transparencies in case someone spills the coffee; and so on. Check carefully on their easels. Those little flimsy ones and your big charts or flip charts may not make a good marriage.

Ask for electronic equipment by name, model number, size, and style to be sure you get exactly what you need.

8. *Send a diagram*

Send diagrams for the stage and room arrangement as well as your visual aid requirements. Know what? Your hosts will be relieved and will welcome that.

9. *Be sure about time length*

Find out what the considerations of time for your speech *really* are. Speeches notoriously start late, and if yours is crammed full, you may end up having to edit as you speak. Instead, find out what comes after you and what the *real* restraints are. Build in an envelope or two of possible drop-out sections in your speech just to protect yourself; it's best to feel comfortable about when you actually have to stop.

10. *Try it all out*

Arrive early and test the equipment, including sound balance, lights, electronic equipment, who'll help you carry out the charts, run the projector, etc. Notice the heat or cooling system and if there's taped music playing in the hall outside your door that you can ask to be turned down.

All these details, well handled, make for a smooth, finished performance. Breakdowns in, or inattention to, any of these areas greatly diminishes all your hard work in preparation.

Okay. No more endings. This *is* the end of this chapter. On to the art of answering questions effectively and persuasively.