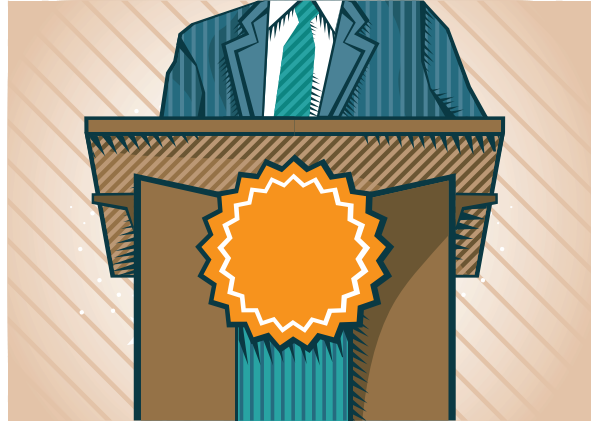


# Speaking Skills

**M**OST PEOPLE will face opportunities in their lives—professionally and personally—where they will need to speak publicly. This opportunity need not cause anxiety or paralysis. Certain tricks of the trade, when learned, can make it possible for you to be a great speaker. As with any skill, practice makes the difference between a rookie and a professional.



## Objectives:



1. Identify techniques for effective speaking and the different categories of speeches.
2. Describe how to organize, prepare, and deliver an informative speech.

## Key Terms:



body	enunciating	introduction
conclusion	informative speech	persuasive speech
entertaining speech	intensity	pitch

## Public Speaking

There may be times in your life when you will have to speak to an audience. This task requires practice if it is to go well. It is safe to say that if you do not practice, your anxiety will make this task difficult. The purpose of this E-unit is to show you how to prepare speeches for different occasions and how to deliver those speeches to an intended audience.

## EFFECTIVE SPEAKING TECHNIQUES

A speaker should follow a set of proven guidelines and techniques to deliver a speech successfully. These effective speaking guidelines include the following:

- ◆ Being prepared

- ◆ Being organized
- ◆ Staying within the time limit
- ◆ Using an attention-getting introduction
- ◆ Being enthusiastic
- ◆ Using notes
- ◆ Maintaining eye contact
- ◆ Using facial expressions
- ◆ Varying one's voice
- ◆ Knowing the subject

## CATEGORIES OF SPEECHES

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Public speaking is used to motivate, persuade, perform, or entertain.

### *Persuasive Speech*

A **persuasive speech** is one in which the speaker's general purpose is to convince. It is used to arouse or excite the audience. A persuasive speaker tailors the messages to change listeners' attitudes and behaviors. In persuasive presentations, the speaker implies that the listener should accept a particular viewpoint and act accordingly.

### *Informative Speech*

An **informative speech** is one in which the speaker assists the audience in learning or understanding something new. It is sometimes called an oral technical report and is intended primarily to provide knowledge or to illuminate a subject. The information the speaker uses is basic to various topics. Meanwhile, the listener is the learner, with knowledge being the result of teaching.

### *Entertaining Speech*

An **entertaining speech** is one in which the speaker's general purpose is to provide entertainment. This type of speech is designed for telling stories or clever comments. Sometimes it is used as an "attention-getter" prior to introducing some other task. An example would be an after-dinner speech or a humorous speech at a banquet.

## **Informative Speech**

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The informative speech is often used to advise or teach an audience something they may not know or appreciate. The informative speech is prepared in a certain way to help the audi-

ence learn the information quickly. Preparation on the part of the speaker typically translates into understanding on the part of the listener-learner.

## ORGANIZE, PREPARE, AND DELIVER AN INFORMATIVE SPEECH

Effective speakers organize their material so it develops a specific purpose and stimulates interest in the speech.

### Selecting a Topic

Selecting a topic is the first step in preparing a speech. It is important to select a topic appropriate to the audience. Do not try to cover the entire topic area; select one aspect and expand on it. Pinpoint your topic using facts and information.

### Collecting Information

Once the topic of the speech is determined, begin to collect information. Use correct materials as resources for information. Use the library, bookstore, or Internet to obtain current information. Use pamphlets or research reports from universities or research stations and note cards or a computer to record information.

Resource Title:
Author:
Copyright:
Source/Publisher:
Information Summary:

FIGURE 1. Accurate note cards are a critical piece of speech preparation and are necessary for delivering a successful speech.

### Developing an Outline

Develop an outline as the framework of the speech. Most outlines are organized into three major parts: the introduction, the body, and the conclusion.

#### Introduction

The **introduction** is the first part of the speech; it should be used to get the audience's attention and explain the purpose of the speech. The introduction sets the stage for the rest of the presentation. Techniques that may be used to create interest include references to a common place or occasion, compliments, dramatic statements, questions, stories, personal experiences, or quotations.

#### Body

The **body** of a speech provides the main information the speaker wants to convey. The body is usually limited to two to four main points that are major topics in the outline. Supporting information is included under each topic area. Most speeches use chronological, motivational, topical, or general-to-specific order as the format for the order of the main point pre-

sentation. The most common errors within the body of the speech include too many major points, not enough supporting material, rambling, and failure to use proper transitions to help the speech flow.

## Conclusion

The **conclusion** is the section that summarizes and reviews the speech content. One important function of the conclusion is to remind the audience of the specific purpose of the speech. The conclusion should leave the audience in the proper frame of mind and should provide closure. Delivery of the speech is perhaps the most important part of effective speaking. Without a good delivery, the message may be lost.

An example speech outline may resemble the following outline.



FIGURE 2. Without a good delivery, the message of a speech may be lost.

### Preliminary Speech Outline

Title:

Purpose: To convey...

- I. Introduction
- II. Body
  - A. First main point
    1. Sub-point number one
    2. Sub-point number two
  - B. Second main point
    1. Sub-point number one
    2. Sub-point number two
    3. Sub-point number three
- III. Conclusion (emphasis on original purpose)
  - A. Summary of main points
  - B. Action to take



## DIGGING DEEPER...

### UNCOVERING ADDITIONAL FACTS: Critiquing Your Own Video Speech

Research and develop a topic for a three- to five-minute speech. Then deliver the speech using proper public speaking techniques. Focus on the fundamentals of speech delivery. Have an audience-grabbing introduction, clarity of purpose, audience appropriate language, confident body language/posture, proper eye contact/gestures, an interesting and suitable use of voice, enthusiasm, and vigor.

Your topic and materials should be well organized and researched. Your conclusion should reconnect with your purpose and introduction. Practice your speech several times. Try to make small corrections and tweaks to improve your delivery. When you are ready, have a friend video you while delivering your speech (or set the camera up to record yourself). When finished, review your speech delivery using the following criteria:

1. Introduction: The speaker should identify clearly the subject of the speech and his or her purpose for speaking (e.g., persuade, inform, or demonstrate).
2. Clarity of purpose: The identified purpose for speaking should be evident throughout the body of the speech. The speaker should not deviate from the intended purpose for speaking. Transition devices and word choice should be selected with the purpose in mind and should link the elements of the speech together to achieve the purpose.
3. Language: The choice of words and structure of sentences should be appropriate to the audience and occasion.
4. Body language/posture: The speaker stands erect and comfortable with both feet a comfortable distance apart for good support. He or she should appear alert but at ease, with confidence. Distracting movements should not be present.
5. Eye contact/gestures: Eye contact should be nearly constant with the audience and should move frequently across all parts of the audience. No “locking on” to note cards or one particular audience member. Gestures should be smooth and integrated with the points being made in the speech. Gestures should not detract attention from the message or communicate excessive nervousness. Note cards should be read only momentarily to gain information and to keep track of the speaker’s next point.
6. Use of voice: Voice should accent the points being made. Inflection, volume, speaking rate, accents, etc., should be chosen carefully to reinforce the message and blend smoothly with the speaker’s appearance and gestures.
7. Enthusiasm/vigor: The speaker should demonstrate interest in the topic through the use of gestures, posture, voice, and word choice.
8. Confidence/self-control: The speech continues smoothly and without noticeable breaks from beginning to end.
9. Organization: The speaker should utilize a clearly developed introduction, body, and conclusion. If the listener cannot construct a clear outline of the speech just by listening to the transitions and pauses, watching movements, and picking up the verbal cues to shifts in emphasis that signal new sections of the outline, the speech needs to be improved.
10. Conclusion: The speech should be summarized clearly. All main points covered in the organization of the speech should be touched upon one final time to remind the audience of the main ideas. The speech should make a smooth exit. (Adapted from Washington Community High School, District 308, Speaking and Listening In-House Assessment)

## Working on Delivery

Once you have your speech information, you will need to focus on the delivery of the message. A number of speech delivery techniques are used by effective speakers:

- ◆ Breathing or taking a big breath before the start of the speech and then breathing often throughout the speech
- ◆ Varying **pitch** or voice inflection
- ◆ Selecting the appropriate **intensity** (degree of energy or feeling) by being loud enough for everyone to hear or by speaking slightly louder than normal conversation
- ◆ Maintaining a constant rate of speech
- ◆ Pronouncing words correctly
- ◆ **Enunciating** or speaking clearly and precisely
- ◆ Using appropriate body language to appear self-confident and relaxed
- ◆ Using eye contact
- ◆ Avoiding the use of distracting gestures (e.g., scratching or excessive walking)
- ◆ Ensuring visual aids are simple and readable to the audience

## Summary:



There may be times in your life when you will have to speak to an audience. This task requires practice. A speaker should follow a set of proven guidelines and techniques to deliver a speech successfully. These effective speaking guidelines include being prepared and organized as well as staying within the time limit. Public speaking is used to motivate, persuade, perform, or entertain.

The informative speech is often used to advise or teach an audience something they may not know or appreciate. It is prepared in a certain way to help the audience learn the information quickly. Preparation on the part of the speaker typically translates into understanding on the part of the listener-learner. Effective speakers organize their material so it develops a specific purpose and stimulates interest in the speech.

There are several speech delivery techniques you can use to increase the successfulness of your speech. These techniques include breathing or taking a big breath before the start of the speech and then breathing often throughout the speech, varying pitch or voice inflection, and selecting the appropriate intensity by being loud enough for everyone to hear. The most helpful aid to becoming a better public speaker is to practice by speaking publicly.

## Checking Your Knowledge:

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1. List five elements from the list of effective speaking guidelines.
2. List the three categories of speeches, and define each category.
3. Define the three major parts of a speech.
4. Create an example speech outline, emphasizing the structure of the outline, not the speech topic.
5. List four speaking techniques used to improve the message quality.

## Expanding Your Knowledge:

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*One Word—One Minute* with speaker, author, businessman John Maxwell is an excellent opportunity to see short, effective speeches by an expert. Review his website and sign up to receive the free motivational speeches. The website is <http://johnmaxwellonleadership.com/2011/01/31/one-word-one-minute/>.

## Web Links:

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### Speech Tips

<http://www.spechtips.com/>

### Speeches

<http://www.videojug.com/tag/speeches>

### Speech Writing

<http://www.davegustafson.com/speech/process.htm>