

SPEAK WITH CONFIDENCE!

1. Write down the purpose of your speech (inform, persuade, entertain) and include the topic...(to be most effective, it should be something you are familiar with that you are "eager" to share)
2. Brainstorm/Write down as many ideas related to the topic as you can come up with (if need be, additional ideas may be acquired through research), then categorize into no more than 2 or 3 main points (the body of your speech). Trying to make too many points is ineffective--just concentrate on what you most want your audience to remember/act on. If more points are necessary, tell them they will receive a handout afterwards (so they don't need to take notes and can focus on listening!).
3. Think of examples, facts, stories to use to emphasize each point and "bring them to life" (could include pictures/graphs/props/etc)
4. Decide on a good attention-getting opening (arresting facts, intriguing story, provocative question, etc) and a strong motivating close (summarizing your points and, if appropriate, including a "call to action").
5. Convert to BRIEF notes/outline that can be used when giving speech.
6. Practice giving the speech, using eye contact, gestures, vocal variety (these will come "naturally" if you focus on their "causes" -- [a] Knowledge of/ expertise in the subject, [b] Passion for it, [c] Desire to share it with others).

TRANSFORMING stage-FRIGHT into stage-ENTHUSIASM --

1. Know your topic and prepare well (see above).
2. Imagine in your mind actually giving the speech successfully, with smiling faces engrossed in what you are sharing with them! (If possible, go to where you will be giving the speech to familiarize yourself with the area, and practice "on location") Audience "feedback" (facial expressions, laughing, etc) go to the speaker's "first brain" (the brain stem) which "detects" whether the situation is "friendly" or not. If not, it activates the "fight or flight" mechanism (heart pounding, sweating, etc). If faces are smiling and the audience is even laughing and enjoying themselves (i.e. "captivated"), the first brain informs the "new brain" (cerebral cortex) that all is well and it is "safe" to proceed. For this reason, your speech introduction should be attention-getting and possibly include a touch of humor (here, or at least in the body of your speech). This effectively removes fear by transforming it into self- confidence via audience rapport.
3. Just before starting, breathe deeply a few times. This has a way of relieving tension (and gets oxygen to the brain). Realize that ALL speakers feel some degree of anxiety. Understanding the above will enable you to use this anxiety/tension to your advantage to deliver an energetic/enthusiastic speech!!!
4. Smile at the audience as you approach the podium and pause for a moment as you look around at everyone. Think how EXCITED you are about this information and that you CAN'T WAIT to share it! Realize that THEY will be SO GLAD to get the information you will be imparting and that their lives will be DEEPLY ENRICHED and BENEFITED by it!!! If you concentrate on this wonderful message you are about to share and how much your audience will APPRECIATE it, your mind will be OFF you and ON what you WANT it to be on--your message!
(also, see 1 John 4:18)

TABLE TOPICS! (IMPROMPTU SPEAKING)

Give you the opportunity to practice effective public speaking skills on the “spur of the moment” -- much like we all do in the natural course of a day. Should employ the same skills used in a prepared speech (eye contact, gestures, vocal variety, etc.), and have an opening, body and conclusion.

FORMULA for Successful Impromptu Speaking:

1. **LISTEN** – not only to the words, but to their content, to make sure you understand what you heard. Advantages are: (1) Respect - People are more likely to listen to your ideas when you listen to theirs, (2) Ready-made dialogue - You’ll be able to incorporate some of what you’ve heard into your reply, (3) On-target responses - your chances for commenting directly on what you’ve heard are improved.
2. **PAUSE** – allows you to organize/refresh your thoughts to formulate an answer and can even add drama to your reply. A silent pause is always preferable to verbal place holders such as “um,” “ah” and “y’know.”
3. **CONFIRM** – repeating the question out loud gives your brain cells a better opportunity to absorb the concept ... providing you with a clearer idea of how to respond. This will also verify that you understood the question!
4. **TELL** – now that you’ve prepared, dazzle them with your reply (thoughts, opinions or ideas) and remember to stay focused.
5. **END** – bring your comments to a close: emphasize your main point, smile while making that final audience eye contact ... then, sit down!

The best way to PREPARE AHEAD is to have an “outline” already in mind you can “fit” your comments into. When given a topic, just select a format that “works for you” and organize your thoughts accordingly! Here are a few possible formats.

PAST - PRESENT - FUTURE
BEFORE - AFTER
ALTERNATE VIEWPOINTS
PROBLEM - SOLUTION(S)
ADVANTAGES - DISADVANTAGES
POLITICAL - ECONOMIC - SOCIAL
GEOGRAPHIC INFLUENCES
YOUR OWN EXPERIENCES
AN APPROPRIATE STORY

(A “message” to the Topic Master – Topics should be of such a nature that ANYONE should be able, without too much difficulty, come up with their own comments to share. The purpose is NOT to “stump” the victim (oops, I mean, speaker), but to allow them the opportunity to practice speaking on something they should be able to compile a few quick thoughts on.)

When given a topic to speak on, feel free to take a few seconds to collect your thoughts before speaking. The “nice” thing about Table Topics is that, if you have difficulty thinking about what to say on the topic you’ve been given, you can SWITCH to a related topic!!! Just have the attitude that you’re going to enjoy yourself sharing a few thoughts/insights ... and, by all means, add a little humor (it “breaks the ice” and puts everyone [including YOU] at ease)!