

How to Deliver a Speech  
Speaking With Confidence and Purpose  
Mr. M. Katz, Year 3 M. Y. P. Speech & Debate Coach

ELEMENTS OF A GOOD SPEECH

- A. ATTITUDE
- B. REHEARSAL
- C. VERBAL EXPRESSION
- D. NONVERBAL EXPRESSION

A. ATTITUDE

- Attitude matters a great deal with delivery.
- A confident presence is an aspect of your credibility and persuasiveness.
- Yet people have speaker apprehension, fear of speaking in front of an audience.
- This fear can become a self-fulfilling prophecy: We can make ourselves fail . . . or succeed.

DON'T

- \* Comment on your own performance.
- \* Apologize for your speaking, especially not before you speak.
- \* Don't hide behind the lectern, wear hats, or chew gum.
- \* Don't look over the audience heads or envision them naked (silly myths).
- \* Don't "watch your own feet when you dance."

You're Just the Messenger - don't stay focused on yourself or how people are regarding you. It's not just about you.

Three elements necessary to the speaking process:

1. Message.
2. An audience for which the message is designed.
3. A messenger - the messenger is less important.

DO

- Be conversational. A public speaking situation is personal - speak naturally and make eye contact - look at people and they'll relate to you.

\* Move like you do in normal life, but much less.

\* Stay focused on your material - you're just the messenger, not the point of the message. If you've chosen topics well, it's vital that you impart the information to your fellow classmates!

### DO NOT

- Give up on yourself - there's something you do well you that may not know yet.
- Get help when you need it - don't go away and try to get it "perfect" on your own, before you let anyone see it.
- Wait until the last minute - it's a bad habit that holds you back from your goals.

In this class, you simply can't afford it.

### B. REHEARSAL

- Practice, practice, practice.
- Get your speeches written at least a week early and say them out loud every day.
- Say your speeches out loud as you're writing them. Some phrasing looks good on the page, but doesn't fit the tongue.

It will remind you to keep language concise (to the point).

Places to practice:

In the car.

In the shower or bathtub.

Somewhere where you can shout without being heard.

In your mind when your lips are tired.

Your lips WILL get tired if you're speaking correctly. Repeat some *tongue-twisters* for conditioning:

\* Rugged rubber baby bumpers

\* She sells sea shells by the seashore.

\* Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.

\* How much wood could a woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck could chuck wood?

He'd chuck all the wood that a woodchuck could, if a woodchuck could chuck wood.

### Battle Plan

There are several ways to deliver a speech:

1. By memory (we won't require that)
2. By reading from a fully written manuscript – be familiar enough with your content so you can maintain eye contact.

3. Speaking from a memorized or written outline.

4) Speaking “extemporaneously” or “impromptu” - on the spur of the moment.

- Impromptu speaking isn't suitable here.
- It's possible to do some extemporaneous aspects of the speech: introductions, transitions, source citations, and conclusions.
- You're basically working with a rehearsed manuscript as you're building arguments that have to be carefully read.
- **Don't try to switch *battle plans* mid-speech.**

Don't explain the argument or how you got it.

Just read your document. Remember, there are time limits.

## ELEMENTS OF GOOD SPEAKING

### C. VERBAL EXPRESSION

\* You must speak loud enough to be heard, clear enough to be understood, and slow enough for your audience to comprehend the information you are imparting.

### D. NONVERBAL EXPRESSION

\* Body language matters because it influences your credibility and helps the audience focus on your speech. (Nonverbal “frames” the verbal).

#### Vocal Expression

There are five dimensions of voice that can be manipulated for greater effect:

**Volume** - Speak louder or softer for emphasis.

**Pitch** - Stay at an appropriate mid-range level.

**Rate** - Accelerate for a few sentences to excite, slow down and pause to emphasize some words.

**Articulation** - Speak clearly with full voice.

**Quality** - The personality of your voice, resonant, throaty, nasal, etc.

\* **Use appropriate in tone.** Sometimes when we get nervous we laugh inappropriately during serious moments. We may even become self-satirizing when nervous, playing as if it weren't important.

\* While you don't want to take yourself so seriously that you pressure yourself into errors, you should **treat the process with respect.**

#### Nonverbal Expression

- **The nonverbal frames the verbal** in this sense: Whichever behavior interrupts the other is the one that takes audience's focus.

- If I move to draw their attention - gesture or take a step - then speak, they'll hear me. (Non-verbal frames the verbal.)
- If I start to speak, then move aimlessly, they'll watch but not hear.
- **Stand still** for a moment and make eye contact with your audience. Then start. Speak only once you've made contact.
- Stay in one place for a while. Don't pace around through the speech. **Choose 2 or 3 places where you'll take a step or two.**
- Literally, "move into" your next argument.
- **Gesture naturally**, as you would when you talk with friends.
- **Free your hands** as much as possible to "allow" that to occur.
  - 1) Use large print on your index cards.
  - 2) Number them in case they fall out of sequence.
  - 2) Use the lectern for your index cards.
  - 3) Keep your hands out of your pockets.

Clothing and accessories are an aspect of your persuasion.

- 1) Dress appropriately to the occasion.
- 2) Don't hide under hats or behind sunglasses.
- 3) Watch jangling jewelry.

The Indescribable Interaction

- A speech isn't something you do to someone. It's something you do with them.
- They'll react how they react. They'll laugh at places you didn't think were funny, then not at places you thought were hilarious.
- Let them interact. Watch their faces and adapt. They're the point of the exercise.