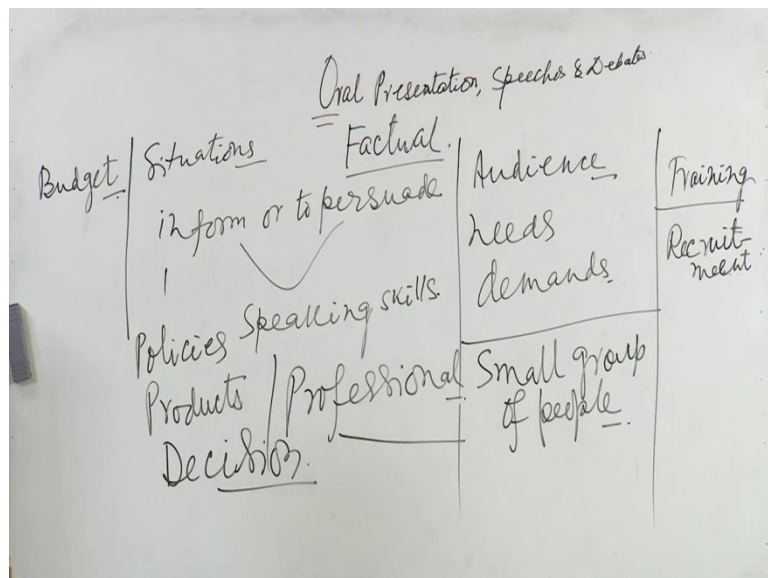


**Soft Skills**  
**Dr. Binod Mishra**  
**Department of Humanities & Social Sciences**  
**Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee**

**Lecture - 47**  
**Oral Presentations, Speeches & Debates**

Good morning! In the previous lecture, we talked about speaking as a skill or the importance of speaking as a skill. And there we talked about the various components which are involved in speaking. We also threw light on how a good speaker has better chances.

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And then we talked about various speaking situations and in organizations, you often come across----- one being conversation, group discussion, meetings, interviews, negotiations. But then there are certain other things also which we ought to understand.

For example, you as an employee or you as an aspiring young man, might be thinking; how will oral presentation is important or why is oral presentation in organization, a factor or criterion for an employee to feel greater, better and more productive. Now one of the situations is oral presentation. Again, the other is the speeches and then debates.

Dear friends, once you are employed, you come across several chances of speaking. Now it is--- you're not confined only to your table, you have at times to address people; you

have at times to convince people, at times you have to tell them because all speaking situations are either to inform or to persuade. In both these situations, you require better speaking abilities.

Now, while you are informing, you are actually telling them something new; either about the new product that is going to be launched, first you want your own team members to know about it or you also want them to understand some new policies, products, at times you also want some changes in the way of their dealing with customers or in the way, they are treating other faculty members for all these situations you have to speak.

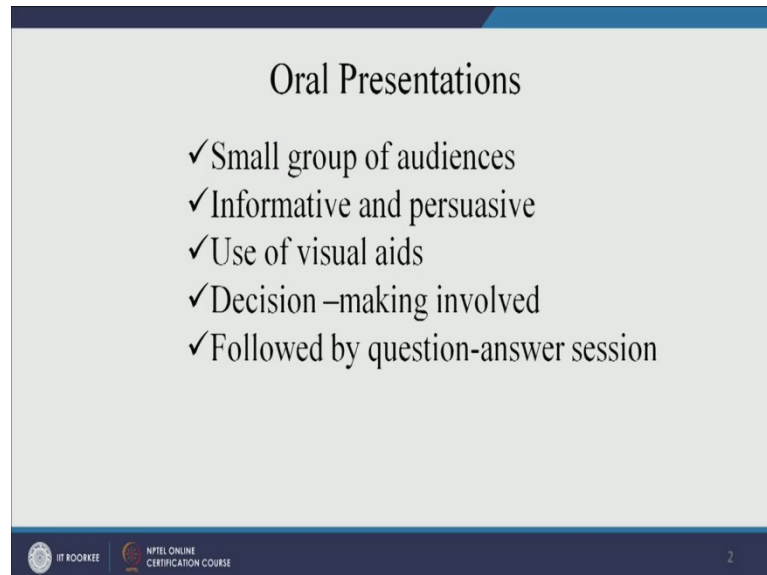
Now, there are many occasions where when you are informing them, you are not only informing them simply by speaking, but you want to demonstrate also suppose you are talking about a product or you are trying to explain a process. So, for all these, you require a sort of oral presentation. Now you might be thinking; what actually is oral presentation. Till now, right from the school days to your college days, you might have come across debates and discussions.

But then, what is this oral presentation and what are the various specifications of this oral presentation that we shall see and we will also in the lectures to come talk about; how to deliver successful oral presentations and we will do it a stepwise. Now for all of you is to understand that oral presentations can be given because earlier we were talking about audience; is it not. In your organization; your audience will of course, be the people who are the members of the organization, but again among them depending upon the circumstances, depending upon the needs, demands and of course, circumstances you will have different sorts of audience. And, if audience members as we said in the previous lecture, they vary not only in terms of their age, their size also, their taste, their educational qualification likes and dislikes.

So, sometimes depending upon the situation, you may have to speak in a smaller group; smaller group, but sometimes because you know oral presentation is actually more of a professional; you know; it is more of a professional sort of thing, more professional. So, when you are supposed to deliver an oral presentation or to think about an oral presentation; you have to understand what actually is oral presentation an oral presentation can be given to a small group of audiences.

So, in this lecture, we shall be differentiating oral presentation from speeches and of course, debates. So, when you think of an oral presentation.

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It has to given to a small number of people. Now when the number of people is small the task becomes more challenging; you might be thinking why because here; suppose you are going to give a presentation only to 10 people; you will find that all these 10 people, they are very much concerned about it, they are very much eager to know what the speaker wants to say. They actually will listen to every word that you will speak, every explanation that you will give. And remember, it is not only informative because you as a speaker have decided what to speak on and why to speak and how to speak because you will decide. So, when you give, when you go for an oral presentation, you have to understand that this oral presentation and especially to a small group of people, small group of people is actually; more challenging small group of people, more challenging; they are actually listening to you very sincerely hence a lot of preparation is required.

So, we shall discuss more when we talk about the preparation of oral presentation, but here I want to bring or I want to show the differences. Now in oral presentation as you will find it is not too full of emotion, it is a presentation because as a presenter; you are a presenter; presenter is the speaker who is actually going to speak to a small defined group of people and then if it is going to be informative, people may not simply be confirmed or they may not agree unless and until they know everything about it.

Since it is informative, all you need to do is you can take help to the use of certain aids, a new product that is going to be launched and people do not know about it. So, naturally you will try to show them and when you show them graphically, for that the visual aids can be mainly, you know, you can take the help of a chart; you can take the help of a graph; you can also take the help of several tables in different forms you can also bring film clips or you can also provide them a live demo which you have got from somewhere.

So, while doing this because visual aids are there, and people and these visual aids, they actually satisfy the curiosity of your audience members and they will listen to you only when they are satisfied. So, when you are giving an oral presentation you can take the help of these aids and these aids are going to facilitate your presentation because if it is an informative presentation it may either be informative or it may be persuasive because you know you want.

Why you are giving a presentation is because you want these people not only to know, but to condescend, but to accept your point of view or accept with your line of argument that is why are these graphs, charts in whatever form these visual aids are there because after this presentation you will be able to take a decision.

So, with every presentation some decision is involved. Suppose you want to cut down the uses of paper in your organization and for that, know, nowadays, there are different methods available earlier, you remember when people used to go to their offices, they had attendance registers, everyone used to sign and sometimes or the other, some people or as the trend was some people could have forgotten also to sign, but now they have developed a new mechanism and what is this new mechanism all of you are familiar with this biometric system of attendance.

In the days to come, there may be several new things. Like this new machines but before our people before our employees before our colleagues understand the nitty-gritty of all these, we have to convince them and that is possible only when we give an oral presentation, how can we be paperless, how can we be using a particular machine a particular product for that you present the entire discussion with the help of an oral presentation.

And after this oral presentation when you have taken the consent of all the members of the group to whom you have discussed, you are in a position to take a decision, but remember when more challenging thing is involved in an oral presentation is that after you have given the oral presentation; you will find that there may be questions because all these people; who are a part of this decision making process; they are to convince themselves also no one wants to be unconvinced and as a person giving the presentation it becomes your prime responsibility to convince them to persuade them, is it not?

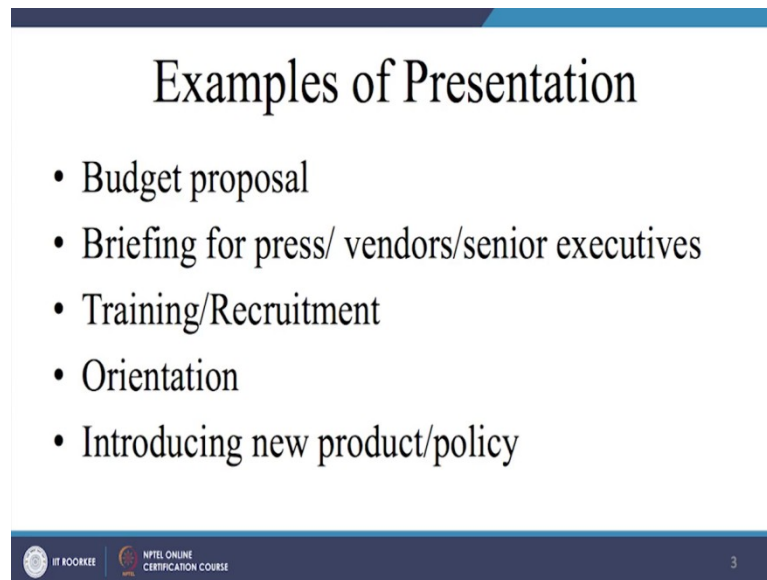
So, since it will lead to decision making process, it is better that this question-answer session is utilized properly, for that a presenter first himself needs to be well informed, he should prepare in such a fashion and how can he do that that will also discuss later he could anticipate the questions that will come and when he anticipates the question, he will also think of the possible answers because there lies the crucial act and this crucial act, I mean by satisfying your members you will be able to take a better decision.

So, this is all about oral presentations, but then when you have to participate in an oral presentation you will find that there are many such situations where you not as a member of this presentation, not only as a listener of this presentation because you know your position also; at times will expect you to give the presentation, some person who are simply a member in a listener in a presentation may have to deliver.

Because as officials, what they do? They give a presentation to their people, I mean to the people of their unit and those unit heads. They will also give another presentation in their own sections; meaning thereby you may also come across a chance or an opportunity where you also have to give an oral presentation. Now you might be thinking; what actually might be the different occasions where you need to give presentation.

In every organization, you will find that on occasions you are asked to prepare a budget is it not? Budget for your department, budget for your section; budget for your unit, but when you have prepared the budget in the written form and you are ready in order to convince other members, you have to give a small presentation. So, this presentation may be also a budget presentation.

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## Examples of Presentation

- Budget proposal
- Briefing for press/ vendors/senior executives
- Training/Recruitment
- Orientation
- Introducing new product/policy

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So, you need to understand the occasions when you have to give presentation. So, you have to give a sort of budget presentation and for that you should arm yourself, but then as I said earlier you need to be very careful not only while preparing this budget presentation, but also while anticipating the questions your roles keep changing in organizations, in institutes, it is good that sometimes you have to give a presentation in the organization, but there are times; when you have to give presentations to people from outside.

I mean that may be in the form of briefing, you know people at lofty positions, at times, they have to address, they have to face people from divergent fields. So, sometimes, it may be a briefing for the press there also you have to speak and all these situations have different limitations. The presentation that you give in your organization and when you are supposed to brief it to the press naturally there are differences your words; your say sentences your overall you know description will be different because it is for others.

So, it may be briefing for the press; sometimes you also may have to give a presentation to the vendors or organizations, you will find they have vendors of different categories different sorts. So, suppose something new is announced some new policies which are to be implemented and have been formulated. So, you want to inform them. So, naturally you can go for briefing to the vendors.

Sometimes, you also from time to time will find because you know we are living in the world of organizations, where we want to update the progress, we want to know what is happening, how much of job has been done and how much of it is still remaining. So, in order to update because you know in organizations it is actually dependent on the information that you have been providing. So, from time to time in order to measure in order to decide what more men and materials are to be required.

So, sometimes you also have to brief your senior executives. So, here briefing will be in a different form; you will be informing, you will be telling them, but remember while you are doing all these; it is actually your speaking that matters; it is because you know he may not be in a position to read everything, but then while you are submitting him the written version; you are also going to express it by speaking to him. Another situations that require you to speak or to give presentations; they are also for the purposes of training, for purposes of training at times, recruitment, is it not.

So, you will find that there are situations where suppose a new lot, a new group of assistant managers have joined your organization and you are the unit head; they do not know; what they have to do now though you have already provided them; the written material you have provided them, a set of instructions, but then you need to address them also.

So, there are times when you need to address them and in certain organizations they have an orientation program; when you might be students joining a particular institute for a particular course; you might have felt that there could be an orientation program where they will inform you about the courses about other activities about the campus. Now, in all these situations because you know oral presentation is actually a factual description, it is based more on facts, it is very much factual.

So, you need to provide them information through orientation, through training; you will also find that in educational institutions from time to time especially for teachers; they are also sent for orientation programs; this is with an aim that they will receive some new knowledge, they will get more updated about the new policies, about the new procedures and if it is for the purpose of recruitment also.

So, your boss; I mean, the placement officer or whosoever it be; they will provide certain tips either to their students; who are going for the selection or also to those people who

are going to different organizations to hire new lot of B Techs; M Techs, graduates, post graduates, people with different specifications. So, for that also you need to address them again. You will find when you are going to launch a new product then the chances of your giving an oral presentation become very important.

Because there most of your responsibilities include how to compete with the other products that are there. How to have an extra edge over other people and other organizations? So, these are some of the situations where you need to address people, where you need to speak and that may be in the form of oral presentations. Next is you might be thinking oral presentations are fine, but why speeches? Are speeches also important, fine?

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## Speeches

- ☐ the faculty or power of speaking ; oral communication; ability to express one's thoughts and emotions by speech sounds and gesture
- ☐ a form of communication in spoken language, made by a speaker before an audience for a given purpose

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Now, imagine you are going to pass your final examination, it is actually a time when you are going either to receive your degree or somebody is going to give you a degree and while degree giving ceremony is on, you will find that there are some people who have to act as chief guests. Now you may also as studentS in smaller groups when you have your Bhavan day, when you have a situation like giving farewell or a situation when because you know you do not speak always only to inform or to persuade, you also speak at times to entertain.



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<u>Speech / Situations</u>	<u>Factual</u>	<u>Audience</u>	<u>Training</u>
Careful	inform or to persuade	needs	Recruitment
listen to new ideas	linguistic skills	demands	Research
argumentative ability	linguistic skills	Small group of people	
critical	linguistic skills		

Now, sometimes you have a Bhavan day and you have to speak, sometimes; they will announce your name on the spot. You have invited many of your friends, there also. Now you start feeling very uneasy why because you have not expected. Now such situations may come and you also might have come across many situations where you have to speak and that also in the form of speech.

Now, why you feel that you are not able to or you actually wish it could have been better had they not announced my name now, why is it? So, because you are not prepared and you start thinking that something wrong may happen; you do not have ideas, it is better to understand; what actually is a speech though will have a separate lecture on speeches for different occasions. But here I want to tell you many of us who are frightened of speaking; they are frightened only because they have to speak before unfamiliar crowds.

But then, if you understand what actually speech is, the task becomes easier. Now speech is actually the faculty of speaking, the power of speaking the lexical meaning of speech is the way you speak; it is once again a sort of oral communication; it is a face to face communication where you are expressing your thoughts, your opinions with the help of these speech sounds and with the help of your gesture and posture.

On many occasions, because you do not give a speech in your house. Because the sort of speaking you do in your house is very informal, but when you have to speak formally or to give a formal communication or to formal speech in a spoken language you have

many worries; you know you find there are so many difficulties that one will often end list why he or she does not want to speak.

So, a speaker has to speak before an audience for a given purpose. Of course, for all sorts of speaking here; again you will feel the same sort of situation is there and the same components will work your voice, your vocabulary, your style, your gesture, your posture---- all these are required since we are going to speak in detail on speech, it is better that we do not explain too much here, but then we have to understand the difference between the speech and presentation.

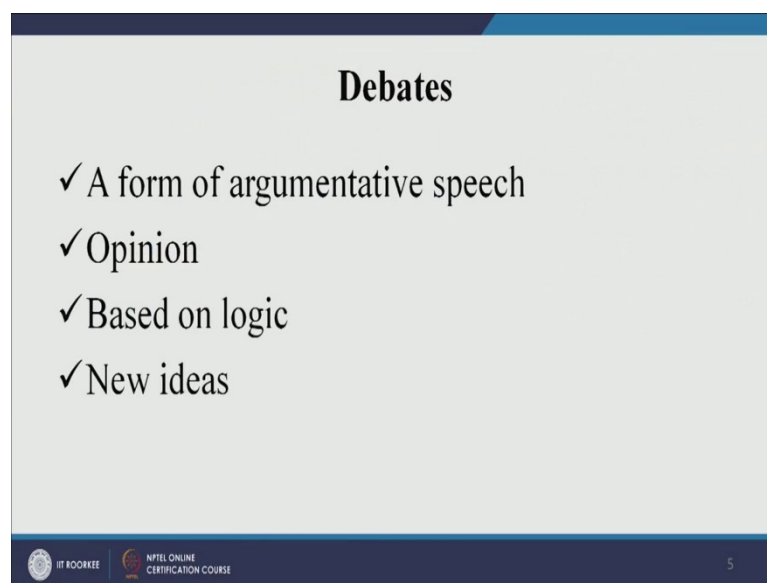
While in presentations; you will find that you have some visual aids that you can show in speech this is not so fine. So, there are certain limitations also, but then there is third situation also which is; which you have already experienced and you know as a speaker you often feel better when you speak on a situation which is familiar. So, let us now talk about debates.

You might have participated in debates as a student, you might also have been winners, but then there have been many such debates where you might not have been successful and you might be thinking that such a situation will never come in the organization because in organization you do not have to give a debate, but what is the harm if we try to understand. How debate is different from speech and presentation.

Now, because an very important factor is involved into it for all sorts of better speaking, you actually require a sort of argumentative ability and this argumentative ability can be developed only through debates, argument; you know people have argument, but they do not know; how to put their argument that is why from the school level; these debates are organized and students are expected to show their caliber and charisma through debates.

Now, when you are in a debate or when a debate is organized, what are the expectations and what are you supposed to do. First is that you have to build a sort of argumentative ability--- argumentative ability; how to do that what are actually the components in a debate you will find when the debate topics are announced.

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You know; most of the people, if they are interested in debates, they will tell you more how half of the thought processes are already given in the topic itself.

And in any debate, you will find that there are two parties; sometimes, there is a debate which is in the form of a group debate sometimes it is individual debates. So, you have to decide because there are two ways; either you will speak for or you will speak against. Now the question is there are two sides. Now the question is you might be thinking whether you speak for or you speak against.

Now, the thing is you have to decide whether you are going to speak for or against, but then when you are speaking either for or against you are actually putting your own opinion in it, opinion coupled with your argument. Because you may have a very different opinion than others, but remember whatever you are going to speak there has to be a logic in it. It has to be developed logically, my dear friend it should be based on logic.

So, when you are participating in a debate there are certain processes that you have to follow and of course, you are adding to new ideas, fine; new ideas; you are adding to new ideas. Now how to do better in debates and why debates are essential, debates are actually essential for an individual because it helps them cultivate a sort of critical thinking any topic is given and through topic we try to understand the person's capability of analysis experimentation evaluation then conceptualization.

We actually or people who are organizing debates actually want to see how a person's opinion can be reflected through a topic. Hence, as a debater and you know whether you are for the motion or against the motion whatever way; you are going to speak you are developing a sort of critical thinking. So, in order to have your critical thinking, you are proposing your own views, you are proposing your own ideas, but remember it is in a very rational manner.

You know if people simply at the outset say that I am against the motion; even if you are against the motion; you have to substantiate. You have to justify your line of thinking; why do you think like this because you have to reason and when you are going to reason; you are going to reason with facts of course, at times you may take the help of imagination, but this imagination is simply with an order to ensure that we can also look at this problem in such a way moreover this debating facility allows the individual to enrich his speaking qualities and also arguing abilities.

Now, let us try to understand what is so important of a debate; debate can be organized on any topic.

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**Attributes**

- On any and every topic
- Well-researched
- Either for or against
- Speech with conviction
- Readiness to counter
- Careful listening

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And you know; on this, on any topic; we want to elicit the views and through views, we want to know the persons response that is why when you are going to participate in a debate and you know the topic most of the time topics are announced well ahead and invitations are sent to many institutes and institutes send their students or representatives.

Now, all these people they have to do a lot of work before they go to participate in the debate; in order to be successful; in a debate first is when you know the topic you have to have a sort of research about the topic. Now when you talk about research, there are several ways you can adopt and you can go. Most of these students, they find it easier; simply to access Google and then get lots of points, but whatever points they are ultimately it is you who are expected to speak.

So, you have to do a lot of research and when you are doing the research and you are putting your own views; it has to be supported by arguments of course, you have your opinion, but then in order to support your arguments you have to bring certain data and when you are speaking imagine the days when there were debates in your schools, you could find that there was a sort of conviction among speakers. I mean this conviction has to be displayed through non verbally; even through verbally while they are speaking remember; when either you will speak for or against no doubt, but then if you are against you will always, you also have to ensure that the opposing party or the opponent may have something to encounter your views. So, you should also be ready to counter what the other party has said and how is this possible. This is actually possible only when you listen very carefully, fine.

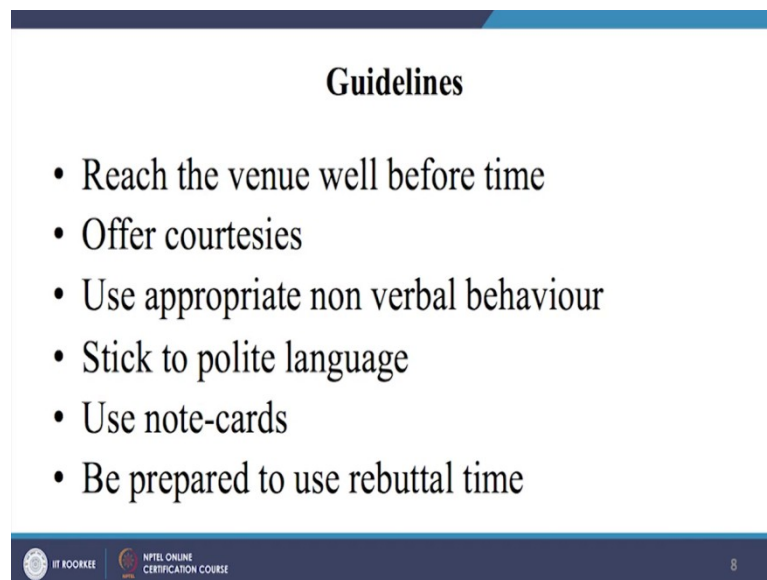
So, careful listening is a part of debate and when you start, finally, you know every debate is written as every speech is written; every presentation also is prepared. So, when you are writing the debate, you have to practice and in most of the situation, you have somebody to guide you. So, please remember and when you have written your debate you actually have to rehearse, it a number of times to see whether the way you are expressing is appropriate or there is some change required some alteration required.

So, but then before because you are a debater you know well how to put your views, but before that let us try that we do a lot of homework by researching on the topic and trying to draft your debate in a way that substantiates your line of thinking. Now another question that you might be thinking that should you stick to what you are saying of course, if you are for, you have to be for, but remember that there is one time which is called the time of rebuttal.

If a speaker listens to debate; a debater listens to others' point of view, from there also, he can find out certain you know points and when the rebuttal time comes he can argue,

well it has been seen that rebuttal time being properly utilized have resulted in making some people winners though; they did not anticipate themselves to be winners in the beginning so, but then there're certain things which you should also do on the day of the debate.

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### Guidelines

- Reach the venue well before time
- Offer courtesies
- Use appropriate non verbal behaviour
- Stick to polite language
- Use note-cards
- Be prepared to use rebuttal time

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It is always better to reach the venue, well in time because where you are going to speak in a debate you will find that there should be a proper blend between your mental, physical and psychological makeup. And for that, it is better not to be in a hurry, but to reach the venue; well in time when you reach there, you will find the other participants are also there; never treat them that they are only going to be your opponents please offer the normal courtesies required and when your name comes or when your name is announced please go there, greet the people, greet the panelists and then start speaking.

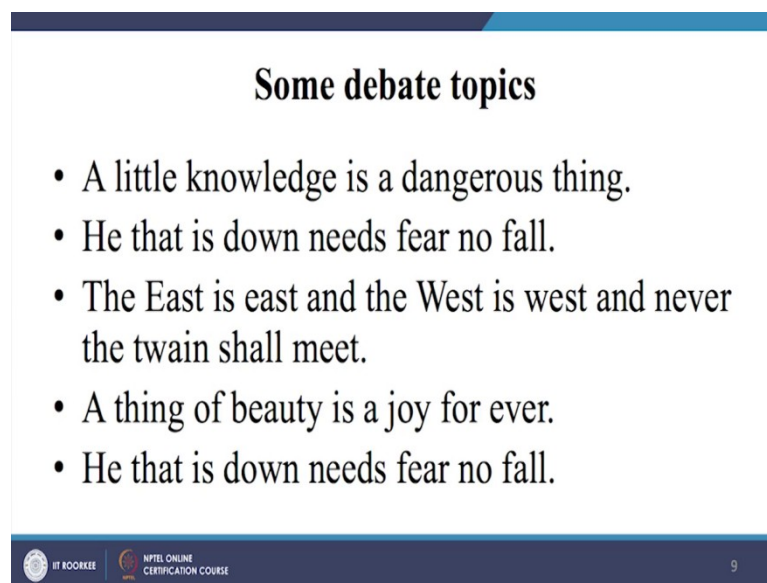
When you start speaking, you will realize that initially you may have certain difficulties, but since you have prepared a lot after certain amount of time, I mean which is you know very less you will find that you have been able to do your part well, but while speaking; please make use of appropriate nonverbal behavior and whether you agree or disagree your language has to be very polite; the way you speak even when you are contradicting somebody's views; you have to allow yourself to use a language that is harmless.

Some of the situations where you feel you can forget some of the points, that is why there is some liberty that you can have some note cards that is allowed, but whatever you

write on the note card should be legible and visible to you, otherwise, it has been seen that there are many good speakers who forget in the middle and they are some way or the trying to recall and even the note cards are not being helpful.

So, my advice to you is--- you have to make proper use of the rebuttal time, but remember once again; whether, it is presentation or it is debate or it is speech it is your speaking abilities that will pay you better dividends. The topics of debates can be different. Some of the topics that I can suggest are say for example.

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**Some debate topics**

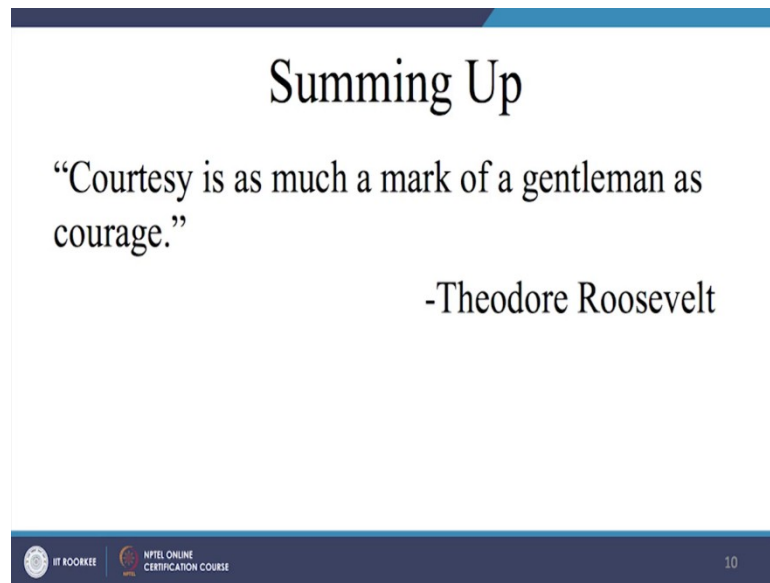
- A little knowledge is a dangerous thing.
- He that is down needs fear no fall.
- The East is east and the West is west and never the twain shall meet.
- A thing of beauty is a joy for ever.
- He that is down needs fear no fall.

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Some topics may be very literal, some topics may be very psychological, some topics may be a quote from some poem, some topics may be from some other sources because all these topics actually aim at eliciting the proper response of the debaters.

So, as a rule you have to win or lose, but then the way you express your thoughts are very important as debate allows your facility to argue, but argue in the best manner and without compromising with the courtesy it is time that we reminded ourselves of what Roosevelt said--- **Courtesy is as much a mark of a gentleman as courage**. Hence, as prospective speakers all of you in any form of speaking; whether it is debate oral presentation or speech, you are expected to maintain that courtesy keeping into consideration the thoughts, emotions and responses of your audience members.

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## Summing Up

“Courtesy is as much a mark of a gentleman as courage.”

-Theodore Roosevelt

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If you prepare, well nothing in the world can stop you from becoming a good speaker and ultimately a winner. Because winners do things, but only with a difference. I hope you will realize the difference and bring it in your form of speaking so that the way you speak, you are going to captivate your audience members and your listeners.

Thank you very much.