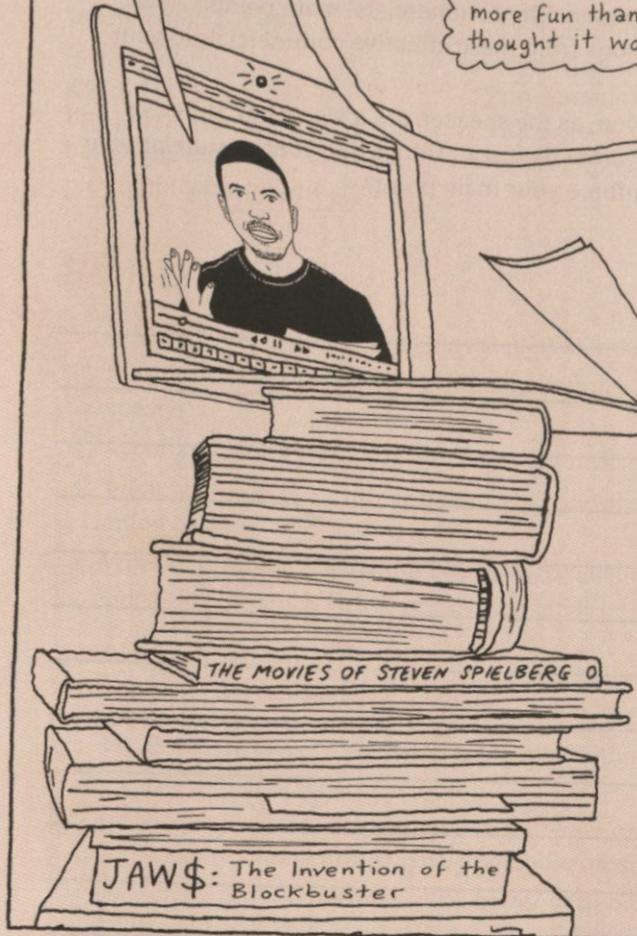


Jaws was the turning point for Steven Spielberg. It grossed \$470 million at the box office worldwide. His next movie, Close Encounters of the Third Kind...

This movie I'm making of my speech is not going to gross \$470 million, but it's a lot more fun than I thought it would be.



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Look for the  and  throughout the chapter for adaptive quizzing and online video activities at [macmillanhigher.com/speakup4e](http://macmillanhigher.com/speakup4e).

# MEDIATED PUBLIC SPEAKING

# 15

“Effective mediated public speaking offers a new world of challenges and opportunities.”

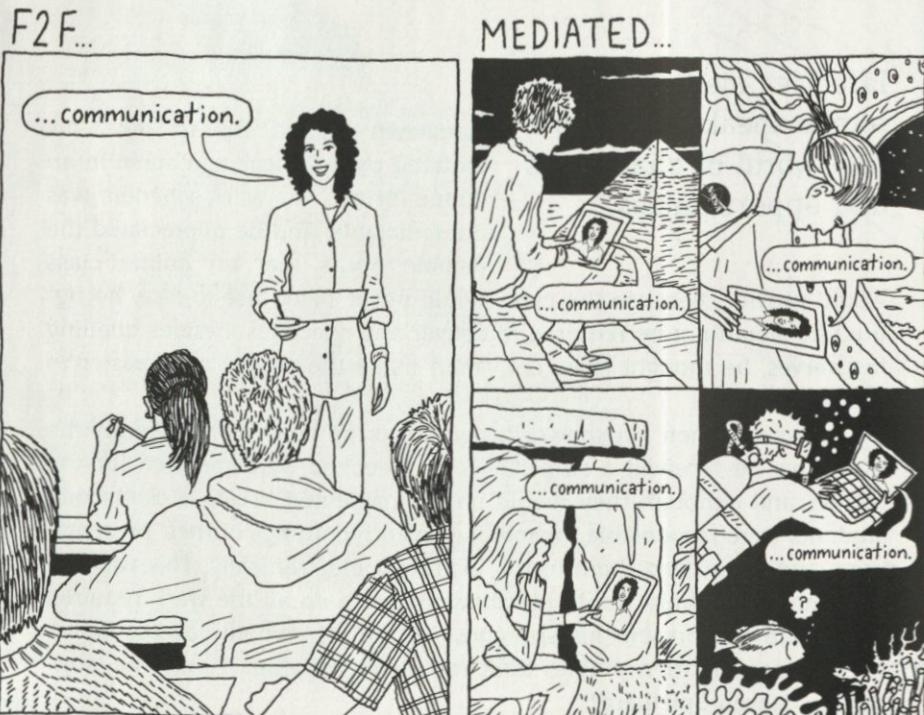
would provide. Because the class would never meet face-to-face, he figured he would not be required to deliver any speeches. Besides quelling his nerves, he thought that this would make the course a bit easier to manage.

However, when Marshawn logged on to the course Web site for the first time, he received a surprise. Four speeches were required for the course, and although they would not be presented live in a classroom, students were responsible for making video recordings of their presentations and submitting them to the instructor electronically. This was not good news. Not only would Marshawn have to do all the work required to prepare and present his speeches, but he also would need to worry about recording them. “Who does my instructor think I am?” he wondered. “Steven Spielberg?”

Marshawn signed up to take his required public speaking course in an online format. His work schedule was unpredictable, and he appreciated the flexible hours that an online class

After the first week of classes, Marshawn began to reconsider. He had been involved in making videos for most of his life. He had recorded special events with friends and family members on his cell phone and posted them on YouTube. His church choir had made a DVD of its best work, which featured Marshawn singing a solo. And whenever he brought a new romantic interest home to meet his parents, Marshawn's mom could not resist showing a video of his campaign speech for sixth-grade class president. Maybe he had more video experience than he'd originally thought.

Marshawn's experience is not unique. Twenty-first-century technology has increased the ways that we can communicate with one another. Today, speeches can be presented in real time to audiences in different locations, and they can be saved for future playback. Messages transmitted through either a mechanical or an electronic medium are examples of **mediated communication**. You may be called on to use mediated channels for presentations on campus, in your career, or as part of your community involvement. Therefore, you will benefit from gaining skills and experience with such methods of communicating.



Fortunately, much as you follow a set of manageable steps to prepare and deliver successful speeches in a face-to-face (F2F) environment, you can use a similar approach when called on to deliver a mediated presentation. This chapter will help you learn how to adapt when you speak to a remote audience and also how to become comfortable when speaking to a camera instead of live listeners. We begin by discussing the rise of mediated communication and the advantages and challenges of real-time and prerecorded presentations. Then we move on to strategies for optimizing delivery of effective messages in a mediated environment. Finally, we discuss the procedures for recording a classroom presentation and some special considerations for real-time presentations.

## THE RISE OF MEDIATED COMMUNICATION

Since the 1990s, rapidly evolving communication technology has changed many of the ways we live and interact with one another. Before then, people wrote letters and used their landline telephones to stay in touch with friends and family members. Now you are far more likely to use text messages, emails, and social media instead. Back then, people had no choice but to visit the library to begin a research project, but now most students can access quality library resources online. Rather than commuting to your job every day, you may end up telecommuting from remote locations, using mobile devices such as laptops or smartphones to stay connected with colleagues and clients.

How do these trends relate to public speaking? These technological changes have created more options for public speakers to reach an audience. But face-to-face presentations are not on the way out; on the contrary, they remain the gold standard of public speaking formats. Technology cannot replicate the naturalness of F2F communication and the bond that can be created when speaker and audience share the same space. If you are taking an online public speaking class, you may be asked to come to campus to deliver your speeches in person. (This is often the case in “hybrid” speaking courses.)

Many remote classes—and perhaps some in-person courses—will ask that you record your speeches. You also may face situations in school and life in which a mediated format is your best available option. Mediated presentations offer some specific benefits, such as cost savings and the ability to reach a wide audience. Let’s consider how mediated options are expanding and look at two basic formats for mediated speeches.

## The Expansion of Mediated Public Speaking

There are many situations in which you may deliver a mediated presentation at school, on the job, or in your community. Consider the following examples:

- Recording a presentation for a class and uploading it on the course Web site
- Participating in a job or scholarship interview on Skype
- Creating a video for a favorite charity and posting it on YouTube
- Podcasting a program you produced for your campus radio station
- Delivering a sales presentation by videoconference to clients in several different states

Research confirms that the use of mediated presentations is expanding. A recent survey of college presidents found that over three-fourths of institutions teach online classes.<sup>1</sup> This has meant that teachers may be teaching substantially more students—particularly in massive open online courses (MOOCs), which are free and open to all.<sup>2</sup> Worldwide, spending on videoconferencing technology grew from \$2 billion in 2011<sup>3</sup> to \$7 billion by 2014.<sup>4</sup> The expectation going forward is that the market for video conferencing will grow by almost 10 percent per year until 2019.<sup>5</sup> Detroit's City Council is one of an expanding number of governmental organizations that allow people to use technology such as Skype to make comments during public meetings.<sup>6</sup> In fact, many of the this country's cities use Skype, and many more have embraced multiple

### MEDIATED PRESENTATIONS CAN BE FUN...



\*Actually, just find your pants.

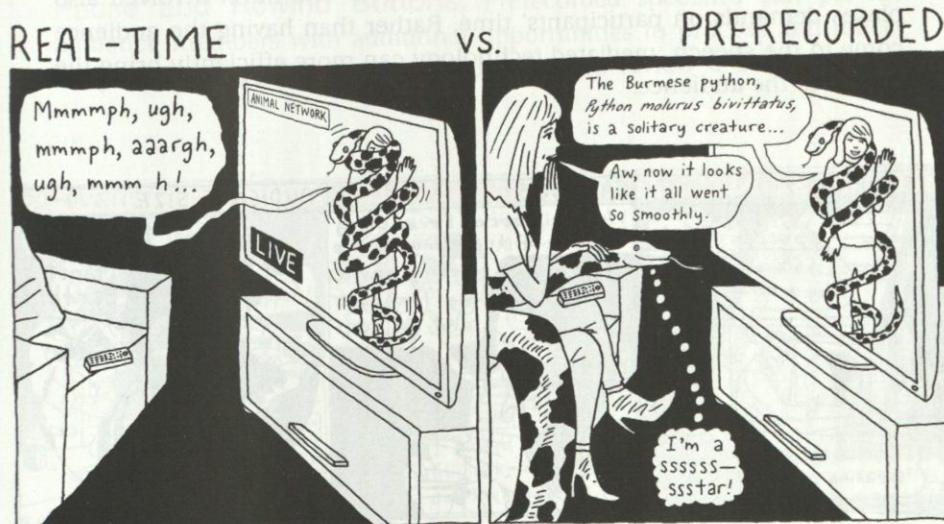
forms of social media.<sup>7</sup> Social media such as Skype can allow people to address a city council or a board of supervisors, even if they can't be at the meeting in person. This kind of technology has the potential to increase civic engagement in a meaningful way.

## Prerecorded and Real-Time Presentations

The options for mediated delivery can be divided into two categories—prerecorded and real-time. A **prerecorded** (also known as **asynchronous**) mediated presentation is recorded by the speaker for later viewing by one or more audiences. For example, a speaker might create a podcast or a YouTube video of a presentation. If you are taking an online public speaking class in which you will be recording your speech assignments and submitting them to your instructor, you will be delivering a prerecorded speech.

A **real-time** (also known as **synchronous**) mediated presentation is delivered directly to the audience as the speaker presents the message from a remote location. For example, a speaker might make a presentation during a videoconference or a speech presented to a group via Skype. These speeches are similar to face-to-face presentations but with one crucial difference: the audience and speaker are not together.

Mediated presentations pose both opportunities and challenges, and these can vary depending on whether they are in a prerecorded or real-time format.



## ADVANTAGES OF MEDIATED PRESENTATIONS

Why—and when—might a mediated presentation be a good choice? Let's consider the main benefits to presenting a mediated speech to a remote audience and the types of situations in which you may want to deliver a mediated speech.

### General Advantages

This first group of advantages applies to both prerecorded and real-time presentations.

**Flexibility.** One advantage of mediated presentations is increased flexibility. Unlike face-to-face presentations, where you need to be at a specific place at a specific time, real-time technologies (such as videoconferencing) allow audience members to be at multiple (and presumably more convenient) locations. Prerecorded speeches also can be viewed at different locations *and* at different times. You may choose to sign up for an online public speaking class because of the flexibility it offers for your schedule.

**Savings.** Both forms of mediated presentations can save time and money. It can be expensive for an organization to bring everyone who should hear a message to a common location. The travel involved also places demands on participants' time. Rather than having the audience come to the speech, mediated technology can more efficiently bring the speech to the audience.



**Audience Size.** Attendance at a face-to-face presentation is limited to the number of people who can be accommodated in the available space and who can be there at the designated time. Because mediated presentations can be viewed by audiences in different locations and even at different times (for prerecorded speeches), they give you an opportunity to address a greater number of people.

## Advantages of Prerecorded Speeches

Prerecorded presentations come with several specific advantages—*do-overs, pause and rewind buttons, and the option to save*.

**Do-Overs.** One benefit of prerecorded messages is the opportunity to do another “take” if your speech does not go well the first time. In a real-time speech, if you make a mistake (or perhaps your technology fails), there is no do-over. You need to adapt to the problem as best you can and continue the presentation. When you prerecord your speech, you have the chance to start over as many times as you like until you are pleased with the outcome. If you are adept with your equipment, you might also be tempted to edit your presentation. But be careful: your instructor may not allow editing in classroom speeches. If this is the case, it would be an ethical violation to do any editing, so be sure to check with your instructor first.

**Pause and Rewind Buttons.** Prerecorded speeches can provide audience members with additional opportunities to process and reflect on your message. A viewer can go back and review a section of the



presentation or watch the entire speech again. Audience members may also pause the video and discuss a part of the speech before moving on to the next main idea.

**Option to Save.** A final advantage is that prerecording creates a permanent record of your speech so that future audiences can view it. Suppose that you make a clear and concise training video for new employees at your job or you create an outstanding presentation about how to set up a food distribution program for a nonprofit organization where you volunteer. The company or the nonprofit organization could use your video to provide future audiences with the benefits of your good work. In addition, having recordings of your classroom speeches allows you to provide prospective employers with a sample of your public speaking skills, much as you might provide them with a writing sample.

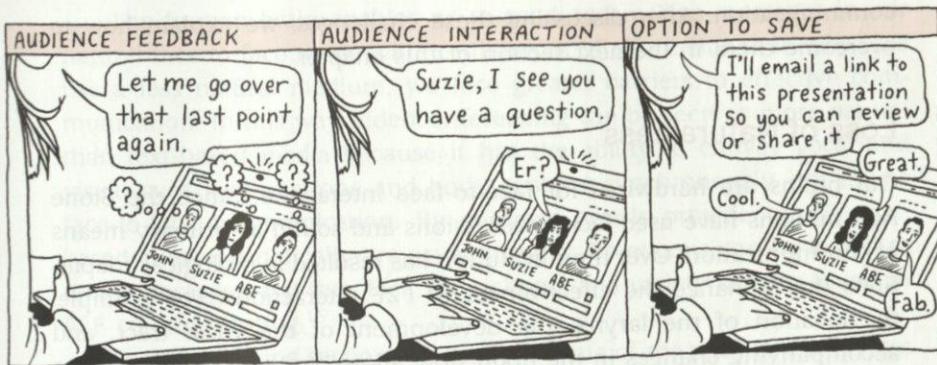
### Advantages of Real-Time Technologies

Video-based technologies such as videoconferencing, Webinars, and Skype allow speakers to communicate with audience members in diverse locations and in real time. The decision to use a real-time mediated format may depend on the purpose of the presentation. If the message is straightforward and not complex, this format is more likely to be appropriate.<sup>8</sup> Videoconferencing is also more likely to be successful when participants have already met and built a relationship with one another.<sup>9</sup> When participants are not acquainted, it may be more difficult for them to develop a sense of togetherness or cohesion in mediated formats.<sup>10</sup>

In any real-time mediated presentation, the technologies cannot create the sense of presence that comes when a speaker and an audience share the same physical space. However, they do allow for some of the benefits of a face-to-face speech, including *audience feedback* and *audience interaction*, and they offer the *option to save*.

**Audience Feedback.** Depending on the type of technology available, you might be able to experience audience feedback and adapt your speech in the moment. If you have the advantage of top-flight technology and large screens, you will be able to observe more of your audience's nonverbal responses.<sup>11</sup>

**Audience Interaction.** Real-time technology allows audience members to interact with the speaker during or immediately after the speech. For



example, there can be a question-and-answer session. Or if the speaker encourages it, audience members may ask questions during the presentation.

**Option to Save.** An additional benefit to real-time presentations is that they often can be saved. Depending on what technology you use, audience members may have the ability to go back to any part of your speech if they didn't understand something or want to reinforce the information shared. If you are able to record your real-time speech, you have the opportunity to share it with an even wider audience.

Now that we have considered some of the potential advantages to mediated presentations, let's turn our attention to the main challenges.

For an example of a prerecorded (aka asynchronous) mediated speech recorded by the speaker for later viewing by one or more audience members, see Video Activity 15.1, "McAlister, Arsenic in Our Water Supply."

## CHALLENGES OF MEDIATED PRESENTATIONS

Think of a political rally, a commencement speech, or a technology conference. Even with a large crowd, the speaker is able to connect personally to his or her audience. The main concern with mediated communication is that the in-person connection is missing. This section explores specific challenges that are created by mediated presentations, including loss of naturalness, loss of immediacy, decreased nonverbal communication, diminished feedback, difficulty managing distractions, and technological difficulties that are not found in face-to-face

communication. After discussing these challenges, we explain how to overcome them in the next section of this chapter.

## Loss of Naturalness

Our brains are hardwired for face-to-face interaction. Since the Stone Age, humans have used facial expressions and sound as primary means of communication. Over time, evolution has resulted in biological adaptations that enhance the effectiveness of F2F interactions. For example, the location of the larynx, the development of the vocal tract, and accompanying changes in the brain now allow human beings to create the many sounds needed to speak modern languages. Similarly, adaptations of muscles in the human face enable a diverse range of facial expressions used to communicate.<sup>12</sup>

The **naturalness** of a communication medium is determined by the extent to which it matches the features of face-to-face interaction.<sup>13</sup> Key factors that contribute to feelings of naturalness include sharing the same space, sending and receiving messages quickly, and being able to send and receive both verbal and nonverbal expressions.<sup>14</sup>

### NATURALNESS: COMMUNICATION BEYOND WORDS



The human brain enables us to send and receive messages in our natural face-to-face mode with a minimum of effort. However, when we use a less natural medium, we face greater barriers to effective communication. In this way, videoconferencing can be seen as more natural than text-based media because it has the ability to convey vocal and visual cues (such as tone and body posture) synchronously, not unlike face-to-face communication. By contrast, emails provide mostly text-based cues and typically are asynchronous. Emoticons can be added to email messages, but they lack the richness and variety of cues found in F2F communicating.<sup>15</sup>

In the following section, we explore some of the specific challenges caused by mediated presentations in terms of the naturalness we often take for granted in F2F communication. Unless otherwise noted, these challenges apply to both prerecorded and real-time communication.

### **Loss of Immediacy**

When you and your audience do not share the same space, the sense of connection is reduced. When you deliver a speech face-to-face—especially in a typical classroom setting—audience members are closer to you physically. They can observe your eye contact and sense your movement. Such actions create “interest and warmth between communicators.”<sup>16</sup> Conversely, when you and your audience are in different locations, you will both feel less of a psychological link.<sup>17</sup> In a less natural environment, speakers face greater challenges establishing credibility and building common ground.<sup>18</sup> You may also feel less of a bond with your audience when presenting to a camera, which can feel like “presenting into the void.”<sup>19</sup>

### **Decreased Nonverbal Communication**

In Chapter 13, we noted the central role that nonverbal expressions play in communication. In a face-to-face speech, audience members can observe the full range of your nonverbal behaviors.<sup>20</sup> In a mediated presentation, however, this is less likely, especially when the camera is in a fixed position. For example, if you are being filmed from the waist up, the audience will see your facial expressions and most of your hand gestures, but the camera may not capture large arm gestures. Similarly, if you are using a fixed camera, your opportunities for moving around will be limited. Thus, you would not be able to move closer to the audience to emphasize a key point or move a few steps in either direction to signify a transition.



Mediated presentations also alter how listeners see and interpret your nonverbal messages. For example, the flat images of facial gestures that appear on a screen are not the same as the ones that would be perceived in a three-dimensional face-to-face environment.<sup>21</sup>

### Diminished Feedback

A face-to-face environment provides your audience with the best opportunity to provide feedback while you are speaking. Even with real-time technology, it's difficult for listeners to provide that same quality of feedback.<sup>22</sup> When a speech is prerecorded, your audience has no chance to

provide real-time feedback. (They may be able to leave real-time comments or tags on your recorded speech if you post it on specific sites that allow commenting.)

This decrease in audience response leads to several disadvantages. Normally, feedback lets you know if you are speaking clearly or presenting at the right pace. If it suggests that audience members do not understand an idea, you can expand on your explanation.<sup>23</sup> If you do not have a clear view of your entire audience, you cannot determine if they are losing interest and thus add some energy to your presentation.<sup>24</sup> It also prevents you from gathering positive reactions—such as attentive listening, a smile, or a nod of the head—to show that you are on the right track.

## Difficulty Managing Distractions

When you are speaking from a remote location, audience members may be more likely to engage in **multitasking**. This practice, which refers to “juggling multiple tasks with and without technological devices,” is increasingly common in the workplace, in meetings, and on campus.<sup>25</sup> For example, if you observe another student texting or checking Facebook during a classroom lecture, you are witnessing multitasking in action.

When you are delivering a speech face-to-face, common courtesy should discourage listeners from multitasking, but when audience members are watching you on a screen, it is easier for them to give in to distractions around them. This is particularly true for workplace presentations when audience members are watching in their offices or cubicles and can easily be interrupted by a coworker.<sup>26</sup> If you are not speaking on location, you also lose opportunities to use nonverbal strategies (such as moving closer to a person who is multitasking or changing the volume of your voice to gain attention).

From a remote location, you will have few opportunities to notice things that might be distracting your listeners. This is especially problematic during real-time presentations, when listeners can’t immediately replay what they might have missed. You will not hear a lawn mower or an airplane passing overhead and temporarily drowning out your voice. If you are speaking to audience members in different locations, you may not be aware that one viewer’s computer has crashed.

## Technological Difficulties

In addition to challenges based on a lack of in-person interaction, mediated presentations are subject to unique technological difficulties.

Mediated speakers often fear that their technology (including uploading tools, computer recording devices, and Internet connections) will fail them.

Technological challenges do happen, but there are simple things you can do to try to prevent them. Practice beforehand with the technology you plan to use (we discuss this more in the following section). If you have trouble with your recording device, make sure that a backup is available. If the site you're using stops working, try opening it in a different browser or disconnecting and reconnecting to the Internet. Contact the help team if you're using a submission site (like YouTube or a class Web site) that's not allowing you to upload. If you're having trouble with an online video service (Skype, Google Hangouts, ooVoo), consider switching to another.

Real-time presentations have more room for technological error, and we discuss these further in the last section of the chapter.

## OPTIMIZING DELIVERY AND MESSAGES IN MEDIATED PRESENTATIONS

The key principles of speech delivery, content, and practice discussed in this book apply to both mediated and face-to-face speeches. However, there are a few unique considerations to keep in mind when your presentation is mediated. In this section, we discuss *delivery considerations*, *message adaptations*, and *practicing delivery and recording*.

### Delivery Considerations

First, let's discuss some considerations for delivery. These points apply to both prerecorded and real-time speeches unless otherwise noted.

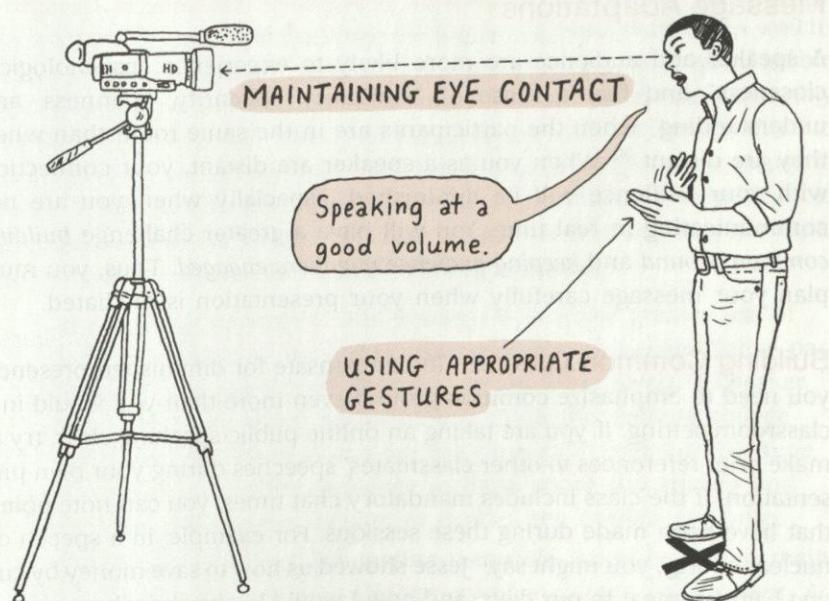
**Voice.** To make sure your speaking voice is effective in a mediated presentation, a good general rule is to speak at about the same volume you would use to address people seated in a conference room. If you are prerecording, consider doing a quick "voice check": record yourself saying the beginning of your introduction, and play it back to ensure appropriate volume.

Maintaining an effective rate of delivery can be a challenge. There is a natural tendency to speed up your presentation if no audience is present, and the absence of an audience means you will not receive

feedback if you speak too fast. To keep your rate under control, be sure to pause at natural stopping points in your speech.<sup>27</sup> For example, you might pause before you transition to the next main point, after you display a visual aid, or after you present evidence. Recall that speaking to a camera rather than a roomful of people can make it seem as though you are communicating with a vast empty space, which can cause you to lose energy. Imagine that you are speaking to a live audience, and consciously try to maintain an energetic delivery. Include some reminders on your extemporaneous notes, such as “Energy!” or “Enthusiasm!”

If your audience is watching you from different locations (say, for an online class), consider asking them to use high-quality earbuds. This will help them hear you clearly and will be more comfortable for them.

**Eye Contact.** Maintaining eye contact with your listeners is a challenge in mediated presentations because you can't look at them directly. (Even in real-time presentations, both the speaker and the audience are looking at each other on a screen.) Nevertheless, your audience will notice where your eyes are looking. To avoid looking as though you're gazing off into space, you should always look toward the camera (or a visual, like a small



stuffed animal taped to the top) while presenting.<sup>28</sup> While speaking, imagine your audience in front of you. Make extended eye contact in several directions, just as you would with real people in a live audience.

**Movement and Gestures.** Elements of nonverbal delivery such as movement and gestures are also affected in a mediated presentation. On a screen, your gestures will appear more prominent because you are being displayed in a smaller area. Expansive gestures may also move out of the frame of your video. (Even if you have a skilled cameraperson, she or he can't anticipate your natural, conversational gestures.) It is important to gesture when you are recording a speech, but be careful not to gesture too expansively.<sup>29</sup>

Movement also needs to be controlled. Ensure that all movement remains within the range of the camera so that you do not move in and out of the screen. If your camera cannot move because you are recording your own speech or speaking at a fixed microphone, you may need to speak from a fixed location. If this is the case and you can't use nonverbal cues (such as pointing to an item on a visual aid or moving to indicate a transition), be sure to provide clear verbal cues to help audience members understand your point.

### Message Adaptations

A speaker and audience are more likely to experience “psychological closeness” and feel a sense of “similarity, solidarity, openness, and understanding” when the participants are in the same room than when they are distant.<sup>30</sup> When you as a speaker are distant, your connection with your audience will be diminished, especially when you are not communicating in real time. You will have a greater challenge *building common ground and keeping audience members engaged*. Thus, you must plan your message carefully when your presentation is mediated.

**Building Common Ground.** To compensate for diminished presence, you need to emphasize common ground even more than you would in a classroom setting. If you are taking an online public speaking class, try to make brief references to other classmates’ speeches during your own presentation. If the class includes mandatory chat times, you can note points that have been made during these sessions. For example, in a speech on nuclear energy, you might say, “Jesse showed us how to save money by cutting back on meat in our diets, and now I would like to show how we can

all save money on our utility bills.” You also might be able to relate common experiences of online students to concepts in your speech. In an informative speech on the use of smoke signals, you might note how this ancient system of communication was used to warn soldiers up and down the Great Wall of China when the enemy was near.<sup>31</sup> Thus, students can see how methods for communicating over great distances have evolved, with technology now enabling them to interact with one another online.



You also want to emphasize common ground during mediated workplace or community presentations. If you have interacted with audience members in the past, use relevant ideas from your previous discussions. If you do not know your audience, you might emphasize goals or principles that are familiar to everyone in the group. For example, you might refer to a company’s logo or the mission of a nonprofit organization.

**Keeping Audience Members Engaged.** It is more difficult for listeners to remain attentive when staring at a screen than when watching a live human being.<sup>32</sup> Remote listeners may feel more comfortable multitasking, and you won’t be able to see their nonverbal cues that may indicate lack of interest. Thus, you will need to make it easier for them to focus on what you are saying. There are several strategies you can use to maintain audience interest when speaking in a mediated setting. Many of these approaches are helpful in a face-to-face context, but they are especially important when your speech is being recorded.

- *Ask rhetorical questions.* One strategy is to make greater use of rhetorical questions and other strategies that encourage active participation. In a speech on the need to get more sleep, a speaker might ask, “How many hours do you think the average college student sleeps?” Even if you are not physically present, this type of question invites the audience to think about the answer and wait with anticipation for you to explain the correct response.
- *Increase the variety of supporting materials.* Another way to maintain interest is to increase the variety of materials you present. A

remote audience is more likely to lose interest if a speaker seems to be talking on and on. Conversely, a switch to another mode of presentation can recapture audience interest. For instance, a speaker who participates in rodeos might discuss rodeo equipment, focusing on the proper saddle in one of her main points. Her first subpoint might be an explanation of why a proper saddle is needed—and what went wrong the time she brought the wrong saddle to a barrel-racing event. Next, the speaker could display an actual saddle as a visual aid. Finally, the speaker might show a video clip of a rider in action while explaining how this rider used the saddle effectively.

- *Keep it simple and relevant.* A third strategy for maintaining engagement is to reduce complexity when explaining a main point or subpoint. Instead of discussing five ways for college students to decrease stress, pick the three that will be most relevant to the audience. If two credible research sources make the same basic point, choose the shorter quotation. Rather than presenting a long list of statistics, choose the most important one or two, and invest more time in helping the audience understand and remember them. If you must go into more detail on a particular main point, use signposts along with an internal preview or summary to help the audience keep track of your train of thought (see Chapter 9).
- *Highlight takeaways.* Finally, emphasize key takeaways for your audience to remember. A **takeaway** is a memorable phrase or sentence that captures the essence of your speech and can be repeated at key points in the speech. For example, in her speech on cardiovascular disease, Aubrey focused on three risk factors in her main points—stress, poor nutrition, and lack of exercise. Her subpoints explained the importance of minimizing these risks and the many feasible steps students could take. At the end of each main point, Aubrey used repetition, noting, “If you focus on this preventive measure now, your heart will thank you later.” She also closed with this key sentence in her clincher.

## Practicing Delivery and Recording

Now that you've considered strategies to combat the challenges of mediated presentations, it's time to move to the next stage—practice. Whether



you are giving a prerecorded or a real-time speech, you should allocate time to practice your presentation, just as you would if you were addressing your audience face-to-face. If you'll be using a camera operator, have this person record your practice so that he or she can become familiar with both the equipment and your speech. If there are points in your speech where the operator should zoom in on a visual aid, take a closer shot of you, or pan a live audience (if you have one), this can be practiced to ensure that it is handled smoothly.

After you record yourself practicing, play back the recording to see how your speech will appear to your audience. As you watch, note areas for possible change by considering the following questions:

- Are your rate and volume appropriate?
- Do you appear to be looking at the audience?
- Are all of your movements and gestures within view?
- Can your presentation aids be clearly seen? Does the audience have sufficient time to process the content of each one?
- Does the setting of your speech look professional?
- Do the lighting and background work to make a clear picture of you?

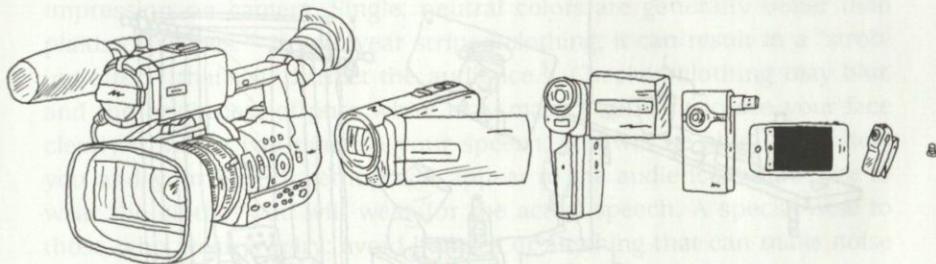
Practicing should minimize problems when you do a “final take” for a prerecorded presentation. However, allow sufficient time for a do-over if you experience any issues during filming. As with your practice takes, watch to make sure you have a quality recording before you submit your speech. Also, remember to save your final speech in more than one place (such as the cloud, a USB drive, or an external hard drive) as you would any important school materials.

## RECORDING YOUR CLASSROOM SPEECH

After preparation and lots of practice, it’s time to turn to the nitty-gritty of recording. In this section, we discuss how to set up and record your speech effectively. These suggestions will help you record both in-class and out-of-class presentations, such as a video for a scholarship application or a sales presentation your employer might require. Although this section focuses on prerecorded speeches, many of the tips about the *camera, setting and background, attire, and camera positioning* can be applied to real-time presentations.

### Camera

There is no need to buy an expensive, top-of-the-line camcorder. You can make a very good recording with an iPad or a smartphone camera<sup>53</sup> (small tripods for these can cost under \$10). If you have a smartphone, go to your camera features. For iPhones, slide the toggle at the bottom from Photo to Video, and press the red button to start recording. If you



decide to use a smartphone to shoot video, remember these tips: (1) use a tripod to steady your shot; (2) shoot your video horizontally (wide screen) instead of vertically (narrow screen) because it will help you catch more in the shot; and (3) shoot a ten-second sample video, and replay it to make sure the lighting and sound quality are acceptable. For best results, do any editing on your computer, where a larger screen will allow you to see everything in more detail.

Check to see if your college has video cameras available for students to borrow. If you want to buy a camcorder, look at online reviews to find one that meets your need. You also might consider buying a camcorder with other classmates and then selling it and splitting the proceeds once the term has ended. Whichever option you choose, be sure to use a device that is familiar and easy to use.

## Setting and Background

The background for your recorded presentation should look professional. Consider finding a conference room you can use at your college or in a neighborhood library. If you need to record the speech at your home, be sure the setting is neat and clean. Look through the viewer to see what your audience will see. Make sure your inflatable gorilla, the pile of unwashed clothes, and half-eaten bags of chips are out of sight. Even an attractive item may create a distraction. For example, be sure that the plant or lamp you're standing in front of doesn't appear to be growing out of your head.<sup>34</sup>

Avoid background noises that might compete with your speech in the video. The last thing you need is to have an episode of *Project Runway* blaring in the background or a boisterous friend barging into your room with concert tickets. Select a time when your roommates will not be home, or be sure you can count on them not to disrupt your speech.



The primary light source should be behind the camera operator and directed toward you. Avoid standing in front of a sunny window or a bright light; otherwise, you will be in shadow. It is generally better to have more light than less, so be sure to select a well-lit room. You can also bring in additional light if the room seems too dark.<sup>35</sup> However, if you're blond, beware of standing directly beneath a bright light (it might make your head appear to glow).

 To see an example of how lighting and clothing choices can affect a speech, try Video Activity 15.2, "Attention-Getter (Needs Improvement)."

### Attire

In addition to selecting clothing that is appropriate for public speaking (see Chapter 13), you need to choose clothing that will make a good

impression on camera. Single, neutral colors are generally better than plaids or stripes.<sup>36</sup> If you wear striped clothing, it can result in a “strobing effect” that will distract the audience.<sup>37</sup> Checked clothing may blur, and the brightness of pure white may make it difficult to see your face clearly.<sup>38</sup> When you practice your speech, you will be able to see how you and your speech setting will appear to the audience, so be sure to wear the clothes you will wear for the actual speech. A special note to those who wear jewelry: avoid bangles or anything that can make noise because it will be an audible distraction during your presentation.

## Camera Positioning

You or your carefully chosen camera operator should check that the camera is trained on the correct shot. Your instructor may have specific visual requirements (such as having the video show you only from the waist up as you deliver your speech). If you are required to speak to an audience, your instructor may ask you to record the comments of listeners both before and after your speech.

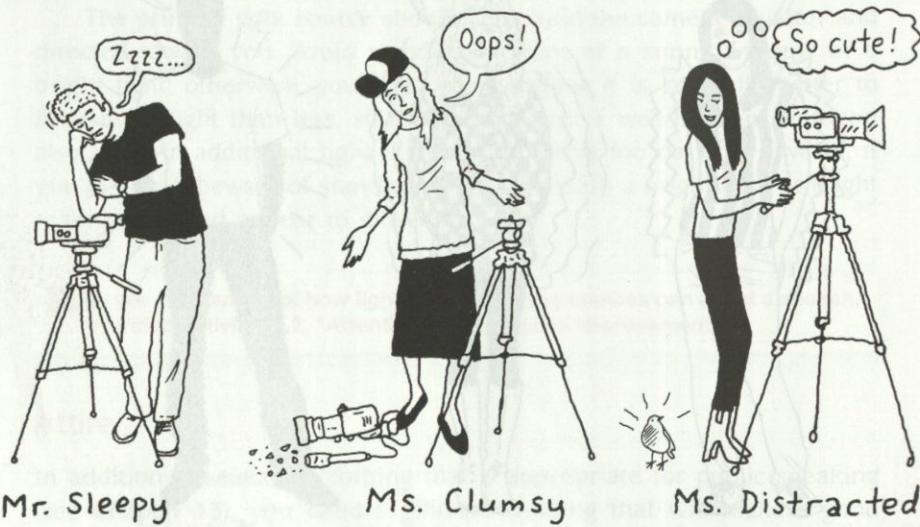


When recording your speech, be sure the view is wide enough to capture your movements and gestures. If no specific shot is required, avoid using “talking head” shots, in which the audience can see only your head and upper body. These tend to be perceived as boring by the audience, and they limit much of your nonverbal communication. Also, if someone is taping you with a cell phone or other handheld device, be sure to have her or him place the device on a flat surface to avoid camera shakiness.

© To see an example of a speech with camera operator problems, try Video Activity 15.3, “Fallacy: Red Herring (Needs Improvement).”

Be sure the camera is positioned at the level of your eyes. This will make you appear to be having conversational eye contact with audience members rather than looking down on them.<sup>39</sup> Changing the camera shot while recording presents challenges, but it can help enliven your speech.<sup>40</sup> If you have a skilled camera operator and are confident he or she can make these kinds of moves look seamless (or if your professor suggests you incorporate different moves), consider having your operator

#### DO NOT ASK ANY OF THESE PEOPLE TO BE YOUR CAMERA OPERATOR



take close-up shots when you emphasize key points, zoom in on visual aids, or shoot you from different angles. These moves need to be coordinated between you and your camera operator so that they are done at the correct points in your speech. If the microphone is in the camera, it should remain about the same distance from you for the entire speech. If that distance becomes greater, you will sound farther away: a microphone can't zoom in or out the way a lens can.<sup>41</sup>

## SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR REAL-TIME PRESENTATIONS

Many students have experience with real-time communication, whether through joining Google Hangouts with friends or using Skype during an internship interview. Real-time communication is also highly important in today's workforce, and employers may expect you to know how to give an effective mediated speech.

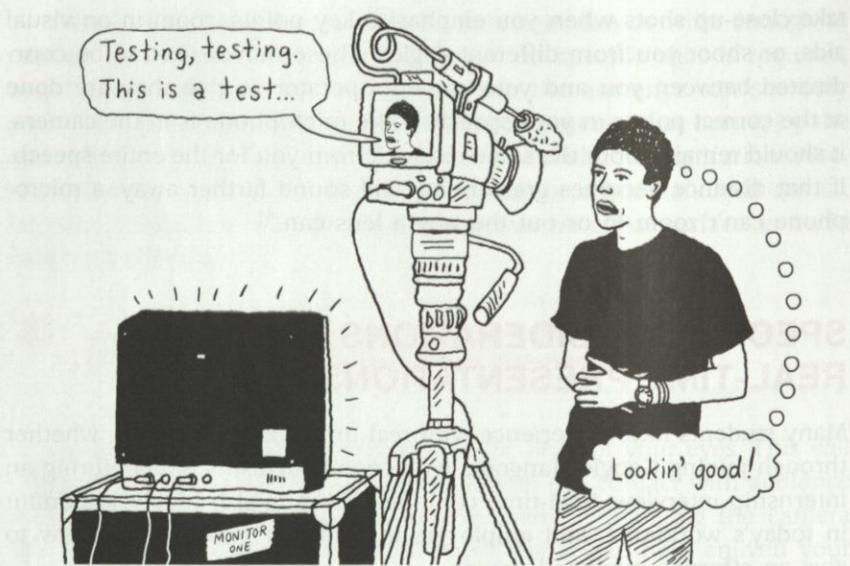
Although many of the previous suggestions about delivery mechanics apply here as well, some additional tips and suggestions are unique to real-time technology, including *practicing with your equipment to make sure it works*, *selecting a robust Internet connection*, *using group chat/video and screen sharing*, *creating opportunities for audience interaction*, and *soliciting feedback through an alternative medium*.

### Practicing with Your Equipment to Make Sure It Works

As mentioned previously, we strongly advocate practicing mediated speeches before the actual presentation date. For real-time presentations, it's vital to practice with the technology you plan to use. For example, if you are using Skype, practice in the room or location where you will be presenting at least one day before your speech. Go through a dry run, using and sharing any slides or video you plan to use in the speech. Ideally, you should ask a friend or colleague to view your speech remotely and make sure everything works smoothly.

### Selecting a Robust Internet Connection

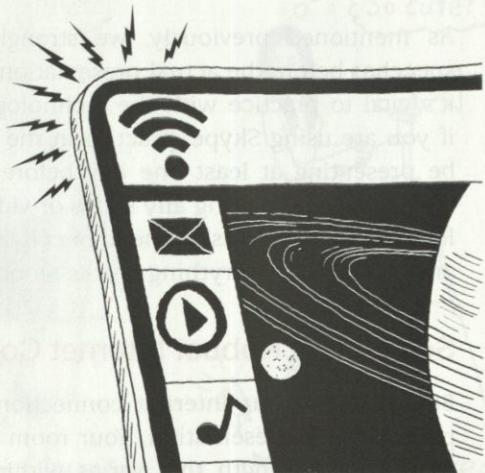
Be sure that your Internet connection is strong enough to handle all parts of your presentation. Your room may have a weak wireless signal or a signal strength that varies within the room. In these cases, you

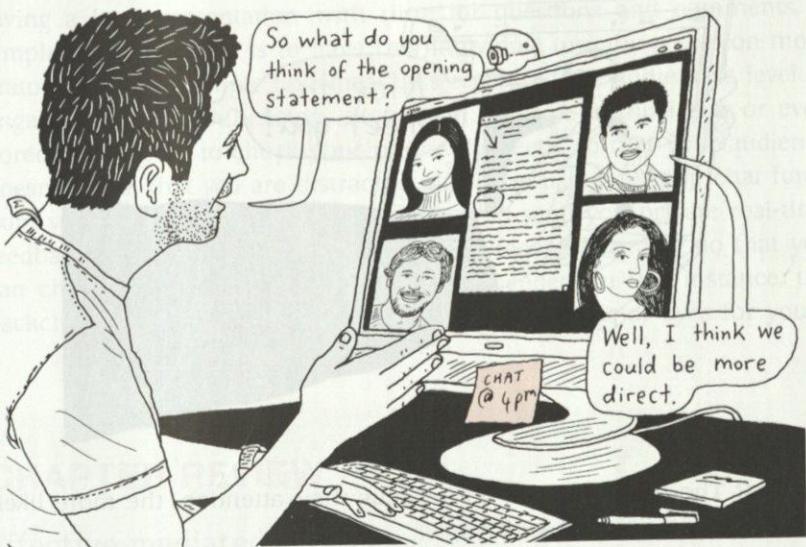


should find either a better room or a spot with the strongest signal. Sometimes you will have a choice of using an Ethernet connection or wifi. In our experience with technologies like Skype, if you have a choice, indicate a preference for Ethernet. In nearly every situation, it will provide a stronger, more reliable, more consistent connection. Wifi works, but other devices in the immediate vicinity drain its signal strength, which can freeze or crash your program.

### Using Group Chat/ Video and Screen Sharing

In a presentation via technology such as Skype or Google Hangouts, you can establish your audience and manage what audience members see with group chat/video and screen sharing. Group chat





can be used on the day of your presentation to add audience participants from a contact list. You can then change the name of the chat to reflect the purpose of the meeting (your presentation), type in a welcome message, and send out files (such as an agenda or slides) before the speech. Group video will allow you to see all participants individually. If available, you can also use screen sharing to allow your audience members to view your presentation aids on their computers.

### Creating Opportunities for Audience Interaction

As we mentioned earlier, mediated presentations can never take the place of face-to-face interaction. However, with technology such as Skype, you can take some easy actions to decrease the barrier between you and your audience as much as possible.

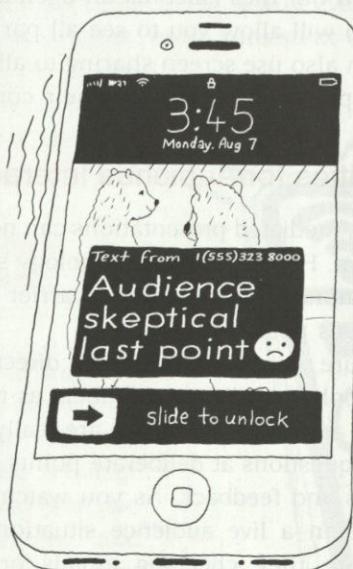
For starters, make sure you position yourself directly in front of your computer so that you look at audience members as they watch you on their screens. Create the appearance that you are really in their presence. Encourage them to ask questions at deliberate points in your speech, or ask them for comments and feedback. As you watch them, study their reactions as you would in a live audience situation. Do they appear engaged? Distracted? Are they checking emails or texting on their



phones? The more you can do to focus their attention, the more likely they will be to interact with you.

### Soliciting Feedback through an Alternative Medium

Finally, you may decide to ask someone who is at the audience's location to send you the reactions of other listeners, especially if you are



giving a long presentation with time for questions and comments. A simple way to do this is to have this individual (usually a session moderator) send you simple text messages regarding the audience's level of engagement, comprehension, skepticism, interest, enthusiasm, or even boredom. Be sure to check your phone discreetly so that your audience doesn't think that *you* are distracted. (If you're using a group chat function, your observer may be able to use it to send you private real-time feedback.) Ask this individual to keep the feedback simple so that you can check it and adjust your delivery as needed. In this instance, the backchannel feedback source becomes a second pair of eyes for you.

## CHAPTER REVIEW

Effective mediated public speaking offers a new world of challenges and opportunities.

Although mediated communications do not have the immediacy of F2F communications, they offer several advantages and are used increasingly in schools and the workplace. They fall into one of two categories—prerecorded presentations and real-time presentations.

Some of the advantages of all mediated presentations are flexibility, savings, and audience size. Prerecorded advantages include do-overs, pause and rewind buttons, and the ability to save. Real-time advantages include audience feedback, audience interaction, and the option to save. Due to the loss of naturalness in mediated presentations, there are also some challenges to meet, including loss of immediacy, decreased non-verbal communication, diminished feedback, and difficulty managing distractions. Still, there are ways to combat these challenges—by optimizing delivery methods (voice, eye contact, movement, and gestures) and adapting your message appropriately (focusing on building common ground and keeping audience members engaged). It's also important to practice a mediated speech beforehand.

When recording a presentation, you should consider choice of camera, setting/background, attire, and camera positioning. For real-time

In this chapter, we examined mediated public speaking, in which a message is transmitted through an electronic or a mechanical medium. We contrasted mediated communication with face-to-face (F2F) com-

presentations, keep in mind the following suggestions: practice with your equipment to make sure it works, select a robust Internet connection, use group chat/video and screen sharing, create opportunities for audience interaction, and solicit feedback through an alternative medium.



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## Key Terms

mediated communication 436  
prerecorded (asynchronous)  
presentation 439  
real-time (synchronous)  
presentation 439

naturalness 444  
multitasking 447  
takeaway 452

## Review Questions

1. Define *mediated public speaking*, and provide three examples of situations in which a mediated presentation might be used.
2. Name and define the two major categories of mediated presentations.
3. Identify three advantages of mediated presentations.
4. Define *naturalness*, and explain the challenges speakers face when not presenting in a face-to-face situation.
5. Identify three things to keep in mind for effective delivery of mediated presentations.
6. Name four ways of keeping your audience engaged during a mediated presentation.
7. Name three tips for practicing the delivery and recording of a prerecorded speech.

8. Explain how the background for a prerecorded speech should look.
9. Explain the advantages of group chat/video or screen sharing in a real-time mediated presentation.

## Critical Thinking Questions

1. Will mediated public speaking ever replace face-to-face speeches as the preferred format for presentations? Explain your answer.
2. Some colleges have created courses in which all lectures are presented online. Does this format improve the quality of education? Why or why not?
3. You have been assigned to videotape a presentation for your class, and you have three choices for locations—the campus study lounge, your apartment, or the campus bar. The campus study lounge may be occupied by students who are prepping for final exams, your apartment has stains on the carpet and the sofa, and the campus bar (where you work) will be moderately empty when it opens a little before lunchtime. Which location would you choose, and why?

## Activities

1. Working individually or in groups, prepare a plan to prerecord a speech. Include the type of camera, setting and background, speaker's attire, and camera positioning.
2.  Look at the illustration on page 458. How would you redraw this picture to correct the three camera operators? What should each person do differently?
3.  **Video Activity 15.4: “Gentz, My Hero, Marilyn Hamilton.”** Watch Lillian Gentz’s speech. How does the limited view of the speaker make it difficult to observe all of her nonverbal communication? Her presentation aids? If you were the camera operator, what changes would you make in recording Gentz’s presentation?

## Study Plan

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