I repeated or paraphrased questions before answering them.
- ☐ At the end of the question-and-answer session, I reemphasized the message and thanked the audience for listening.

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