



## **COMM 113: Communication Skills (2 CR)**

**Lecturer: Dr Wilson Silungwe,**

**BMC, MA Comm, MA, DRS, MMC (c), PhD (c)**

**[+260973485296,](tel:+260973485296)**

**[silungwewilson@gmail.com](mailto:silungwewilson@gmail.com)**

# DISCLAIMER....

1. Class attendance: Extremely important. Unless permission is sought for a genuine emergency, and since this is block release, absence is not going to be tolerated. Time is limited.
2. Submission of assignments: Assignments are to be submitted on or before the due date. Assignments submitted after the due time and date will be outrightly rejected.
3. Writing test: It's your obligation to ensure you write the test (s) given in this course. There will be no supplementary test (s).

# Course Description

This Communication Skills course is primarily aimed at instructing students in the skills of speech communication, particularly in small group and in public speaking.

Learners are expected to improve on their speech communication skills by diminishing communication apprehension and enhancing communicator credibility.

# Expected Learning Outcomes

At the end of the course, students will understand:

- 1.Appreciate the salient aspects of speech communication
- 2.Manage and minimize communication apprehension
- 3.Enhance communicator credibility

# Course Content

The course covers the following topics:

1. Defining communication
2. Speech communication defined
3. Communication apprehension
4. Speaker credibility
5. Topic selection

6. Finding subject information
7. Organizing your presentation
8. Audio-visual resources in speech communication
9. Informative versus persuasive presentations
10. Ethics in public speaking

**Topic 1:**

# **DEFINING COMMUNICATION**

1. **Communication** (from Latin *commūnicāre* , meaning "to share") is the activity of conveying meaning through a shared system of signs and semiotic rules.
2. Communication in biology often occurs through visual, auditory, or biochemical means.
3. Human communication is unique for its extensive use of language.



## **Verbal communication:**

Verbal communication composes 7% of all human communication. Effective verbal or spoken communication is dependent on a number of factors and cannot be fully isolated from other important interpersonal skills such as non-verbal communication, listening skills and clarification.

# **Nonverbal communication:**

Nonverbal communication describes the process of conveying meaning in the form of non-word messages. Examples of nonverbal communication include haptic communication, chronemic communication, gestures, body language, facial expression, eye contact, and how one dresses. Speech also contains nonverbal elements known as paralanguage, e.g. rhythm, intonation, tempo, and stress.

Research has shown that up to 55% of human communication may occur through non verbal facial expressions, and a further 38% through paralanguage. Likewise, written texts include nonverbal elements such as handwriting style, spatial arrangement of words and the use of emoticons to convey emotional.

Communication is thus a process by which meaning is assigned and conveyed in an attempt to create shared understanding. This process, which requires a vast repertoire of skills in interpersonal processing, listening, observing, speaking, questioning, analyzing, gestures, and evaluating enables collaboration and cooperation.

Effective communication:

Effective communication occurs when a desired thought is the result of intentional or unintentional information sharing, which is interpreted between multiple entities and acted on in a desired way. This effect also ensures that messages are not distorted during the communication process.

Effective communication should generate the desired effect and maintain the effect, with the potential to increase the effect of the message.

Therefore, effective communication serves the purpose for which it was planned or designed.

Possible purposes might be to elicit change, generate action, create understanding, inform or communicate a certain idea or point of view. When the desired effect is not achieved, factors such as barriers to communication are explored, with the intention being to discover how the communication has been ineffective.

# Barriers To Effective Communication: Notes in the Effective Communication Lecture



## **Types Of Human Communication**

1. Intra-personal Communication within oneself
2. Inter-personal Communication between two people
3. Group communication – Small (2 -20)
4. Public (20 up)
5. Mass (mass – audience)

# Models of Communication

Various models have been derived to present the communication process and make it understandable. Models not only describe and summarise the communication process, but also assist in identifying communication problems by showing where misinterpretation and misunderstanding could have occurred in a communication interaction.

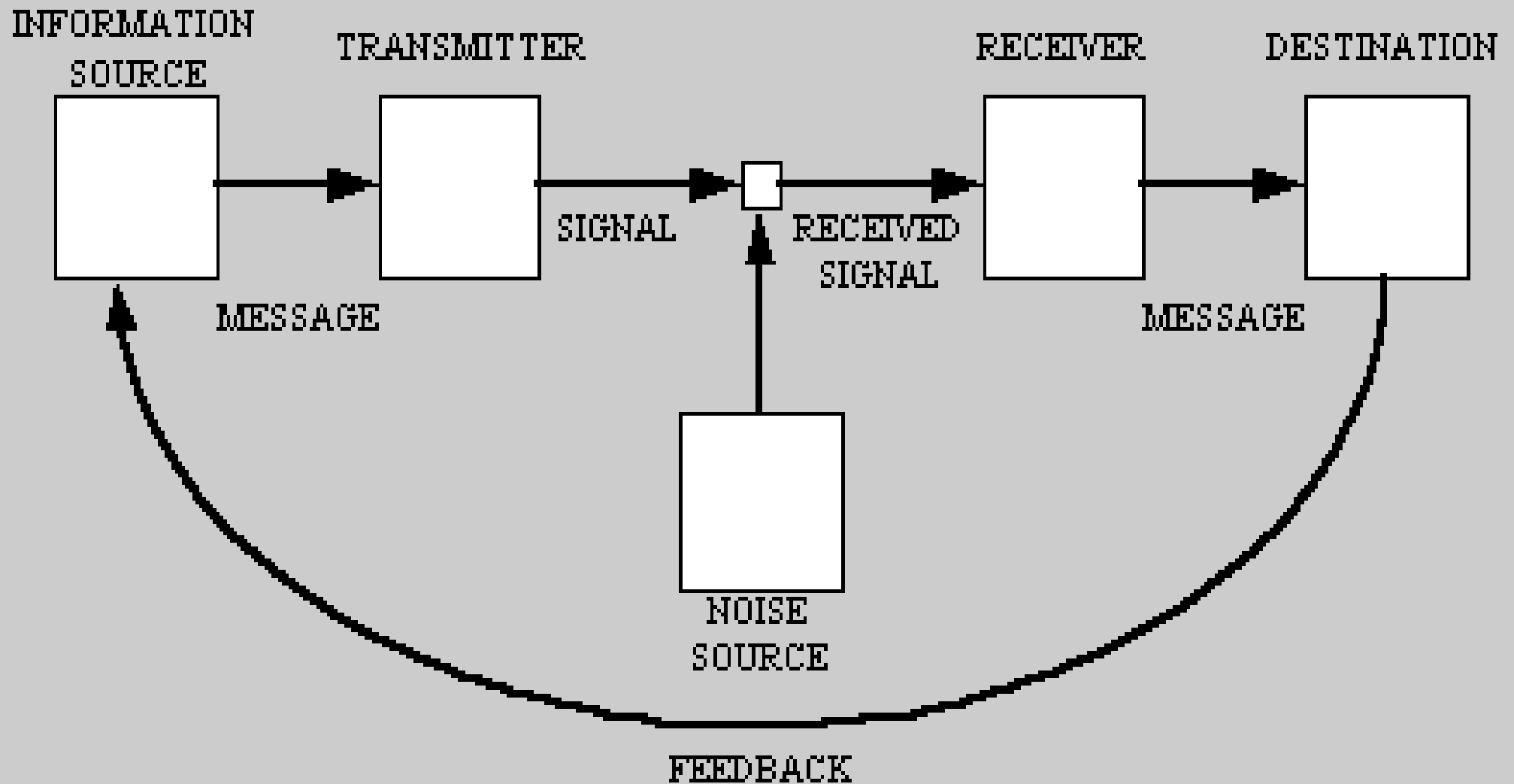
## **Action Model of Communication....**

This model, also referred to as the linear model of communication, describes communication as a one-way process. The earliest communication model, it suggests that communication is linear, mechanistic, clearly indicating the sender who encodes and sends the message to a receiver, who receives and decodes it.



## **Interaction Model of Communication**

The interaction model reflects advancements in the knowledge and understanding of communication. It depicts communication as an interactive process. The model identifies a circular, interdependent feedback process transposed over the linear communication model. The interaction model can also be referred to as two-way communication.



# INTERACTION MODEL OF COMMUNICATION

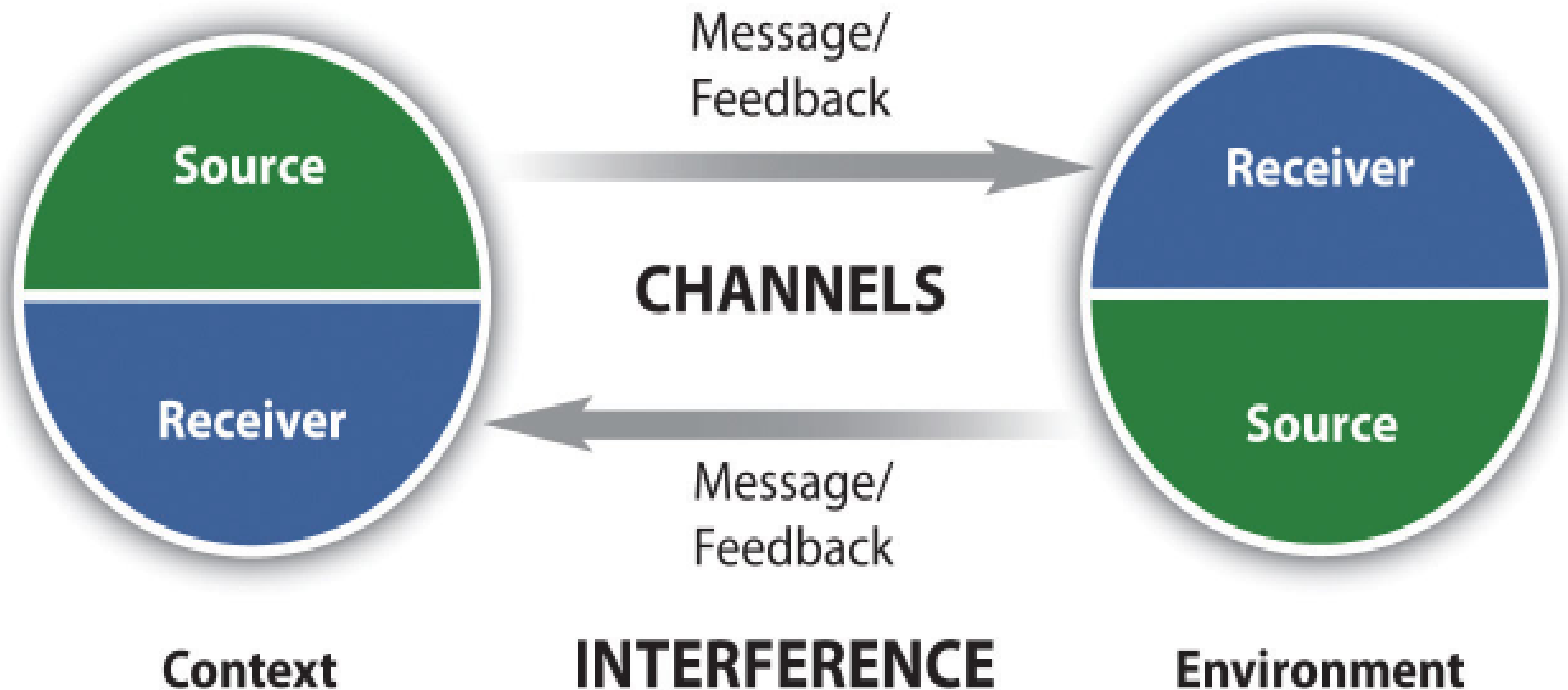
# Transactional Model of Communication

The transactional model of communication describes a communication transaction that involves a person's experiences from birth to the present, as well as his or her future aspirations and plans (Gamble & Gamble 2002: 14).

Jandt (1998:25) states that the transactional model involves sharing of information because relationship is the goal. Jandt further suggests that people who communicate with the goal to create, maintain or engage in relationships are employing the transactional model of communication because they seek meaning.



# TRANSACTIONAL COMMUNICATION



**THE END**

# Topic 2:

# SPEECH COMMUNICATION

Speech is the vocalized form of human communication. It is based upon the syntactic combination of lexicons and names that are drawn from very large (usually about 10,000 different words) vocabularies. Each spoken word is created out of the phonetic combination of a limited set of vowel and consonant speech sound units.

These vocabularies, the syntax which structures them, and their set of speech sound units differ, creating the existence of many thousands of different types of mutually unintelligible human languages.

Most human speakers are able to communicate in two or more of them, hence being polyglots. The vocal abilities that enable humans to produce speech also provide humans with the ability to sing.

Speech is researched in terms of the speech production and speech perception of the sounds used in vocal language. Other research topics concern speech repetition, the ability to map heard spoken words into the vocalizations needed to recreate them, that plays a key role in the vocabulary expansion in children and speech errors.

Several academic disciplines study these including acoustics, psychology, speech pathology, linguistics, cognitive science, communication studies, otolaryngology and computer science.



It is controversial how far human speech is unique in that other animals also communicate with vocalizations.

While none in the wild have comparably large vocabularies, research upon the nonverbal abilities of language trained apes raises the possibility that they might have these capabilities. The origins of speech are unknown and subject to much debate and speculation.

Speech Communication is verbal communication:

- 1.It is influenced by the personality of the speaker, the situation and also the characteristics of the receiver.
- 2.The ability to be an effective capable/convincing speaker is important because it hinges on your success and professional growth.

3. Public speaking is a process of generalizing and sharing meaning in a situation where a single source transmits a message to a number of receivers and gets non-verbal feedback.
4. The source of the message adapts a message to the audience in an attempt to achieve maximum understanding.
5. In public speaking, all the elements of communication process

# Public Speaking

Public speaking is oral, to a great variety of audiences in diverse situations – at work, in clubs, and associations, and during political events and church gatherings. In order to be an adept public speaker, both speaking skills and listening skills are important.

Public speeches perform four important functions for a society:

1. Speeches are used for self-definition e.g. Memorial Day, labour Day, dedications of monuments, centennial celebrations.

2. Speeches are used to spread information through a community e.g. Presidents Press Conference.

3. Speeches are used to debate questions of fact, value, and policy in communities e.g. Radio and Television Interviews
4. Speeches are used to bring about individual and group change e.g. the Constitutional Review Commission Presentations on TV, Radio and in Conference rooms around the country.

# Principles of Effective Communication

1. Accuracy: Careful word choice is essential ingredient in transmitting your meaning to an audience. Leave no doubt to your meaning. Words are symbols that represent concepts or objects. To avoid vagueness in definition and elsewhere, choose words that express the exact shade of meaning you wish to communicate e.g. shine – ray of light: glow, glitter, glisten, gleam, flare, blaze, flash, and beam all allow you to communicate more precise features of the ray.

2. Simplicity: Abraham Lincoln says “speak so that the most lowly can understand you and the rest will have no difficulty. Never use a longer or less familiar word when a simpler one is just as clear and accurate. Simplicity suggests that you consider the advantages of short, easily understandable words that convey precise, concrete meaning.



3. Coherence: Transmitting ideas orally requires attention to the perceived coherence of your message. Speakers are signposts in form of carefully worded phrases and sentence to help listeners follow the movement of ideas within a speech and perceive the overall message structure

4. Language intensity: Word choice depends on how you feel about the subject. Through word choice or phrasing you communicate your attitudes toward the subject e.g. discussed, outlined (verb choice)

5. Appropriateness: Speech should be appropriate to the topic and to the situation e.g.
1. Solemn occasion – restrained, dignified
  2. Joyful occasion – informal and lively
  3. Slang usage – first check the audience (peers)

6. Style: Style involves selecting of words, arraying them in sentences, and then decide how to reveal yourself-image to that group of listeners. Using these styles can be personal, or impersonal, literal or ironic, plain or elevated, even philosophical or poetic.

When we speak in public, we have three basic kinds of tools at our disposal: Visual, Verbal, Vocal

Visual Considerations...

With visual cues, we shall look at clothing, posture, gestures, facial expressions, movements, and use of eye contact.





Dressing: Before you select your wardrobe, consider the topic, the audience, and the occasion. The clothing a speaker wears should reinforce, not detract from the presentation. Be aware that it's up to you to choose what you will wear. Your clothing does not choose you. (Formal: Dark suits are recommended).





Posture: You are expected to be on your feet. Your posture communicates. Some unaccepted postures are:

1. Leaning on the podium
2. Others perch one foot like a crane
3. Others prop themselves against the wall behind them



Gestures: movements of speakers hands and arms.

1.They may be purposeful

2.They help reinforce the content of your speech

Unwanted Gestures: scratching your neck, hands in the pocket, jingling of keys or jewelry, smoothing the hair, such manners become intensified in stressful moments.



Movement and Facial Expressions: The way you rise and approach the speakers stand communicates a significant first impression to your listeners.

Consider carefully your way of moving to and from the speakers stand. The way you move communicates whether you are in control or not.

Facial expressions as you complete your speech and your walk as you return to your seat also send important signals to your audience. Some movements and facial expressions apologize for a poor showing.

To show confidence, walk with head erect, and in a straight path. Proceed assuredly and use open rather than closed arm movement.





Eye contact: Eyes also communicate. Be sure that your gaze includes all the members of the audience. Such contact will draw even the most reluctant listeners into your presentation.

## Vocal Considerations

The voice is our main tool in speech making. The voice is to your speech as the artists brush is to a painting – it carries color, just as the voice transmits ideas to your listeners.

Work on the four basic vocal dimensions: volume, rate, pitch, and quality.

1. Volume: Maintaining your voice at an appropriate volume is your responsibility

2. Pitch: Try not to fall into the monotone trap; it creates boredom. Use pitch to reflect the emotional content of your material; use it to create interest.

3. Rate: speaking too quickly or too slowly can impede understanding. Respond to feedback from your audience and speed up or slow down your pace as appropriate.

Non-fluencies are a problem every public speaker needs to consider. Also referred to as vocalized pauses “uuh”, “uum”, are normal in communication encounter, but not in public speaking. Public speakers are expected to have prepared their remarks carefully, and thus the audience is less tolerant to their non-fluencies.

# Evaluating Your Effectiveness

You and your listeners can evaluate your speech by analyzing how effectively you were able to handle each of the following: content, organization, language, and delivery.

Content: Was the subject of speech appropriate, worthwhile, purpose communicated research, visual aids helpful? Were the main points adequately developed?

## Organization:

- 1.effective organizational approach
- 2.attention of the audience
- 3.preview of the main points
- 4.logical arrangements of points
- 5.conclusion: provide sense of closure; motivate listeners to keep thinking about the presentation thereafter.

Language:

1.Clear

2.Vivid

3.Speech sound as if it should be listened to or read

4.Words or phrases (may considered offensive to members of audience)



## Delivery:

1. Maintain effective eye contact
2. Approach speaking situation confidently
3. Able to use extemporaneous style delivery
4. Heard easily
5. Speaking at appropriate rate
6. Articulate clearly

# THE END

Topic 3:

# COMMUNICATION APPREHENSION

# EVERYONE HAS STAGE FRIGHT... IT'S BIOLOGY!



# Communication Apprehension

This is the level of fear or anxiety that an individual experiences associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons. There is normal and abnormal apprehension.

1. Normal apprehension: In the first few minutes of speaking, we all experience nerves. That is normal.

2. Abnormal apprehension: is excessive or chronic because it occurs through out one's speaking experience.



# Types Of Apprehension

1.State apprehension (situational apprehension) - It is related to a specific situation that would render somebody anxious

2. Trait apprehension (chronic apprehension) –  
Persistent behavior of a continuing nature. Several  
technics used to treat this kind.
3. Communibiological apprehension (genetic make-up)
  - May need medication



## **CAUSES OF COMMUNICATION APPREHENSION**

**“I had a previous experience, and it was bad.”**

**“This is totally new experience. I have no idea what to expect.”**

**“I am worried about the effect that this communication may have on my life.”**

**“I don’t like people looking at me; it makes me uncomfortable.”**


**“I don’t think that anyone here wants to hear what I have to say.”**

**“I feel like everyone’s really tense; talking can’t possibly ease the mood.”**

# CONSEQUENCES OF HIGH COMMUNICATION APPREHENSION

Tendencies to avoid all forms of communication

1. Leads to poor performance in school, work place.
2. Compromises general competency
3. Compromises your attractiveness
4. Compromises your composure
5. Compromises the credibility of the speaker



*Society places a premium on  
your ability to communicate  
forcefully, and there are  
many, mostly negative  
consequences for those  
with an apprehension  
about communicating.*

— Dr. John Daly

## Ways to Reduce Communication Apprehension:

Skill approaches (skills training in public speaking.)

1. Know your topic (absorb your topic)
2. Know your audience
3. Know yourself
4. Know your speech
5. Focus on the message and not yourself
6. Appreciate your value and your uniqueness (like fingerprints)

# How to achieve all this

- 1.Practice
- 2.Be calm
- 3.Be confident
- 4.Be comfortable first before you start speaking (scan the audience, by the time you are done, you will have intimidated all of them.)
- 5.Focus on friendly faces in the audience
- 6.Make sure the introduction, the main points and conclusion are clear in your mind.

# Cognitive Modification

This is an anxiety reducing technique that requires you to think positively than negatively

# Visualization

It is where you visualize or picture yourself  
presenting a successful presentation where you  
did not have communication apprehension

## Systematic desensitization

This is where you combine fear reducing thoughts and deep relaxation to reduce communication apprehension (start speaking only when you have calmed down.



# THE END

# **Topic 4:**

## **SPEAKER CREDIBILITY**

**Credibility is, literally, the extent to which your audience believes you when you speak. It is about the trust they place in you, especially as being an expert in your topic.**

**Unlike simple trust, which is often given until a person is found untrustworthy, credibility often has to be earned, and people will look first to indicators such as achievements in education and employment, then to their first-hand experience of your presentation.**

## **Initial credibility**

**Initial credibility is that which you have before the presentation. This may be zero when people do not know you at all. It may also be very high if you are a known author, professor or personality who has achieved fame.**

**For those with low initial credibility, the task is to create credibility, which is where presented credibility is important and particularly derived credibility for real evidence.**

**For those with high initial credibility, the challenge is to live up to expectations, which may be artificially inflated, perhaps by your publicists or maybe by excessive admiration from your adoring audience!**

## **Presented credibility**

**Presented credibility is that which is presented to the audience before you speak. If there is a brief biography in event material then this may give them some indication of your achievements.**



**A powerful form of presented credibility is a glowing reference from other people who themselves have high credibility. This is often done when a known person introduces a person who is not known.**

**Things that add to presented credibility include:**

- 1.High qualifications, such as a PhD or degrees in multiple subjects.**
- 2.Having books and papers published.**
- 3.Senior positions in known organizations.**
- 4.Significant achievements in your work or private life.**

## **Derived credibility**

**Derived credibility comes from what you actually present. It comes from the quality of the material in your presentation, including the layout of your slides and the credibility of the facts you present. It comes from the words you use and how you say them. It also comes from how you dress and present yourself with clear authority.**

**A person with high initial credibility can lose significant credibility here if they are ill-prepared, which can happen to a famous person with an over-busy schedule. If your audience thinks you do not care enough about them, then they may feel betrayed and discount much of what you say.**

**A person with low initial credibility can do a lot here to build credibility with a clear, well-thought-out presentation and strong delivery. It does not have to be world-class as your audience likely does not expect this. But if you send them away with a good impression of both you and what you have said, your credibility will take a significant boost.**

# **Terminal credibility**

**Terminal credibility is that which your audience takes away with them. Perhaps unfairly, if they admire you already, they may forgive you for a less than perfect display (although this is a dangerous game to play).**

**Equally unfairly, they may forget what a lesser-known speaker says, even though it is sound. This is one reason why it is important to make a solid and clear impact, not over-doing it nor presenting too much information. They will remember few things, so do remember to make your points clear and to give them a strong ending.**

**Speaker credibility thus:**

**1.Hinges mainly on the audience's perception of the speaker.**

**2.Often times is assumed that the credibility of the speaker when they are in position of authority their credibility is enhanced**



# **HOW TO ENHANCE CREDIBILITY**

- 1.Competence – speaker is perceived to be credible (is the speaker reliable, calm, confident)**
- 2.Trustworthiness – degree to which the speaker is perceived to be honest, honorable, fair, kind and friendly**
- 3.Dynamism - Speaker perceived to be bold, active, energetic, strong and assertive**
- 4.Common ground (co-orientation) - Extent to which the speaker's values, beliefs, attitudes and interests are shared with the audience (be consistent)**

# Identification

- 1. A speaker who identifies with an iconic personality, who is revered (respected) by his audience will be considered credible.**
- 2. It can be achieved before, during and after the speech**
- 3. It depends on topic, audience and situation.**

**Highly credible speakers have the ability to influence the decision making of their audiences.**

**THE END**

# **Topic 6:**

# **AUDIENCE ANALYSIS**

**The first thing is audience analysis**

- 1.Collection and interpretation of data on the demographics, attitudes, values and beliefs of your audience**
- 2.You can collect this data through observation, inferences, interviews**

# **Levels of audience analysis**

**Type of Audience: There are captive and voluntary audience :**

- 1. Captive audiences are homogenous**
- 2. Voluntary audiences are heterogonous**

# **Demographic analysis**

- 1.This is the collection of as well as interpretation of data about the demographic characteristics of the audience**
- 2.This data can be collected through various ways**
- 3.It includes things like age, sex, and gender, race, tribe, religion.**



# **Audience interests and knowledge of the topic**

**1.Relevance and importance the audience attaches to the topic**

**2.Audience knowledge is the amount of information the audience has about the topic**

**3.Age of the topic**

# **AUDIENCE'S ATTITUDES, BELIEFS, VALUES**

## **Attitude**

**An attitude is a predisposition to respond favorably or unfavorably to a person, an object, and idea or an event**

# **Belief system**

**It is a conviction often thought to be more enduring than the attitude and less enduring than value.**

**Value :**

**It is a deeply rooted belief that governs attitude about something**

# Relating attitudes, beliefs and values

**Attitude : Positive**  
**Attitude towards school**

**Belief in Education**

**Value: Knowledge and wisdom**

**Good performance in school has nothing to do with a mere hard work but has all to do with attitude, belief and value**

# **THREE METHODS OF AUDIENCE ANALYSIS**

## **Observation:**

**This is seeing and sensing the behavior and characteristics of an audience**

**Inference:**

**It is a tentative conclusion based on some evidence which may or may not be correct.**



# **Questionnaire :**

**It is a set of questions developed to obtain demographic data as well as information on attitude.**

**THE END**

# **Topic 7: SPEECH PRESENTATION**

## **STEPS TO FINDING SUBJECT INFORMATION**

# Topic selection

1. You do research
2. Introspection (debating within yourself)
3. Benefit is for you to discover and narrow your topic

## **Organizing of ideas**

It helps you identify the main and subordinate points.

## **Building on supporting ideas**

It helps you have facts, examples and definitions.

## **Preparing the intro and the**

It helps you reveal the most interesting ideas

## **Delivery**

It helps you boost confidence and credibility

# SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- 1.Introspection is fed by personal experience
- 2.Written work
- 3.All possible written words as well as visual experiences; what you see and hear is part of your enrichment process of your knowledge
- 4.Internet
- 5.People sources

# ORGANIZING YOUR PRESENTATION

- 1.Introduction is catchy
- 2.The body has sufficient information
- 3.Conclusion summarizes major ideas
- 4.There should be list of sources (bibliography)



# **What makes the presentation catchy?**

The introduction should gain and maintain audience attention.

**How do you do it?**

- 1.You can do that by presenting the object you are going to talk about in an interesting way.**
- 2.Audience participation**
- 3.Dress the part**
- 4.Play around with the imagination of your audience**
- 5.Start by capturing their sight or hearing**

- 6. Arouse curiosity**
- 7. Role playing**
- 8. You can start with a quotation or statement**
- 9. Start with “startling facts” or “striking facts” or statistics**
- 10. You can also start with self-disclosure**
- 11. Tell a story**

**By arousing interest of the audience**

- 1.The best way is to relate the topic to the audience**
- 2.State clearly the purpose of your presentation in the introduction**

**End your speech in a manner that makes your audience want to think and do as you recommend.**

# **Topic 7:**

# **SPEECH DELIVERY**

## **Modes of delivery:**

**1. Extemporaneous Mode – A carefully prepared and researched speech delivered in a conversational style**

**2. Impromptu mode - A speech delivered without notes, without any plan and without any preparation and it is characterized with spontaneity and informed language**

- 3. Manuscript mode - A speech delivered from a written-down script**
- 4. Memorized mode - A speech delivered having been committed to memory**



# **Vocal Aspects Of Delivery**

**Vocals – these are sounds made when delivering a speech**

- 1.Pitch (highness and lowness of voice)**
- 2.Rate (speed at which you deliver). Normal speech speed should be between 125 – 190 words per minute.**
- 3.Pauses (the absence of vocal sounds used for dramatic effects, transition or emphasis of ideas.)**

- 4. Vocalized pauses – breaks in fluency or feeling in silence with meaningless words or sounds.**
- 5. Volumes – the loudness or softness of a person's voice**
- 6. Enunciations – how pronunciations and articulations**

# **How To Improve Delivery**

- 1. Gestures – they must be in line with the presentation**
- 2. Facial expressions**
- 3. Eye contact**
- 4. Body movement**

## **Visual Aids:**

**It is an item, can be used by a presenter for purposes of reinforcing a message**

**Visual Aids sustains 85% retention after three hours and 65% after three days.**

# **Types Of Visual Aids**

- 1.Chalk boards and White board**
- 2.Posters**
- 3.Power-point presentation and Slide presentations**
- 4.Film/movies and Photographs**
- 5.Drawings and Objects**
- 6.Handouts**
- 7.Flip charts**

## **Topic 8:**

# **INFORMATIVE VERSUS PERSUASIVE PRESENTATIONS**

**Primary goal of an informative presentation is to enhance an audience's knowledge about a particular subject area. It is supposed to be;**

- 1.Interesting to the audience**
- 2.Significant to the audience**

**In order to make an informative presentation effective;**

**1. Tap into the information hunger of the audience,**

**2. Tap into the relevance of the information on novelty (fantasy),. Novelty is useful**

**3. Explain - Breakdown information about something to make listener understand further**

**4. Narrating - Oral presentation and interpretation of an event on series of events**



# **Persuasive Presentations**

**It is an on-going process in which verbal and non-verbal messages sharpen, reinforce and change people's responses**

**The goal is to change people's attitude towards particular subject or stimulus.**

**Persuasion is not manipulation, it is not coercion**

# **Definition of Persuasion**

- 1. The act of causing people to do or believe something :  
the act or activity of persuading people**
- 2. A particular type of belief or way of thinking**

**How to persuade:**

- 1.Through motivational appeals (includes body and mind)**
- 2.Emotional appeal – people’s emotions**
- 3.Logic appeal – appeal on basis of rationality.**

**Speaker credibility is important as far as persuasive presentations are concerned**

**THE END**

# TOPIC 9

## LISTENING

**TOPIC 9:**

**ETHICS IN PUBLIC SPEAKING**