



CHAPTER TWO

Famous First Words

Visual Aids Speeches

Terms to Learn

stage fright
audience analysis
purpose sentence
chronological pattern
spatial pattern
topical pattern

problem-solution pattern
introduction
body
conclusion
slogan
jingle

Learning to speak publicly, to present ideas through the oral presentation, takes much time and effort. It involves both the matter and the manner of the speech. The matter, being the material presented, and the manner, the way in which it is presented, are equally important. Beginning speakers should realize that speech making is a part of our everyday lives. When you try to persuade your parents to let you do something which they are dead set against, you are speaking persuasively; and it is most likely that the speech is well planned and rehearsed. At some time, you may be asked to present a book report or introduce a guest speaker. Regardless of the type of speech or the size of the audience, the same rules apply when it comes to the mechanics of good speech making.

Preparation Overcomes Stage Fright

Being well prepared for speaking will help greatly in controlling your nervousness. This nervousness you feel when appearing as a speaker or performer before an audience is called **stage fright**. Convincing yourself that you are not going to fail can reduce your stage fright. Say these words to yourself, "I am prepared. I *will* do a good job on my speech. The audience will be interested in my speech topic." You can see how saying these positive things to yourself can put you in the right frame of mind for getting up in front of an audience. Too many speakers say, "My speech isn't going to be very good. I don't want to do this." Saying negative things like this will produce feelings of failure before you ever speak.

Gaining experience as a speaker will also reduce your fear of speaking. The more you get up in front of an audience, the more at ease you will become. Try to remember that most people get some form of stage fright. It may be seen as sweaty palms, a dry mouth or shaking knees. Another way of controlling this nervous tension is by focusing on your topic and your audience and not on yourself. Being well prepared and thinking positively are your best bets for overcoming stage fright.



Visual Aids

During those first speaking experiences, you sometimes wonder what to do with your hands. You are extremely self-conscious because you know all audience members' eyes are on you. One way to reduce the pressure of speech making is to provide something for the audience to look at. Several activities at the end of this chapter will provide the opportunity to do speeches with visual aids. This type of speech will make beginning speeches much easier. The audience will be focusing on the visual aid during the speech. This will mean audience eye contact will be divided between you and what you show. By the time you have spoken several times with visual aids, you realize that there's really no reason for your stage fright. At the same time your stage fright is reduced, your confidence is increased and you will have begun to take control as a speaker.

Planning your speech ahead of time is the first rule of good speaking. Speech preparation involves more than just getting up in front of a group

of people to speak. You have to know what you are going to say. You have to prepare.

Audience Analysis

First, you select a topic that interests both you and your audience. Audience analysis is important because you need to know everything you can about the background, attitude and interests of those who will be listening to you. Selecting a purpose for speaking is what makes a speech different from an ordinary conversation. Speeches have direction, and you must know where you are headed with your words. Will you be speaking to interest, inform, stimulate, persuade or entertain? Remember that you will be the expert on your speech topic.

Choosing a topic with which you are already familiar will make speech preparation easier. The audience will also be able to tell if you are interested in your topic. Show both knowledge and enthusiasm regarding your speech topic, and you will generate audience interest.

Know the Intent of Your Speech

It is a good idea to decide upon the specific purpose of your speech; that is, precisely what you want the listeners to learn or do once they have heard the information. You must be very specific as you write a ***purpose sentence***, a single sentence stating the intent of your speech. A sample purpose sentence might read: The purpose of this speech is to inform the audience about the proper care of a dog as a pet. Remember that the subject must fit the time allotted for your speech.

Some speeches require more than your personal knowledge of the subject. If your topic information seems shallow, you will want to add research to your speech. Support for your ideas may be material which comes from surveys, experts in the field, books, magazines and newspapers. Your researched information can be in the form of facts, statistics, illustrations, specific instances, narratives, examples, humor or quotations. You decide just exactly how much and what type of research information is needed to interest and inform your audience.

Every Speech Has Its Own Organizational Pattern

Many jobs are done simultaneously as the speech preparation process takes place. As you select your topic and begin preparation of the material, you will also decide on the organizational pattern to be used in your

speech. There are several ways to put your materials together. The possible patterns include chronological, spatial, topical or problem-solution. You do not have to organize your speech using any of these techniques but they will prove helpful as you gain experience as a speaker.

Chronological order develops in the same order that the events happen. A speech which discusses the history of women's rights could be put into this organizational pattern.

A **spatial** order uses space arrangements to tie the parts of a speech together. If your speech deals with a specific place, such as a vacation spot, this pattern would prove useful.

Another organizational pattern is **topical**, referring to the subject broken down into parts. All of the smaller parts fit together to form the whole topic. Speech topics for this pattern might be types of fishing or events at a gymnastic meet.

The fourth pattern, **problem-solution**, presents a problem that exists and develops a solution to the problem. A topic which could fit into this type of organizational pattern would be helping our senior citizens remain a vital and active part of our society.

Choosing an organizational pattern will depend upon the material you want to present about your topic, your style and creativity as a speaker and the direction and purpose of the speech.

Having chosen a topic, researched it, and selected your organizational pattern, you will be ready to begin a speech outline. Write your outline in complete sentences. Forming your ideas into complete thoughts prior to your oral presentation is very helpful. Most people think that they can speak without advance outline preparation. These talented individuals are few, believe me. It takes time and hard work to prepare and present a good speech. The outline is essential if you are going to master the art of good speaking.

A speech is divided into three parts — an introduction, a body and a conclusion. The **introduction** should get the attention of the audience. It should tune the audience into the speaker and the topic, allowing them to concentrate on the material ahead. The **body** of the speech is the subject matter, your personal knowledge plus any researched material you add to your speech. The conclusion ties all materials of the speech together. It brings your speech to a close.

Several Ways to Begin a Speech

One of the biggest questions you will have as a speaker is, "How do I begin?" You can begin your speech a number of ways. You may want to begin your speech with a question. Ask your audience a rhetorical question which has to do with your topic. It will allow your audience to start thinking about your speech topic.

A story is another form of introduction. Open your speech by telling a story which connects with your subject. It may be a personal story or an anecdote which relates to the topic.

Get your audience's attention by using a "startler." Startle your audience by increasing your volume and/or using heightened energy to deliver a remark which directly links with your speech idea. Using a series of ideas, questions or words which pertains to your topic is another option for a speech introduction. A quotation may be an interesting way to tune in to the topic. A song, a poem or joke may be used to arouse the interest of the audience members as long as it relates to the subject.

Choose the type of introduction which best suits the style of speech you plan to present. Arrange your introduction ideas, body material and concluding remarks into an organized outline which will be helpful as you deliver your speech.

This skeleton of your ideas will begin with the purpose sentence. Keeping these important words in your mind will guide you as you develop your speech. Next, put the idea you have chosen for your introduction into a complete sentence. The body of your speech will contain two or three main heads (I, II, III). The main heads will support the purpose sentence. Under each main head will be subheads (A, B, C) which relate to the main heads. Any subdivisions (1, 2, 3) under the subheads provide support for subheads. As you gain experience in speech writing and speech making you can determine the type of outlining which is best for you.

- I. (Main Head)
 - A. (Subhead)
 - B. (Subhead)
 - C. (Subhead)
 - 1. (Subdivision)
 - 2. (Subdivision)
 - 3. (Subdivision)
- II. (Main Head)
 - A. (Subhead)
 - B. (Subhead)
 - C. (Subhead)
 - 1. (Subdivision)
 - 2. (Subdivision)
 - 3. (Subdivision)

Writing your speech ideas in complete thoughts allows you to think about what you want to say and how you plan to say it. It plants the exact wording in your brain so that perhaps you can recall those words when you speak.

Requirements of a Strong Conclusion

The only thing left in the speech writing process is the conclusion. Just because you have completed giving information does not mean you have finished with your speech. You must briefly emphasize the main points of your speech. The closing should provide a brief summary which brings the main points of the speech into final focus. No new material should be introduced in the conclusion as it only confuses the audience. It should be evident to your listeners that you are "wrapping things up."

The conclusion should be left to restate what you have previously stated in the other parts of your speech. Remember, as the introduction allows for a speaker to give a positive first impression, so does a conclusion provide the opportunity to leave a good, lasting impression with the audience. Do not omit any part of a speech because each part has a vital function of equal importance.

Before you deliver your speech orally, you will want to expand the outline into the exact words you wish to present. The full manuscript should never be memorized. The possibility of forgetting important parts of your speech is too great when you try to use word-for-word memoriza-

tion. A better method would be to write the speech in paragraph form as you would like to present it. Familiarize yourself with your exact wording by going over your speech several times.

Transfer the main ideas of your speech to index cards for use in the oral presentation of your speech. Remember, never write complete sentences on your note cards, but just brief notes to give you assistance during your speech, if needed. It is advisable to memorize your introduction and conclusion so that both beginning and ending of your speech are strong. Refer to your note cards during the body of your speech, never read from them.

Methods of Rehearsing a Speech

Rehearsing your speech is the final step in speech preparation. Try recording your speech on a tape recorder and playing it back to hear how you sound. Another practice method involves delivering the speech while facing a mirror so that you may see how you look. You may get an actual critique ahead of delivery time if you can secure an audience with which to practice. All of these rehearsal techniques provide essential feedback so that you will make the necessary improvements to produce an excellent speech.

There are several visual aid speech ideas provided here which will allow you to practice the speech writing techniques discussed in this chapter.

Object Speech

The first visual aid speech is called the object speech. As previously discussed, beginning speakers have difficulty in their first speeches knowing what to do with their hands and where to look. Having an object to hold is like having a security blanket. It gives you something with which to refer, something to look at besides your audience, and something to do with your hands. With the audience's eye contact divided between you and your object, you will find that you are a little more at ease. The object speech gives you experience in front of an audience and practice organizing your ideas without much difficulty. It is a fun, easy speech designed to give you an enjoyable first speaking experience.

ACTIVITY — Object Speech

OBJECTIVE

1. To promote self-confidence in speech making by using an object as a visual aid.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Bring an object to class.
2. The object will need to be a practical object.
3. Show the object and completely describe it.
4. Tell the uses of the object. These may be practical or humorous or both.
5. Tell anything else that pertains to the object that may be of interest to the audience.
6. The speech may be either informative or entertaining.
7. Time limit for the speech is one to two minutes.

Topic Suggestions

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. tennis racket | 9. toilet paper |
| 2. pen | 10. pan |
| 3. _____ | 11. telephone |
| 4. belt | 12. piece of paper |
| 5. rubber band | 13. _____ |
| 6. toothbrush | 14. Band-Aid |
| 7. pillowcase | 15. rope |
| 8. newspaper | |

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