and love to participate with applause, a few cheers, etc. A little involvement right at the start is great.

• *Shared background or interest*

"I come from Wabash, too, originally, and remember when the old lumber yard was down on . . ."; or reveal a hobby you share with some of the audience, like:

"On a clear crisp day like this what are we all doing in here? I know we'd all like to be out cross-country skiing over to the Falls instead of listening to speeches!"

• *Shared goals*

Another approach is to use the subject matter as a joint jumping-off place:

"Well, it looks like the company is in the best of hands. We need commitment and we've got it. Here you are, interrupting your day to hear about how to make better widgets, and you must surely know how / feel about that."

• *Shared values*

Still another area to work from is to let them in on some aspect of what else you care about besides business, and then let that lead you into your subject.

"Yesterday my daughter graduated from high school. The first kid. A big milestone for us. Maybe some of you just shared that. Gives you kind of a twinge, doesn't it? To see how fast the time passes and how much things change. I don't feel too removed from high school myself and here she is talking computer lingo that makes me feel really over the hill!

"There's a lesson there. We sure can't sit back and feel satisfied with what we know. It's outdated before you know it! Kinda scary, y'know? So—come with me while I take you on a trip to Tomorrow-Land. To see what's new in the marketplace and how we need to gear up to absorb and use it."

See what this does as an opening?

You touch a feeling part, not a thinking part, first. Get em where the feelings are! Much stronger than the head alone . . .

You told them something personal about you that they can surely identify with. Kids, graduation, "where is the little girl I carried?" kind of nostalgia.

You identified a common fear—becoming outdated—and let them know you know it's scary, and that's okay.