Speech Communication

Public Speaking

Public Speaking

- **Public speaking** is the process of speaking to a group of people in a structured, deliberate manner intended to inform, influence, or entertain the listeners. It is closely allied to "presenting", although the latter has more of a commercial connotation.

Public Speaking

- "Talk is cheap"
  - Not anymore, a well organized, thoughtful talk makes many people earn a very lucrative wage
    - Stephen Covey
    - Barbara Walters
    - Rick Warren

Speaking Opportunities

- At work
  - Panel interviews
  - Technical presentations
  - Client Presentations and Reviews
- Daily Life
  - Barangay/Homeowners Meetings
  - Group/Club Meetings
  - PTA Meetings

Similarities between PS and Conversation

- Organize your thoughts
  - Giving someone directions to your house
- Tailor your message to the audience
  - A 5 year old asks you where babies come from
  - A 14 year old asks you where babies come from
  - A 22 year old asks the same question
- Telling a story for maximum impact
  - Don't tell the "punch line" of a story first
- Adapting to listener feedback
  - Watch for non-verbal feedback – looks of confusion, looks of pain or hurtfulness

Differences between PS and Conversation

- PS is more structured
  - Usually time limited
  - Questions not allowed to interrupt the speech,
    - usually left for at end (time permitting)
- PS requires more formal language
  - No slang, jargon or bad grammar
  - Speeches should be something special so that they qualify as life events and are remembered
- PS requires a different method for delivery
  - More formal delivery
    - No vocalized pauses – "uh", "ah", "um"
    - Don't use stock phrases repeatedly – "you know", "basically", "I mean"

The Speech Communication Process

- Speaker - speech communication starts here
- Message - whatever is communicated
- Channel – means by which a message is communicated
- Listener – the receiver of the communicated message
- Feedback – comes in many forms and must be understood
- Interference - anything impeding the communication of the message
- Situation – the time and place of occurrance

Listening

- Listening is important
  - Over our lives we will listen to many more speeches than we will deliver
  - Helps develop critical thinking
  - Many Fortune 500 companies provide employees with listening training
  - Studies show a direct link between academic success and the ability to listen
  - Listening and hearing are two different things

Listening and Critical Thinking

- There are four types of listening:
  - Appreciative
    - Listening for pleasure or enjoyment
      - Music, movies, comedy, plays…
  - Empathetic
    - Listening to provide emotional support for speaker
      - A shrink listens to a patient; you listen to a friend's rant
  - Comprehensive
    - Listening to understand the speakers message
      - Direction to a friend's house; in a class or seminar
  - Critical
    - Listening to evaluate a message
      - A campaign speech; a peer's research paper
- Critical Thinking
  - Comprehensive and Critical Thinking require you to think and evaluate while listening, this helps develop Critical Thinking skills

Causes of Poor Listening

- Not Concentrating
  - Daydreaming, mind wandering, dozing
- Listening Too Hard
  - Trying to remember every fact, no matter how minute
- Jumping To Conclusions
  - Putting words into the speakers mouth; interrupting speaker, anticipating what speaker will say/do next
- Focusing On Delivery Instead Of Message
  - Speakers accent, clothes, stuttering, presentation tools

Better Listening

- Take Listening Seriously
  - Like any skill it takes practice and self-discipline
- Resist Distractions
  - When you catch your mind wandering make a conscious effort to pull it back on track; try to anticipate what the speaker will say/do next
- Don't be Diverted by Appearance or Delivery
  - Lincoln and Gandhi were strange in appearance but were excellent speakers

Better Listening

- Suspend Judgment
  - "a closed mind is an empty mind"
- Focus Your Listening
  - Listen for main points
    - A good speech only has a few
  - Listen for evidence
    - Is it accurate
    - Are the sources objective
    - Is it relevant
    - Is it sufficient to support the speakers claim
  - Listen for technique
    - Study the speakers technique as a learning tool

Analyzing the Audience

- Good speakers are audience-centered
  - Primary purpose of a speech is to get a desired response
- Keep the audience foremost in mind at every step of preparation and presentation
  - To whom are you speaking?
  - What is it you want them to know, believe or do as a result?
  - What is the most effective way to compose and present your speech to accomplish those ends?

The Psychology of Audiences

- It's up to the speaker to make the audience choose to pay attention.
- Every speech contains two messages:
  - One from the speaker
  - One received by the listener
  - "People hear what they want to hear and disregard the rest." – Paul Simon's *The Boxer*
- People are egocentric
  - Egocentrism – the tendency for people to be most interested in themselves, their own problems and the way to solve them.
  - They pay closest attention to what affects their own values, beliefs and well being.

Demographic Audience Analysis

- **Look for observable audience traits**
  - **Identify the general features**
  - **Gauge their importance to the situation**
- **Traits**
  - **Age**
    - **Whatever your age, you're a product of your world**
  - **Gender**
    - **Old stereotypes no longer apply**
    - **Avoid sexist language and references**
  - **Racial, Ethnic or Cultural Background**
    - **Be aware of differences and be able to adapt**
  - **Religion**
    - **Highly charged emotional issue, be sure to consider the religious orientation or you might end up being embarassed.**
  - **Group Membership**
    - **Guilt by association – people judge you by the company you keep**

Situational Audience Analysis

- Builds on demographic analysis ; identifies traits unique to the speaking situation
  - Size
  - Physical Setting
  - Disposition toward the Topic
    - Interest
    - Knowledge
    - Attitude
  - Disposition toward the Speaker
  - Disposition towards the Occasion

Adapting to the Audience

- Before the Speech
  - Assess how the audience is likely to respond
  - Adjust what you say to make it
    - Clear
    - Appropriate
    - Convincing
- During the Speech
  - Things may/will not go exactly as you plan
  - Don't panic, remain calm and adapt
  - Remember:
    - Who am I speaking to?
    - What do I want them to know, believe or do?
    - What is the best way to accomplish this?
- Practice, practice, practice

Organizing a Speech – Main Points

- Main Points
  - Number of main points
    - It is better to be remembered for covering 3 or 4 points well than to leave the audience confused and sorting out 7 or 8 points you made.
  - Strategic Order of Main Points
    - Chronological Order
    - Spatial Order
    - Casual Order
    - Problem Solution Order
    - Topical Order

Main Points (cont.)

- Each main point should be independent of the other main points.
- Use the same pattern of wording for each main point
- Balance the amount of time spent on each main point.

Organizing a Speech – Supporting Materials

- Supporting Materials
  - The "flesh" that fills out the skeleton of your speech
  - By themselves main points are only assertions.
  - Listeners need supporting materials to accept what the speaker says
  - Three major types of supporting materials:
    - Examples
    - Statistics
    - Testimony
  - Always provide sources to give credibility to the supporting materials

Organizing a Speech

- Connectives
    - Transitions
        - Words or phrases that indicate speaker has finished one thought and is moving to another:
            - "In addition" , "also" , "Not only" , "That brings me to the next topic"
    - Internal Previews
        - Lets the audience know what the speaker will take up next
            - "now that we realize the seriousness, I will address three solutions"
    - Internal Summaries
        - Remind the audience of what they have just heard
            - "Let me reiterate…"
    - Signposts
        - Brief statements that let you know where you are in the speech
            - Numerate – "First this…, second this …"
            - Introduce a main point with a question – "What make this so…"
            - Simple phrase – "The most important thing to remember…"

Beginning and Ending

- Get Attention and Interest
- Reveal the Topic
- Establish Credibility and Goodwill
- Preview the body of the speech
- Signal the End of the speech
- Reinforce the central idea

Use of Language

- Language is Important
  - How well do you use language?
    - Do you confuse the use of good/well?
    - Do you use phrases like "terrible disaster" or "a good benefit"?
    - Do you use "in the eventuality" instead of "if"?
    - Do you clutter your speech with meaningless words as "you know", "like", "basically", "man", and really"?
  - Classics:
    - "Dean of Students promises to stop drinking on campus."
    - "For Sale: Unique home in downtown Craigsville. Large lot. Many trees. One you would enjoy living in."
    - Headline: "Lost sisters reunited after 18 years at grocery checkout counter."

Meanings of Words

- Words have two kinds of meanings:
  - denotative
    - the literal or dictionary meaning of a word or phrase.
  - connotative
    - the meaning suggested by the associations or emotions triggered by a word or phrase
    - give words their intensity and emotional power
    - the same words may have completely different effects on different audiences

More things to remember…

- Use language accurately
  - "say what you mean"
- Use language clearly
  - Use familiar words
  - Choose concrete words
  - Eliminate clutter
- Use Language vividly
  - Imagery
  - Concrete words
  - Simile
  - Metaphor
  - Rhythm
  - Parallelism
  - Repetition
  - Alliteration
  - Antithesis

Use Language Appropriately

- To the occasion
- To the Audience
- To the topic
- To the speaker

Use Nonsexist Language

- Sexist Language
  - Language that promotes the stereotyping of people on the basis of gender.
- Nonsexist Language
  - Language that does not stereotype people on the basis of gender
- Avoid:
  - generic use of "he"
  - use of "man" when referring to both men and women
  - stereotyping job or social roles based on gender
  - unnecessary or patronizing labels

Speech Delivery

- Types of Delivery
  - Read from manuscript
    - only done when absolute accuracy is required
  - Reciting from memory
    - seldom done, if done rehearse until you're very comfortable doing it
  - Impromptu
    - speaking with little or no preparation
    - avoid unless you are extremely comfortable with the subject
  - Extemporaneously
    - carefully prepared and delivered from a brief set of notes
- Should sound spontaneous even if it has been rehearsed extensively

Vocalization

- Volume – loudness or softness
  - adjust to the situation (electronically if necessary, don't yell)
- Pitch – highness or lowness of the voice
  - use inflections in your voice to avoid "monotone"
- Rate speed at which you speak
  - 120-150 wpm is normal, too slow leaves people hanging on your words, too fast and they get confused and miss information
- Pauses – momentary breaks in your speaking
  - takes experience to know when to pause, pause at the end of thought units
  - avoid vocalized pauses ("uh", "er", "um"...)
- Variety
  - vary the loudness, pitch and rate to make the speech sound more natural and interesting
- Pronunciation – use correct pronunciation of common words
  - genuine, arctic, theater, err, nuclear, February, library
- Articulation – physical production of speech sounds
  - we habitually chop, slur and mumble, rather than enunciating
  - "ought to", "didn't", "for", "don't know", "ask"
- Dialect – variety of language distinguished by variations of accent, grammar or vocabulary

Nonverbal Communications

- kinesics – the study of nonverbal body motions as a systematic node of communication
- People trust their ears less than their eyes.
  - when a speaker's body language is inconsistent with their words the listeners will tend to believe their eyes
- Other aspects of nonverbal communications
  - Personal appearance
  - Body action
  - Gesticulation
  - Eye contact

Visual Aids

- Kinds of visual aids
    - Objects
    - Models
    - Photographs
    - Drawings
    - Graphs
    - Charts
    - Slides and Videotapes
    - Computer-Generated Graphics
    - Transparencies
    - Multimedia

Visual Aid Preparation

- Prepare them well in advance
- K.I.S.S. – Keep It Simple Stupid
- Make sure they are large enough
  - should be able to be seen by "all" viewers when presented, not just those "up front".
- Use easy to read fonts – there is a reason for Times-Roman
  - non-serif fonts are harder to read
- Use a limited number of fonts
- Use color effectively
  - highlighting
  - used well proven color schemes, what colors work well together is a tough choice for most people