

## **How to Give a Persuasive Speech**

The following five steps are the key to helping you give a strong persuasive speech every time!

### Step One: The Attention Step

The Attention step is an opening statement of interest using one of the following tools: a rhetorical question, a startling statement, a quotation, a story, a reference to the subject or a reference to the occasion.

The Attention step is also important to get the audience interested in your subject. You can do that by using one or more of the following: Telling the audience of the practical value of your information, giving them a reason to listen, or raise their sense of curiosity. This is also a good time to establish your credibility (let them know you know what you're talking about) by alluding to your first hand experience or the information you have consulted.

### Step Two: The Need Step

The Need step helps your audience understand why you need to give this speech and they need to listen to you. There are only two kinds of needs when giving a persuasive speech; 1) to urge a change- to point out what is wrong in the current situation or 2) To demand no change- to point out the danger of change.

You can present your needs by; Illustration (tell of one or more incidents that show your need), Ramifications (using facts, examples and quotations to make sure the need is convincing), Pointing (showing the importance of the need to the members in the audience).

### Step Three: Satisfaction Step

The Satisfaction Step is your plan to satisfy their need. Now that your listeners are convinced they need a solution it is up to you to give them one.

You can present your solution by using one or more of the following; Statement of Solution- a brief statement of the attitude, belief or action you wish the audience to take, Explanation - make sure your proposal is

understood, Theoretically- show how the solution logically and adequately needs your needs point by point, Practical experience - give actual examples showing where this proposal has worked successfully or has been proven correct, or Meeting Objections- beat the opposition by showing how your proposal overcomes any potential objections.

#### Step Four: Visualization Step

In this step you help your audience visualize the future under your new solution. Remember, the conditions you describe must be realistic, however, the more vividly you make the situation seem, the stronger reaction you will get from your audience.

Three techniques for visualization are:

Positive - Describe the successful conditions if your plan is carried out. Listeners should be able to see themselves in a situation enjoying the safety, pleasure or pride that your proposal will produce.

Negative - Describe the negative conditions if your plan is not carried out. This should make the audience feel the bad effects or unpleasantness at the failure to enact your proposal will produce.

Contrast - Combination of Negative and Positive. Begin with the undesirable situation and conclude with the desirable situation.

#### Step Five: Action Step

Now if you've done your job correctly the audience is convinced, and you need to tell them what action to take (what do you want them to do). You may use one or more of the following: restate the main idea and give a summary of the main points, give a statement of specific action or attitude change that you want from them, or a concluding statement to recapture interest (a reason to remember).

Congratulations you are on your way to giving a great persuasive argument!

## Persuasive Outline Checklist

Use this outline to help you plan out your arguments, and make sure you cover all of your points!

Speech Topic : \_\_\_\_\_

### I. Attention Step:

1. Choose an opening statement of interest
  - Rhetorical question
  - Startling statement
  - Quotation
  - Story
  - Reference to the subject
  - Reference to the occasion
2. Get the audience interested
  - Practical Value
  - Sense of Curiosity
3. Establish your credibility
  - Personal Experience
  - Sources

### II. Need Step:

1. Change
2. No Change
  - Illustration
  - Ramifications
  - Pointing

### III. Satisfaction Step:

1. Statement of Solution
  - Explanation of Solution
  - Theoretical Demonstration
  - Practical Experience
  - Meeting Objections

### IV. Visualization Step:

1. Restatement of Proposed Solution
  - Positive
  - Negative
  - Combination

### V. Action Step:

1. Restatement and summary
  - Statement of Specific Action or Attitude Change
  - Statement of Personal Interest
  - Reason to Remember

## Sample Persuasive Speech Prompts

Become an organ donor..  
Elvis is alive!  
Michael Jackson was abducted by aliens!  
The Janet Jackson super bowl faux pas was not an accident!  
Home schooling is the best education program!  
Private schools are better than public schools!  
Donate to charity!  
Satellite is better than cable!  
McDonalds is better than Burger King.  
Buying is better than renting.  
Renting is better than buying.  
Recycle!  
Don't procrastinate.  
Celebrities receive preferential legal treatment.  
Reality TV is not "real".  
Keep a journal.  
Women can do anything men do and they can do it better!  
Athletes should be good role models.  
Winning isn't everything but it sure beats losing.  
All is fair in love and war.  
Teachers deserve pay raises!  
Students with "A's" should be exempt from finals.  
Everyone should own a pet!  
Wal-mart is the best place to shop!  
Everyone should take a self defense class.  
Time travel is possible  
Star Wars is superior to Star Trek  
Jury Duty should be voluntary  
Health insurance should be free  
Minimum wage should be raised  
Cats are better pets than dogs  
It is wrong to steal bread to feed your family  
Why the minimum age of the president should be 40  
Curfew is a conspiracy against the young.  
Students should play at least one sport in school  
Riding the bus should be free  
College should be free for anyone who qualifies  
Trains are better than planes  
Everyone should volunteer  
Books are better than movies  
Everyone should own a pet  
Censorship is against free speech  
Board games are better than video games  
Math should be optional  
All cars should get 100 miles/gallon  
Smart phones should be the only type of cell phone

Everyone can get nervous before public speaking, but with some simple Do's and Don'ts you will be prepared to win the crowd!

**Do:**

**Know your material.** Pick a topic you are interested in. Know more about it than you include in your speech. Use humor, personal stories and conversational language – that way you won't easily forget what to say.

**Practice. Practice. Practice!** Rehearse out loud with all equipment you plan on using. Revise as necessary. Work to control filler words; Practice, pause and breathe. Practice with a timer and allow time for the unexpected.

**Know the audience.** Greet some of the audience members as they arrive. It's easier to speak to a group of friends than to strangers.

**Know the room.** Arrive early, walk around the speaking area and practice using the microphone and any visual aids.

**Relax.** Begin by addressing the audience. It buys you time and calms your nerves. Pause, smile and count to three before saying anything. ("One one-thousand, two one-thousand, three one-thousand. Pause. Begin.) Transform nervous energy into enthusiasm.

**Visualize yourself giving your speech.** Imagine yourself speaking, your voice loud, clear and confident. Visualize the audience clapping – it will boost your confidence.

**Realize that people want you to succeed.** Audiences want you to be interesting, stimulating, informative and entertaining. They're rooting for you.

**Don't apologize for any nervousness or problem** – the audience probably never noticed it.

**Concentrate on the message – not the medium.** Focus your attention away from your own anxieties and concentrate on your message and your audience.

**Gain experience.** Mainly, your speech should represent *you* — as an authority and as a person. Experience builds confidence, which is the key to effective speaking.

## **Don't :**

**Starting with a whimper.** Don't start with "Thank you for that kind introduction." Start with a bang! Give the audience a startling statistic, an interesting quote, a news headline – something powerful that will get their attention immediately.

**Attempting to imitate other speakers.** Authenticity is lost when you aren't yourself.

**Failing to "work" the room.** Your audience wants to meet you. If you don't take time to mingle before the presentation, you lose an opportunity to enhance your credibility with your listeners.

**Failing to use relaxation techniques.** Do whatever it takes – listening to music, breathing deeply, shrugging your shoulders – to relieve nervous tension.

**Reading a speech word for word.** This will put the audience to sleep. Instead use a "keyword" outline: Look at the keyword to prompt your thoughts. Look into the eyes of the audience, then speak.

**Using someone else's stories.** It's okay to use brief quotes from other sources, but to connect with the audience, you must illustrate your most profound thoughts from your own life experiences. If you think you don't have any interesting stories to tell, you are not looking hard enough.

**Speaking without passion.** The more passionate you are about your topic, the more likely your audience will act on your suggestions.

**Ending a speech with questions and answers.** Instead, tell the audience that you will take questions and then say, "We will move to our closing point." After the Q and A, tell a story that ties in with your main theme, or summarize your key points. Conclude with a quote or call to action.

**Failing to prepare.** Your reputation is at stake every time you face an audience – so rehearse well enough to ensure you'll leave a good impression!

**Failing to recognize that speaking is an acquired skill.** Effective executives learn how to present in the same way they learn to use other tools to operate their businesses.

## **Current Events**

Discussing current events at a weekly meeting is a great way to keep delegates informed, help them develop their own opinions, and allow them to practice their public speaking in a safe environment.

### Before the meeting:

Decide on current event for the meeting and word of the day\*.

Prepare a brief informational speech (3-5 minutes) on your current event

Prepare some questions related to the current event that people can answer if needed.

### At the meeting

Introduce current event topic and word of the day.

Present speech on the subject

Ask a question then call on a delegate (except guests). Do not call on them before asking the question, as it keeps everyone on their toes.

After 3 questions open it up to guests, if they would like to participate.

When done with questions encourage 5 minutes of open round table debate (make sure to enforce respectful attitudes and language).

*If using a word of the day: assign the word of the day before the meeting. Ask the grammarian to track who used the word of the day in their responses.*

## **Speech Helpers**

### Ah/Um Counter

In public speaking, many people tend to use Ah or Um when they are stumbling and this can be distracting in a speech. To help with that the Ah/Um counter counts how many time each speaker uses these space fillers, and give a report at the end. Bringing awareness to the habit can help to discourage its use. You may also choose to create a no ah/um challenge with prizes (winner of weekly speaking award) or disincentives (\$.25/um etc.)

### Grammarian

The Grammarian can help give everyone feedback about their grammar and provide a Word of the Day. During speeches the Grammarian will count time the word of the day is used as well as additional space fillers and "unconscious" words such as "so", "like", "you know", "and" etc. At the end of the speech the Grammarian can report both good and poor uses of grammar, instances of exceptional eloquence, and of course use of Word of the Day.

## **Public Speaking and opinion making Games**

### **Apples to Apples:**

Substitute anonymous card play by having each delegate defend their card as the best choice. Works best in groups of 5-10. If you have more than 10 delegates make groups and introduce a round-robin tournament style.

### **Would you rather?:**

Assign each delegate a non-traditional and undesirable scenario. They must then argue why their scenario is more desirable than the alternative.

### **Mingle:**

This is a good activity to help students come up with impromptu persuasive speeches. Each delegate is given a card with a declarative statement on it. They must come up with a short speech defending the position on the card. Once students have come up with their speeches have them walking around the room "mingling" until the instructor says stop. Delegates then have one minute each to give their speeches. After their done, then have them move around the room "mingling" again until the instructor says stop. They should now have a new partner and must give their speech again, but this time trying to incorporate tone, inflection and voice. Repeat for one more round. After each round check in with the delegates and see how they are doing and if they feel like they are getting stronger in their presentation. At the end have delegates share out which speeches they thought were most persuasive and why.

### **Line it up;**

This game helps delegates to start identifying their opinions. Each delegate will get a label with a person on it taped to their forehead. Labels should represent a diverse group of people from different socio-economic scales and professions ( rock star, janitor, teacher, mom, baby, etc.) Without ever knowing what is on their own head, delegates must line themselves up in order of most important to least important. They may ask for more parameters such as by wealth or by fame, but it is best if you leave it open. Once they are all in line, have them take off their label and see how they "ranked" themselves. Discuss why they put each person where and if anyone disagree with where they were put.