IVYONLINE COMM101: FUNDAMENTALS OF PUBLIC SPEAKING



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IvyOnline COMM101 Fundamentals of Public Speaking

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1: INTRODUCTION TO PUBLIC SPEAKING

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1.1: Introduction

Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Articulate at least three reasons why public speaking skills are important.
2. Describe the difference between the linear and the transactional model of communication.
3. List, define, and give an example of each of the components of communication.
4. Differentiate between the major types of speeches
5. Identify the eleven core public speaking competencies.
6. Apply chapter concepts in final questions and activities.

Humans' ability to communicate using formalized systems of language sets us apart from other living creatures on the Earth. Whether these language conventions make us superior to other creatures is debatable, but there is no question that overall, the most successful and most powerful people over the centuries have mastered the ability to communicate effectively. In fact, the skill of speaking is so important that it has been formally taught for thousands of years (see Chapter 2 "The Origins of Public Speaking" by DeCaro).

The ironic feature of public speaking is that while we recognize that it is an important skill to have, many of us do not like or want to give speeches. You may be reading this book because it was assigned to you in a class, or you may be reading it because you have to give a speech in your personal or professional life. If you are reading this book because you like public speaking or you have a burning desire to learn more about it, you're in the minority.

The good news about public speaking is that although it may not be on the top of the list of our favorite activities, *anyone* can learn to give effective presentations. You don't have to look like a Hollywood star and you don't have to use fancy words to be a successful speaker. What is important is that the audience understands you and remembers what you have to say. By learning and using the techniques provided in this book, you will discover how to create engaging speeches and present them using your own delivery style.

The purpose of this chapter is to familiarize readers with the basic concepts of communication and public speaking. The chapter begins with a description of the personal, professional, and public benefits of learning more about public speaking. Then the transactional model of communication is introduced along with the fundamental components of the communication process. Next, readers will learn about different types of speeches and the occasions for which they would be presented. The chapter ends with an overview of eleven primary public speaking competencies.

> Wherever I go meeting the public... spreading a message of human values, spreading a message of harmony, is the most important thing. ~Dalai Lama

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1.2: Benefits of Public Speaking

American Colleges and Universities, there are a core set of skills that are necessary “both for a globally engaged democracy and for a dynamic innovation fueled economy” (Rhodes, 2010, p. 10). In the category of “Intellectual and practical skills” **public speaking** is listed as one of these core skills. This is not particularly surprising given that communication skills are critical for intellectual development, career trajectory, and civic engagement. Public speaking is universally applicable to all types of majors and occupations and is seen by U.S. employers as a critical employability skill for job seekers (Rockler-Gladen, 2009; U.S. Department of Labor, 2000). No matter what your ambitions and interests are, developing speaking skills will benefit your personal, professional, and public life.



Personal

People don’t just give presentations on the job and in classes. At times we are called upon to give speeches in our personal lives. It may be for a special event, such as a toast at a wedding. We may be asked to give a eulogy at a funeral for a friend or loved one. As a part of volunteer work, one may have to introduce a guest speaker at an event or present or accept an award for service. Chapter 17, “Special Occasion Speaking” by Scholl will help you to prepare for these brief but important speeches. Developing the skill to give these types of speeches can help us to fulfill essential roles in our family and community.

Another great personal benefit of public speaking is that it builds self confidence. It’s no surprise that speaking in public is scary, but by engaging in the activity you will build self-confidence through the experience. Chapter 11, “Speaking with Confidence” by Grapsy (in this book) will give you advice on how to minimize speech apprehension, and the advice can be used in many other social situations as well.

> Action is a great restorer and builder of confidence. Inaction is not only the result, but the cause, of fear. Perhaps the action you take will be successful; perhaps different action or adjustments will have to follow. But any action is better than no action at all. ~ Norman Vincent Peale

Professional

TV announcers, teachers, lawyers, and entertainers must be able to speak well, but most other professions require or at the very least can benefit from the skills found in public speaking.

It is believed 70% of jobs today involve some form of public speaking (Aras, 2012). With the recent economic shift from manufacturing to service careers, the ability to communicate with others has become crucial. Top CEOs advise that great leaders must be able to communicate ideas effectively, they must be able to persuade, build support, negotiate and speak effectively in public (Farrell, 2011). The chapters on “Informative Speaking” and “Persuasive Speaking” can help readers understand how

to write presentations that enhance their leadership skills. But before you even start a career, you have to get a job. Effective speaking skills make you more attractive to employers, enhancing your chances of securing employment and later advancing within your career. Employers, career counselors, and the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) all list good communication skills at the top of the list of qualities sought in potential employees. According to NACE's executive director, Marilyn Mackes, the Job Outlook 2013 Report found that employers are looking for people who can communicate effectively (Koncz & Allen, 2012). Monster.com advises, "articulating thoughts clearly and concisely will make a difference in both a job interview and subsequent job performance" (McKay, 2005).

Public

Learning about public speaking will allow you to participate in democracy at its most basic level. Public speaking is important in creating and sustaining a society, which includes informed, active participants. Even if you do not plan to run for office, learning about public speaking helps you to listen more carefully to and critically evaluate other's speeches. In fact the "Listening Effectively" and "Critical Thinking and Reasoning" chapters in this book by Goddu and Russ will help you to develop those skills. Listening and critical thinking allow you to understand public dilemmas, form an opinion about them, and participate in resolving them. The progress of the past century involving segregation, women's rights and environmental protection are the result of people advancing new ideas and speaking out to others to persuade them to adopt changes.



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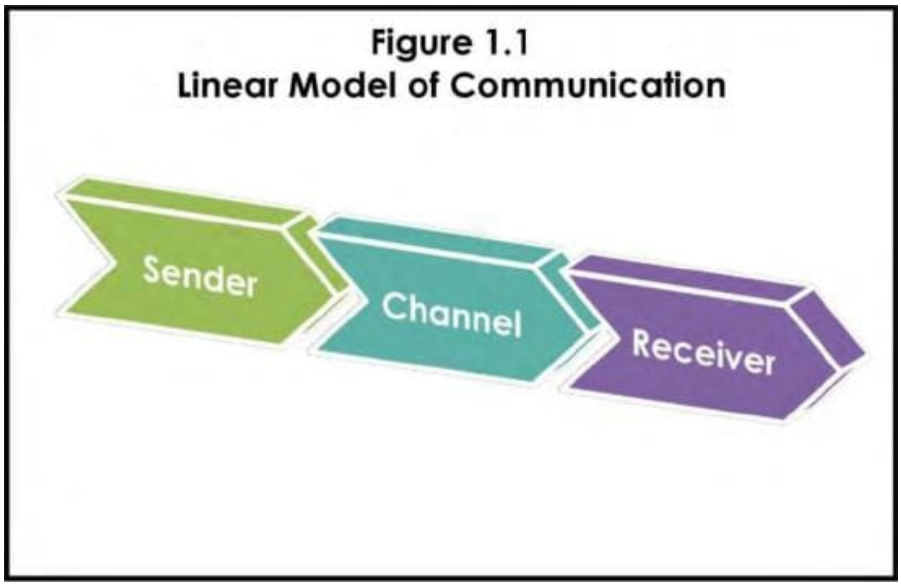
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1.3: Model of Communication

It should be clear by now that public speaking happens all around us in many segments of our lives. However, to truly understand what is happening within these presentations, we need to take a step back and look at some of the key components of the communication process.

Linear Model of Communication

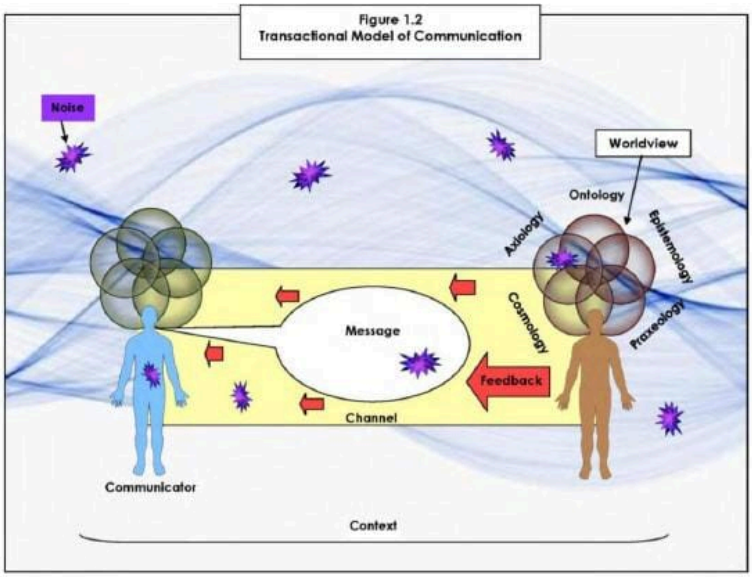
The first theoretical model of communication was proposed in 1949 by Shannon and Weaver for Bell Laboratories (Shannon & Weaver, 1949). This three-part model was intended to capture the radio and television transmission process. However it was later adapted to human communication and is now known as the linear model of communication. The first part of the model is the sender, and this is the person who is speaking. The second part of the model is the channel, which is the apparatus for carrying the message (i.e., the phone or T.V.). The third part of the model is the receiver, and this is the person who picks up the message. In this model, communication is seen as a one-way process of transmitting a message from one person to another person. This model can be found in Figure 1.1. If you think about situations when you communicate with another person face-to-face or when you give a speech, you probably realize that this model is inadequate – communication is much more complicated than firing off a message to others.



He who would learn to fly one day must first learn to stand and walk and run and climb and dance; one cannot fly into flying. ~ Friedrich Nietzsche

Transactional Model of Communication

Models of communication have evolved significantly since Shannon and Weaver first proposed their well-known conceptual model over sixty years ago. One of the most useful models for understanding public speaking is Barnlund's (2008) transactional model of communication. In the transactional model, communication is seen as an ongoing, circular process. We are constantly affecting and are affected by those we communicate with. The transactional model has a number of interdependent processes and components, including the encoding and decoding processes, the communicator, the message, the channel and noise. Although not directly addressed in Barnlund's (2008) original transactional model, participants' world views and the context also play an important role in the communication process. See Figure 1.2 for an illustration.



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1.4: Elements of the Communication Process

Encoding and Decoding

Encoding refers to the process of taking an idea or mental image, associating that image with words, and then speaking those words in order to convey a message. So, if you wanted to explain to your aunt the directions to your new apartment, you would picture in your mind the landscape, streets and buildings, and then you would select the best words that describe the route so your aunt could find you.

Decoding is the reverse process of **listening** to words, thinking about them, and turning those words into mental images. If your aunt were trying to find her way to your apartment, she would listen to your words, associate these words with streets and landmarks that she knows, and then she would form a mental map of the way to get to you. Ramsey's "Using Language Well" (Chapter 10) provides additional insight into the encoding and decoding process.

Communicator

The term **communicator** refers to all of the people in the interaction or speech setting. It is used instead of sender and receiver, because when we are communicating with other people we are not only sending a message, we are receiving messages from others simultaneously. When we speak, we observe others' **nonverbal behavior** to see if they understand us and we gauge their emotional state. The information we gain from these observations is known as feedback. Over the telephone, we listen to paralinguistic cues, such as pitch, tone, volume and fillers (i.e., "um," "uh," "er," "like," and so on). This means that communication is not a one-way process. Even in a public speaking situation, we watch and listen to audience members' responses. If audience members are interested, agree, and understand us, they may lean forward in their seats, nod their heads, have positive or neutral facial expressions, and provide favorable vocal cues (such as laughter, "That's right," "Uh huh," or "Amen!"). If audience members are bored, disagree, or are confused by our message, they may be texting or looking away from us, shake their heads, have unhappy or confused expressions on their faces, or present oppositional vocal cues (like groans, "I don't think so," "That doesn't make sense," or "You're crazy!"). Thus, communication is always a transactional process – a give and take of messages.

Message

The **message** involves those verbal and nonverbal behaviors, enacted by communicators, that are interpreted with meaning by others. The verbal portion of the message refers to the words that we speak, while the nonverbal portion includes our tone of voice and other non-vocal components such as personal appearance, posture, gestures and body movements, eye behavior, the way we use space, and even the way that we smell. For instance, the person who gets up to speak wearing a nice suit will be interpreted more positively than a person giving the exact same speech wearing sweats and a graphic t-shirt. Or if a speaker tries to convince others to donate to a charity that builds wells in poor African villages using a monotone voice, she will not be as effective as the speaker who gives the same speech but speaks with a solemn tone of voice. If there is ever a conflict between the verbal and the non-verbal aspects of a message, people will generally believe the nonverbal portion of the message. To test this, tighten your muscles, clench your fists at your sides, pull your eye brows together, purse your lips, and tell someone in a harsh voice, "NO, I'm NOT angry!" See if they believe your words or your nonverbal behavior.

The message can also be intentional or unintentional. When the message is intentional, this means that we have an image in our mind that we wish to communicate to an audience or a person in a conversation, and we can successfully convey the image from our mind to others' minds with relative accuracy. An unintentional message is sent when the message that we wish to convey is not the same as the message the other person receives. Let's say you are returning from an outing with your significant other and she or he asks, "Did you have a good time?" You *did* have a good time but are distracted by a T.V. commercial when asked, so you reply in a neutral tone, "Sure, I had fun." Your significant other may interpret your apathetic tone of voice and lack of eye contact to mean that you did not enjoy the evening, when in fact you actually did. Thus as communicators, we cannot always be sure that the message we wish to communicate is interpreted as we intended.



Channel

The **channel** is very simply the means through which the message travels. In face-to-face communication the channel involves all of our senses, so the channel is what we see, hear, touch, smell and perhaps what we taste. When we're communicating with someone online, the channel is the computer; when texting the channel is the cell phone; and when watching a movie on cable, the channel is the TV. The channel can have a profound impact on the way a message is interpreted. Listening to a recording of a speaker does not have the same psychological impact as listening to the same speech in person or watching that person on television. One famous example of this is the 1960 televised presidential debate between John F. Kennedy and Richard Nixon. According to History.com (2012), on camera, Nixon looked away from the camera at the reporters asking him questions, he was sweating and pale, he had facial hair stubble, and he wore a grey suit that faded into the set background. “Chicago mayor Richard J. Daley reportedly said [of Nixon], ‘My God, they've embalmed him before he even died” (History.com, 2012). Kennedy, on the other hand, looked into the camera, was tanned, wore a dark suit that made him stand out from the background, and appeared to be calm after spending the entire weekend with aides practicing in a hotel room. Most of those who listened to the radio broadcast of the debate felt that it was a tie or that Nixon had won, while 70% of those watching the televised debate felt that Kennedy was the winner.

Noise

The next aspect of the model of communication is noise. **Noise** refers to anything that interferes with message transmission or reception (i.e., getting the image from your head into others’ heads). There are several different types of noise. The first type of noise is **physiological noise**, and this refers to bodily processes and states that interfere with a message. For instance, if a speaker has a headache or the flu, or if audience members are hot or they're hungry, these conditions may interfere with message accuracy. The second type of noise is psychological noise.

Psychological noise refers to mental states or emotional states that impede message transmission or reception. For example, if someone has just broken up with a significant other, or if they're worried about their grandmother who is in the hospital, or if they are thinking about their shopping list, this may interfere with communication processes as well. The third type of noise is actual **physical noise**, and this would be simply the actual sound level in a room. Loud music playing at a party, a number of voices of people talking excitedly, a lawnmower right outside the window, or anything that is overly loud will interfere with communication. The last type of noise is cultural noise. **Cultural noise** refers to message interference that results from differences in peoples’ worldviews. Worldview is discussed in more detail below, but suffice it to say that the greater the difference in worldview, the more difficult it is to understand one another and communicate effectively.

Worldview

Most people don’t give a lot of thought to the communication process. In the majority of our interactions with others, we are

operating on automatic pilot. Although the encoding and decoding process may appear to be fairly straightforward, it is actually much more complicated than it seems. The reason for this is because we all have different worldviews. **Worldview** is the overall framework through which an individual sees, thinks about, and interprets the world and interacts with it. There are five core components to our worldview.



1. **Epistemology** is the way that we acquire knowledge and/or what counts as knowledge. Think about the process of conducting research. Thirty years ago, to find a series of facts one had to use a card catalogue and scour the library stacks for books. Now researchers can access thousands of pages of information via their computer from the comfort of their own home. Epistemology is linked to public speaking because it governs audience members' preferred learning styles and who or what they consider to be credible sources.

2. **Ontology** refers to our belief system, how we see the nature of reality or what we see as true or false. We may (or may not) believe in aliens from outer space, that butter is bad for you, that the Steelers will win the Superbowl, or that humans will be extinct in 200 years. Speech writers should be careful not to presume that audience members share the same beliefs. If a speaker claims that illness can be aided with prayer, but several people in the audience are atheists, at best the speaker has lost credibility and at worst these audience members could be offended.



3. **Axiology** represents our value system, or what we see as right or wrong, good or bad, and fair or unfair. One of the ways that you can tell what people value is to ask them what their goals are, or to ask them what qualities they look for in a life partner. Our values represent the things that we hope for --they do not represent reality. Values can have an impact on multiple levels of the public speaking process, but in particular values impact speaker credibility and effectiveness in persuasion. For instance, some cultures value modest dress in women, so a female speaker wearing a sleeveless blouse while speaking could cause her to lose credibility with some audience members. Or if audience members value the freedom to bear arms over the benefits of government regulation, a speaker will have a difficult time convincing these audience members to vote for stricter gun control legislation.

> It is always good to explore the stuff you don't agree with, to try and understand a different lifestyle or foreign worldview. I like to be challenged in that way, and always end up learning something I didn't know. ~ Laura Linney

4. **Cosmology** signifies the way that we see our relationship to the universe and to other people. Cosmology dictates our view of power relationships and may involve our religious or spiritual beliefs. Controversial speech topics (like universal health care and the death penalty) are often related to this aspect of worldview as we must consider our responsibilities to other human beings and our power to influence them. Interestingly, cosmology would also play a role in such logistical points as who is allowed to speak, the order of speakers on a schedule (e.g., from most to least important), the amount of time a speaker has to speak, the seating arrangement on the dais, and who gets the front seats in the audience.



5. **Praxeology** denotes our preferred method of completing everyday tasks or our approach to solving problems. Some speech writers may begin working on their outlines as soon as they know they will need to give a speech, while others may wait until a few days before their speech to begin preparing (we do not recommend this approach). Praxeology may also have an impact on a speaker's preference of delivery style, methods of arranging main points, and choice of slideware (i.e., Power Point versus Prezi).

It is important to understand worldview because it has a profound impact on the encoding and decoding process, and consequently on our ability to be understood by others. Try this simple experiment. Ask two or three people to silently imagine a dog while you imagine a dog at the same time. "Dog" is a very **concrete word** (a word that describes a tangible object that can be perceived through the senses), and it is one of the first words children in the United States learn in school. Wait a few seconds and then ask each person what type of dog they were thinking of. Was it a Chihuahua? A greyhound? Golden retriever? Rottweiler? Or some other dog? Most likely each person you asked had a different image in his or her mind than you had in yours. This is our worldview at work.



To further illustrate, you may tell a co-worker, “I can’t wait to go home this weekend – we are having lasagna!” Seems like a fairly clear-cut statement, doesn’t it? Unfortunately, it is not. While “lasagna” is also a concrete word, our worldviews cause us to interpret each word in the statement differently. Where is “home?” Who is making the meal? What ingredients will be used in the lasagna? Is this dish eaten as a regular meal or for a special occasion? Will there be leftovers? Are friends invited? Since everyone who has eaten lasagna has had a different experience of the cuisine, we all acquire a different image in our mind when we hear the statement “...we are having lasagna!”

Complicating matters is the fact that the more abstract the word becomes, the more room there is for interpretation. **Abstract words** (words that refer to ideas or concepts that are removed from material reality) like “peace,” “love,” “immoral,” “justice,” “freedom,” “success,” and “honor” can have a number of different meanings; each of which is predicated on one’s worldview. Communicators have their own unique worldviews that shape both the encoding and decoding processes, which means that we can never be completely understood by another person. People from the Midwest may call carbonated beverages “pop,” while those from the east coast may say “soda,” and those from Georgia may say “coke.” Even when simple terms are used like “oak tree” or “fire hydrant,” each listener will form a different mental image when decoding the message. Never take communication for granted, and never assume your listener will understand you. It takes hard work to make yourself understood by an audience.

Context

> Context is worth 80 IQ points. ~ Alan Kay

The last element of the communication process is the **context** in which the speech or interaction takes place. In the 1980’s context was taught as the actual physical setting where communication occurred, such as in a place of worship, an apartment, a workplace, a noisy restaurant, or a grocery store. People communicate differently in each one of these places as there are unwritten rules of communication (called **norms**) that govern these settings. More recently the concept of context has evolved and expanded to include the type of relationships we have with others and the communicative rules that govern those relationships. So you do not speak the same way to your best friend as you do to a small child, your parent, your boss, your doctor or a police officer. And you may speak to your best friend differently in your apartment than you do in your parents’ home, and your communication may also change when you are both out with friends on the weekend. In sum, the context refers to the norms that govern communication in different situations and relationships.



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1.5: Types of Speeches and Speaking Occasions

There are three general purposes for speaking in public. The general purpose of a speech is usually determined by the occasion in which the speech will be presented. The first general purpose is to inform your audience. In an informative speech, the presenter will share information about a particular person, place, object, process, concept, or issue by defining, describing, or explaining. Occasions for which an informative speech would be presented include a report presented to coworkers, a teacher presenting information to his or her class, and a training session for a job. The second purpose for public speaking is to persuade. In a persuasive speech, the presenter will attempt to reinforce or change their audiences' beliefs, attitudes, feelings, or values. Several occasions where persuasion is used include a sales pitch to potential customers, a politician's campaign speech, or a debate during a public forum. The last general purpose is to commemorate or entertain. These types of speeches often strengthen the bonds between audience members from recalling a shared experience or intend to amuse audiences through humor, stories, or illustrations. Examples of this purpose include a toast, such as a best man's speech at a wedding reception; a eulogy to praise the dead; a commencement speech at graduation; or presenting an award. It is important to note that these general purposes may overlap one another. One might wish to use some forms of entertainment while informing or persuading his or her audience.



A desire presupposes the possibility of action to achieve it; action presupposes a goal which is worth achieving. ~ Ayn Rand

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1.6: Speaking Competencies

We assume you are reading this book or chapter because you wish to improve your speaking skills – a worthy goal. As Ayn Rand alludes to in her quote, a desire to succeed is the first step in achieving this objective. Nevertheless, you cannot hit a target unless you know what it is. Thus, the final portion of this chapter is devoted to an overview of eleven speaking competencies which we consider to be the standards for evaluating a variety of presentations at every level of mastery. These are based on the *Public Speaking Competence Rubric* [PSCR] (Schreiber, Paul & Shibley, 2012). A complete copy of the rubric can be found at http://www.publicspeakingproject.org/ activities.html.

1. Useful Topic

The first speaking competency is *to select a topic that is appropriate to the audience and the occasion*. An advanced speaker selects a worthwhile topic that engages the audience. His topic also presents the audience with new information that they did not know before the speech. A beginning speaker selects a topic that lacks originality or is out of date. His topic provides no new information to the audience. An ineffective speaker may give a speech in which a single topic cannot be deduced by the audience.

2. Engaging Introduction

To *formulate an introduction that orients the audience to the topic and the speaker is the second speaking competency*. An advanced speaker writes an introduction that contains an excellent attention-getter. She firmly establishes her credibility. She provides a sound orientation to the topic, states her thesis clearly, and previews her points in a cogent and memorable way. For the beginning speaker, her attention-getter is mundane and she somewhat develops her credibility. Her thesis is awkwardly composed and she provides little direction for the audience. The ineffective speaker has no opening technique, no credibility statement and provides no background on the topic. In addition she has no thesis statement and no preview of her points.



3. Clear Organization

Competency three is *to use an effective organizational pattern*. An advanced speaker is very well organized and delivers a speech with clear main points. His points are mutually exclusive and directly related to the thesis. Further, he employs effective transitions and signposts to help the speech flow well. The beginning speaker has main points that are somewhat organized, but the content of these points may overlap. Transitions may also be present in his speech, but they are not particularly effective. In the ineffective speaker's speech, there is no clear organizational pattern, there are no transitions, and it sounds as if the information is randomly

presented.

> Don't leave inferences to be drawn when evidence can be presented. ~ Richard Wright

4. Well-Supported Ideas

Fourth on the list of speaking competencies is *to locate, synthesize, and employ compelling supporting materials*. In the advanced speaker's speech, her key points are well supported with a variety of credible materials, and her sources provide excellent support for her thesis. In addition, all of her sources are clearly cited. A beginning speaker has points that are generally supported with a fair mix of materials. Only some of her evidence supports her thesis, and her source citations need to be clarified. An ineffective speaker gives a speech with no supporting materials or no source citations.

5. Closure in Conclusion

The fifth speaking competency is to *develop a conclusion that reinforces the thesis and provides psychological closure*. The advanced speaker provides a clear and memorable summary of his points, and he refers back to the thesis or big picture. His speech also ends with a strong clincher or call to action. A beginning speaker provides some summary of his points, but there is no clear reference back to his thesis. The closing technique of his speech can also be strengthened. In an ineffective speaker's speech, there is no conclusion. His speech ends abruptly and without closure.



6. Clear and Vivid Language

To demonstrate a careful choice of words is the sixth speaking competency. An advanced speaker's language is exceptionally clear, imaginative and vivid. Her language is also completely free from bias, grammatical errors and inappropriate usage. The beginning speaker selects language that is adequate to make her point. She has some errors in grammar and occasionally uses slang, jargon or awkward sentence structure. The ineffective speaker has many errors in her grammar and syntax. She also mispronounces words and extensively uses slang, jargon, and/or sexist or racist terms.

7. Suitable Vocal Expression

Competency number seven is to *effectively use vocal expression and paralanguage to engage the audience*. Excellent use of vocal variation, intensity and pacing are characteristics of the advanced speaker. His vocal expression is also natural and enthusiastic, and he avoids fillers. Some vocal variation is evident in the beginning speaker's speech. He also enunciates clearly, speaks audibly, and generally avoids fillers (e.g., "um," "uh," "like," etc.). An ineffective speaker is inaudible, enunciates poorly, and speaks in a monotone voice. His speech also has poor pacing, and he distracts listeners with fillers.

8. Corresponding Nonverbals

Eighth on the list of competencies is to *demonstrate nonverbal behavior that supports the verbal message*. An advanced speaker has posture, gestures, facial expression and eye contact that are natural, well developed, and display high levels of poise and confidence. Some reliance on notes is seen with the beginning speaker, but she has adequate eye contact. She also generally avoids distracting mannerisms. The ineffective speaker usually looks down and avoids eye contact. She has nervous gestures and other nonverbal behaviors that distract from or contradict the message.

> Body language is a very powerful tool. We had body language before we had speech, and apparently, 80% of what you understand in a conversation is read through the body, not the words. ~ Deborah Bull



9. Adapted to the Audience

The ninth speaking competency is *to successfully adapt the presentation to the audience*. The advanced speaker shows how information is important to audience members, and his speech is tailored to their beliefs, values and attitudes. He may also make allusions to culturally shared experiences. A beginning speaker assumes but does not articulate the importance of the topic. His presentation is minimally adapted to the audience, and some of the ideas presented in the speech are removed from the audience's frame of reference or experiences. An ineffective speaker's speech is contrary to the audience's beliefs, values and attitudes. His message may be generic or canned and no attempt is made to establish common ground.

10. Adept Use of Visual Aids

To skillfully make use of visual aids is the tenth competency. Exceptional explanation and presentation of visual aids is characteristic of the advanced speaker. Her speech has visuals that provide powerful insight into the speech topic, and her visuals are of high professional quality. The beginning speaker's visual aids are generally well developed and explained, although there may be minor errors present in the visuals. An ineffective speaker uses visual aids that distract from her speech. Her visuals may not be relevant, or her visuals may be of poor professional quality.

11. Convincing persuasion

The eleventh and final speaking competency is *to construct an effectual persuasive message with credible evidence and sound reasoning*. An advanced speaker articulates the problem and solution in a clear, compelling manner. He supports his claims with powerful and credible evidence while completely avoiding reasoning fallacies. His speech also contains a memorable call to action. In the beginning speaker's speech, the problem and solution are evident, and most claims are supported with evidence. He also has generally sound reasoning and a recognizable call to action. For the ineffective speaker, the problem and/or solution

are not defined. His claims are not supported with evidence, his speech contains poor reasoning, and there is no call to action. Readers should note that the competencies listed above are not all inclusive. Ultimately one must adjust, expand, and apply these competencies as best fits the requirements of the speaking situation. But they do provide a starting point for new or less experienced speakers to begin to understand all of the interrelated components of a speech.



Being ignorant is not so much a shame, as being unwilling to learn. ~ Benjamin Franklin

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1.7: Review Questions

Our capacity to communicate through systems of language differentiates us from other species, but the use of that language to communicate effectively is actually harder than anticipated, particularly in front of an audience. Fortunately, by reading this book, you can learn the skills required to communicate more effectively one-on-one and in a speaking situation.

The speeches you present will be given in a particular context. In your role as communicator, you will encode and deliver a message which will then be decoded by audience members (also communicators). At the same time you are speaking, you will be receiving verbal and nonverbal feedback from the audience. The way that the message is decoded will depend entirely on the amount of noise interfering with the message as well as the worldviews of audience members.

Every new speaker should work to become skilled at the eleven core public speaking competencies. These competencies include: selecting a useful topic, writing an engaging introduction, organizing the points of the speech, finding effective supporting materials for the points, adding a conclusion that provides closure, using clear and vivid language, making sure that one's vocal expression corresponds to the goals of the speech, using nonverbals that complement the message, adapting the message to one's audience, using visual aids effectively, and using credible evidence and sound reasoning in persuasive messages. Each one of the competencies just listed is covered in depth in one or more chapters in this book.

The authors of this textbook hope that readers will find the chapters useful in developing their own communication competence. Whether you are new to giving presentations, or a more experienced speaker, it is important to remember that the best way to improve your public speaking skills is through preparation and practice. Although it may take time to learn effective speaking skills, the effort is well worth the benefits you will reap in your personal, professional, and public life.

> An effective speaker knows that the success or failure of his talk is not for him to decide -- it will be decided in the minds and hearts of his hearers. ~Dale Carnegie

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Review Questions

1. What are the personal, professional and public benefits of enhancing your public speaking skills?

2. What is the difference between the linear and transactional model of communication?

3. Define and give an original example of each of the elements of the communication process.

4. Which of the elements of the communication process do you think has the greatest impact on the way a message is interpreted. Explain.

5. What are the three types of speeches? For each of the three types of speeches, give two examples of an occasion or situation in which that type of speech might be given.

6. List the eleven speaking competencies. For each competency listed, describe the differences between the advanced speaker and the inexperienced speaker.

Activities

1. Working in groups of 3 – 5, generate a list of the characteristics of ineffective speakers you have seen. Next, generate a list of the characteristics of the effective speakers you have seen. What three qualities do you believe are most important to be a successful speaker? Explain.

2. Locate a speech on YouTube. While watching the speech, identify the strengths and weaknesses of the speaker's content and delivery? What three things could the speaker improve on? What three things did you like about the speaker? If you were to deliver the speech, how would you do things differently?

3. Locate a copy of the Public Speaking Competence Rubric at http://www.publicspeakingproject.org/activities.html. Read through each of the levels of each of the competencies, and try to determine what your level of skill is for each of the speaking competencies. If you are able, have a friend or colleague watch one of your speeches and ask him or her to evaluate your level of skill for each of the competencies. Compare your responses to see how much correspondence there is between your responses and the evaluator's responses. In what areas are you strongest? What do you need to improve upon?

Glossary

Abstract Word: Words that refer to ideas or concepts that are removed from material reality.

Axiology: A part of worldview; refers to an individual or group's value system.

Channel: The means through which the message travels.

Communicator: The people in the interaction or speech setting who encode and decode messages simultaneously.

Concrete Word: A word that describes a tangible object that can be perceived through the senses.

Context: The communication rules that govern different physical settings and/or different types of relationships.

Cosmology: A part of worldview; refers to the way individuals and groups see themselves in relation to other people and their view of their place in the universe.

Cultural Noise: Differences in worldview that cause message interference.

Decoding: The process of listening to words and interpreting the words so they are associated with a mental image.

Encoding: The process of taking a mental image, associating the image with words, and then speaking those words.

Epistemology: A part of worldview; refers to the way an individual or group acquires knowledge or what counts as knowledge.

Listening: The psychological process of interpreting and making sense of the messages we receive.

Message: The words, nonverbal behavior, or other signals transmitted from one person to another.

Noise: Any thing that interferes with the message transmission or the encoding and decoding process.

Nonverbal Behavior: All of the messages we send --- except for the words we say. Can include appearance, eye behavior, kinesics (body movement), proxemics (use of space), touch, time, and smell.

Norms: The verbal and nonverbal rules (usually unspoken) that govern communicative behavior.

Ontology: A part of worldview; refers to an individual's or group's belief system.

Praxeology: A part of worldview; refers to the way an individual or group goes about tasks or solving problems.

Psychological Noise: Message interference that results from disturbed or excited mental states.

Physiological Noise: Message interference that results from bodily discomfort.

Physical Noise: Message interference that results when the noise level (as measured in decibels) makes it difficult to hear a message.

Public Speaking: The act of delivering a speech in front of a live audience.

Worldview: The overall framework through which an individual sees, thinks about, and interprets the world and interacts with it.

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2: SPEAKING WITH CONFIDENCE

2.1: Introduction

2.2: Classifying Communication Apprehension (CA)

2.3: Frames of Reference

2.4: Cognitive Restructuring (CR)

2.5: Techniques for Building Confidence

2.6: Conclusion

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2.1: Introduction

Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Understand the nature of communicative apprehension (CA), and be in a better position to deal with your particular“brand” of CA
2. Analyze objectively the formation of your habitual frame of reference
3. Apply cognitive restructuring (CR) techniques to create a more positive frame of reference
4. Understand the importance of customized practice to become conversant in your topic
5. Create a personal preparation routine to minimize your apprehension

“I have to do what?”

You receive your syllabus on the first day of history class, and you see that a significant percentage of your overall grade for the semester depends upon one, ten-minute oral presentation in front of the class. The presentation is to be based on an original research project and is due in eight weeks.

You are excited to get an email after a very positive job interview. They ask you to come to a second interview prepared to answer a number of questions from a panel made up of senior management. The questions are contained in an attachment. “Please be ready to stand in the front of the room to answer,” the email reads; ending with “See you next week!”

The plans are finalized: You will have dinner to meet your new fiancé’s family on Saturday night – just days away. But, then you are told that your fiancé’s father, a former Marine and retired police officer, will want to talk about politics and current events – and that he will likely judge what sort of person you are based on how well you can defend your ideas.

> I get nervous when I don't get nervous. If I'm nervous, I know I'm going to have a good show. ~ Beyonce Knowles

In this chapter, you will learn about dealing with one of the most common fears in our society: **the fear of public speaking**, which is referred to as **communication apprehension** (CA). If you are one of those folks – take comfort in the fact that you are not alone! Research indicates that 20% or more of the U.S. population has a high degree of communicative apprehension (McCroskey, 1976). CA is an isolating phenomenon; something that makes one feel alone in the struggle. This is true even as programs designed to help people overcome it – like this program and this chapter, for instance – are spreading nationwide. CA is a real phenomenon that represents a well- documented obstacle not only to academic, but also to professional success. CA can impact many diverse areas; from one’s level of self-esteem (Adler, 1980) and how you are perceived by others (Dwyer & Cruz, 1998),to success in school, achieving high grade-point averages, and even landing job interview opportunities (Daly & Leth, 1976). People with higher levels of CA have demonstrated that they will avoid communicative interaction in personal and professional relationships, social situations, and importantly, classrooms. Such avoidance can result in miscommunication and misunderstanding, which only becomes compounded by further avoidance. CA left unaddressed can even lead to a negative disposition toward public interaction, which leads to a lesser degree of engagement, thus perpetuating the fear and further compounding the situation (Menzel & Carrell, 1994). The anxiety creates a vicious cycle and becomes a self- fulfilling prophecy. But it is a cycle that need not continue.



By reading this chapter, you will learn about CA; not necessarily how it develops, as that can be different in every individual, but rather about how people can deal with it effectively.
You will learn how therapies employed by psychologists to help people deal with phobias can be translated into effective techniques to deal with CA. You will learn the differences between trait-anxiety, state-anxiety, and scrutiny fear, and how understanding the differences between them can help a person deal with their "personal brand" of CA. You will learn about how people develop habitual frames of reference that come to define the way they approach an anticipated experience – and how anyone can employ cognitive restructuring to help change habits that are counter- productive to delivering effective presentations. Habits can be very difficult to break, but the first step is becoming aware and wanting to succeed. Going into any activity with a positive attitude is one of the basic ways of maximizing performance. CA is not something that can easily be eliminated – turned "off" as if controlled by an internal toggle switch. But it doesn't have to remain an obstacle to success either.

Effective public speaking is not simply about learning what to say, but about developing the confidence to say it. For many, it all comes down to overcoming those nerves and convincing yourself that you can actually get up there and speak! Each individual deals with CA most effectively through increased self- awareness and a willingness to work on reducing its impact. To conquer the nervousness associated with public speaking, one must identify the factors that lead to this anxiety, and then take specific steps to overcome this apprehension.

> As soon as the fear approaches near, attack and destroy it. ~ Chanakya

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2.2: Classifying Communication Apprehension (CA)

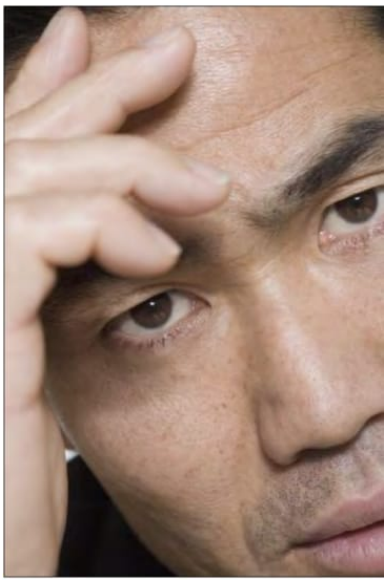
CA is not the result of a single cause, and so the phenomenon itself comes in many forms. It is important for each person to recognize that their particular sort of CA (we'll call it a "personal brand") is a phenomenon that has developed uniquely through each of their lives and experiences. Just as each individual is different, so too is each case of CA. There are specific distinctions between "stage fright" – a term reserved for the common, virtually universal nervousness felt by everyone– and CA – which is essentially "stage fright" with a corresponding emotional trauma attached. Scholars are somewhat divided, however, on whether CA is something inherent in the individual, or if it is the result of experience. In most people, it is very likely a combination of factors.

trait-anxiety

Some researchers (McCroskey, et al. 1976) describe CA as **trait-anxiety**, meaning that it is a type of anxiety that is aligned with an individual's personality. People who would call themselves "shy" often seek to avoid interaction with others because they are uncertain of how they will be perceived. Avoiding such judgment is generally not difficult, and so becomes a pattern of behavior. These folks, according to researchers, are likely view any chance to express themselves publicly with skepticism and hesitation. This personal tendency is what is known as trait-anxiety.

State-anxiety

Other researchers (Beatty, 1988) describe CA as state-anxiety, meaning that it is a type of anxiety that is derived from the external situation which individuals find themselves. While some may fear public speaking due to some personal trait or broader social anxiety, researchers have found that CA more often stems from the fear associated with scrutiny and negative evaluation. Some people may have had a negative experience in public at an early age – they forgot a line in a play, they lost a spelling bee, they did poorly when called on in front of their class – something that resulted in a bit of public embarrassment. Others may have never actually experienced that stress themselves, but may have watched friends struggle and thus empathized with them. These sorts of experiences can often lead to the formation of a state-anxiety in an individual.



scrutiny fear

Still other researchers (Mattick et al., 1989) discuss CA as what is called a **scrutiny fear**; which stems from an activity that does not necessarily involve interacting with other people, but is simply the fear of being in a situation where one is being watched or observed, or one perceives him or herself as being watched, while undertaking an activity. When asked to categorize their own

type of CA, many people will identify with this phenomenon.

In order for anybody to effectively deal with CA, the first step is to consider what may be its primary cause. CA is what is known as a **resultant condition**; and those who are dealing with the challenge will recognize different intensities associated with different situations or triggers. This means that overcoming the condition requires first that you recognize, and then minimize, the cause. Each person is different, and so each case of CA is personal and unique. Trait-anxiety can be one contributing factor to CA, but is often part of a much larger condition. It is important to understand that, while the techniques discussed here would help in improving an individual's approach to public speaking opportunities, we do not claim that these techniques would work with more significant personality disorders. However, both the presence of state- anxiety, and the appearance of scrutiny fear, can be effectively addressed through the application of cognitive restructuring (CR) and careful, deliberate experience.

> How little do they see what is, who frame their hasty judgments upon that which seems. ~ Robert Southey

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2.3: Frames of Reference

Many popular movies are now based on multiple-book series like the “Harry Potter” or “Lord of the Rings” movies.

If you are a fan of these book series, you know about the anticipation you felt as the next film was ready to be released – you get swept away by the memories, you look forward to seeing the characters again. Before you even enter the theatre and take your seat, you are in a very positive mood and you are looking forward to being entertained. Perhaps you are even familiar with the details of the story you are about to watch on film; and this only adds to your feelings of anticipation. Because of your previous experiences, you have developed a frame of reference toward future events. One’s **frame of reference** is the context, viewpoint, or set of presuppositions or evaluative criteria within which a person's perception and thinking seem always to occur; and which constrains selectively the course and outcome of these activities. Once your anticipation is rewarded, this frame of reference becomes how you “approach” the release of each new film in the series – your frame of reference becomes “habitual.” Evidence for this can be seen in the consistent success of the serial movies – even if critics’ opinions are harsh, fans will go see the film.

habitual frame of reference

Developing the habitual frame of reference with regard to public speaking usually comes from a combination of personal experiences and what has been witnessed. Formal public speaking opportunities are most prevalent within the context of formal education – thus, public presentations are generally student-oriented experiences which are strongly associated with being evaluated or judged. Because there is such a focus upon the grade that results from the assignment, there is much less focus upon the integrity of the presentation itself. Studies have even shown that the possibility of a negative experience can lead to many students to skip assignments or drop a class – even when that class is required for graduation (Pelias, 1989). Students will often worry more about their grade rather than what is contained in their presentation. Thus, the act of public speaking takes on the pressure of taking a final exam with everyone watching. It’s no wonder so many students report that they are stressed out by public speaking!



personal frame of reference

We can all recall a time when we’ve met a group of friends for lunch. Try to recall an instance when the conversation centered on the latest popular movie – and you happen to be the person in the group who saw it the night before. Was it fun? Was it worth the money? Should we go see it too? Everyone else around the table would look at you and wait to hear what you had to say. And what happened when you were faced with all these questions? Well, *probably* you focused on your favorite parts; *probably* you told the story in some sort of organized manner; *probably* you asked your friends whether or not they wanted you to give away the ending; and *probably* you were fine with any of your friends interrupting while you were talking. In short, you presented to your

audience. But, since the action of public presentation was not undertaken within the stressful context of a “graded assignment,” but rather within the positive context of “lunch with friends,” you did not feel the same level of CA as with other presentations. The action was essentially the same, but the way you approached the action was completely different – solely because you perceived of yourself engaging in a fun activity (lunch with friends), and not a stressful one (public speaking). Think about how many different experiences have prompted the formation of a habitual frame of reference in you: social events with friends, holidays with family, the weekly staff meeting at work.

Consider whether the way you approach the situation has anything at all to do with the sort of experience that follows. Is there a correlation between positive mood and positive outcome? Think of all the motivational aphorisms and advice you’ve heard: “Think Positive!” or “Expect Success!” all of which are based on the idea that approaching an activity with a positive attitude about your potential success is the best strategy. We need to build a positive attitude about doing something we are afraid to do.



> I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear. ~ Nelson Mandela

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2.4: Cognitive Restructuring (CR)

Since the major difference between “presenting” to a public audience versus “presenting” to a small group of close friends involves one’s attitude about the situation. Overcoming CA is as much a matter of changing one’s attitude as it is developing one’s skills as a speaker. A change in attitude can be fostered through a self-reflective regimen called **cognitive restructuring** (CR), which is an internal process through which individuals can deliberately adjust how they perceive an action or experience (Mattick et al., 1989).

Cognitive Restructuring is a three- step, internal process:

1. Identify objectively what you think
2. Identify any inconsistencies between perception and reality
3. Replace destructive thinking with supportive thinking

These steps are easy to understand, but perhaps may be a bit difficult to execute! The first step is to identify objectively what you are thinking as you approach a public speaking opportunity. Recall your habitual frame of reference. The first step in CR is to shine a bright light directly on it. This will be different for each student undertaking the process.



sources of apprehension

After years of interviewing students from my classes, the two concerns most often described are the feeling of being the center of attention – as if you are under some collective microscope with everybody’s eyes on you; and the feeling that the audience is just waiting for you to make a mistake or slip up somehow – and that their disapproval will be swift, immediate, and embarrassing. Let’s discuss how CR might be applied to each of these widely-held perceptions.

impact of apprehension

Probably the most common concern people have is being the “center of attention.”When people describe this specific scrutiny fear, they use phrases like “everyone just stares at me,” or “I don’t like having all eyes on me.” Consider for a moment what your experiences have been like when you have been a member of the audience for another speaker. Where did you look while the person spoke? Did you look at the speaker? Direct eye contact can mean different things in different cultures, but in U.S. culture, eye contact is the primary means for an audience to demonstrate that they are listening to a speaker. Nobody likes to be ignored, and most members of an audience would not want to be perceived as ignoring the speaker – that would be rude! Compare: before CR, the frame of reference reflects the idea that “everyone is staring at me”; after CR, the perception is altered to “the audience

is looking at me to be supportive and polite – after all, I'm the one doing the talking."

Another common concern is the fear of being judged harshly or making an embarrassing mistake. Go back to that memory of you as a member of the audience, but this time reflect on what sort of expectations you had at the time. Did you expect the speaker to be flawless and riveting? Did you have in mind some super-high level of performance – below which the speaker would have disappointed you? Probably you did not (unless you had the chance to watch some prominent speaker). Think back to any experiences you may have had watching another speaker struggle – perhaps a classmate during one of their presentations. Witnessing something like that can be uncomfortable. Did you feel empathy for the person struggling? Isn't it a much more pleasant experience when the speaker does well? Again, the vast majority of people empathize with the speaker when it comes to the quality of the presentation. They are willing to give the speaker a chance to say what they want to say. Thus: before CR, the frame of reference reflects the idea that "everyone is judging me harshly"; and after CR, the perception is altered to "the audience is willing to listen to what I have to say because it's a more pleasant experience for them if the speaker is successful."



learning confidence

Consider what comes into your mind if you are to deliver a public presentation. Are your thoughts consumed with many uncertainties. What if I make a mistake? What if they don't like what I'm talking about? What if? Try your own version of CR. Put yourself in the role of audience member and ask yourself whether your fears as a speaker are consistent with your expectations as an audience member. Remember that, just like you, the audience wants the speaker to succeed. Of course CR, unfortunately, is always easier said than done. It is a process that takes time, patience, and practice. The most important thing to remember is that you are trying CR as a means of breaking a habit, and habits are formed over periods of time, never instantaneously. The breaking of a habit, similarly, cannot be done instantaneously, but gradually, over time and with deliberate effort.

Changing your attitude is only one element in overcoming CA. The other involves improving your skills as a speaker. The presence of CA in any student brings with it the need to prepare more deliberately and more diligently. The other chapters in this book deal with the importance of preparation in all areas of public presentation. Readers should consider how the challenges involved with overcoming CA can impact the preparation process.

> It usually takes me more than three weeks to prepare a good impromptu speech. ~ Mark Twain

Table 2.4.1: Impact of Cognitive Restructuring

Before Cognitive Restructuring:	After Cognitive Restructuring:
One is worried about being under scrutiny.	One recognizes that audiences look at who is speaking.
One is worried about being judged harshly.	One recognizes that audiences want success.
One is worried about making an embarrassing mistake.	One recognizes that audiences will empathize.

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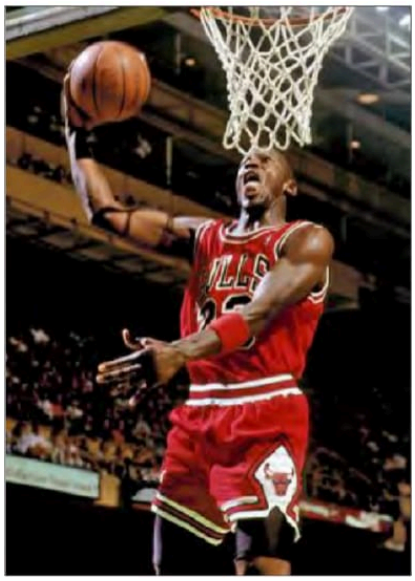
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2.5: Techniques for Building Confidence

prepare well

The correlation between preparation and nervousness is consistent. More practice results in less nervousness. The best, most consistent and direct way to minimize the level of nervousness you feel is through effective preparation. This is always true. Importantly, the best sort of practice is the kind that prepares you properly.

Michael Jordan was once asked the best way to learn how to shoot free throws. He said that you cannot learn to shoot free throws by walking into a gym with a ball, walking up to the line, and shooting. Instead, he described how the first step in learning to shoot free throws is to run sprints. Most importantly, his advice was to run until your body was under the same stress as it would be in a game when you needed to make those free throws – because only under those conditions would your practice become truly productive. *Only* then do you pick up the ball and shoot. And when you managed to catch your breath? All types of preparation and practice yield some benefits, but there is a significant difference between practice that is merely helpful and practice that is sufficient. There is a difference between "knowing what you are talking about," and "knowing what you are going to say." Thinking about your presentation can be helpful, but that sort of preparation will not give you a sense of what you are actually going to say. Athletes know that the best practices will re-create game conditions and test their abilities to perform in real-life scenarios. Studying a playbook? This is helpful, but not sufficient. Going over a speech in your mind? Again, it is helpful, but not sufficient.



Many students do not practice effectively, and this can result in the wrong idea that practice isn't helpful. Unfortunately, these same students usually have had little, if any, training in how one might prepare for a presentation, and so they employ the scholastic training they are most familiar with – how to write a paper. This is not the same activity as presenting, and so the lack of proper preparation only contributes to the lack of confidence. Let's look at a few elements of effective practice.

visualize success

Athletes and performers are often coached to visualize what they are trying to do as a way to perform correctly. Baseball players need to anticipate what they will do if the ball is hit their way so that they are ready to perform without having to make split-second choices. Football and basketball players must envision how each member of the team will move during a particular play because team success depends on speedy and flawless coordination between individuals. Dancers and divers are trained to visualize the form and positioning of their bodies as they execute their moves. Golfers are coached to visualize the flight and arc of the shot they are about to attempt. Engaging the imagination in this way can be beneficial to performance.

> I visualize things in my mind before I have to do them. It's like having a mental workshop. ~ Jack Youngblood

Speakers too, should visualize success. As you practice, visualize yourself presenting with confidence to a receptive audience. “See” your relaxed facial expressions and “hear” your confident vocal tone. Imagine yourself moving gracefully, complementing what you say with expressive gestures. Imagine the audience reacting appropriately – nodding appreciatively and giving thoughtful consideration to your points. Imagine the gratification of watching the audience really “get it.” When you can honestly envision yourself performing at this level, you are taking an important step toward achieving that goal.

avoid gimmicks

Some acting coaches (and speech teachers) encourage their students to practice in front of mirrors, so that they can watch themselves perform and evaluate how they move. In acting, this can be very useful; but in speaking, it is less so. When you practice your presentation, the most important element is expressiveness. You want to become more familiar with the volume of material, the order in which you plan to present it, and the phrasing you think would be most effective to express it. Watching yourself perform in a mirror will focus your attention on your appearance first – and on what you express second. This makes using a mirror during practice a distraction from what the practice ought to achieve.

Plus, consider what you are seeing in the mirror as you practice. Obviously, it is you! But more to the point, what you see in the mirror (your reflection) will not resemble, in any way, the audience that you would see while delivering your presentation. Just as you want to visualize success in yourself as part of your preparation; you also want to visualize success in your audience – which means that you want to imagine the members of your audience reacting positively to your presentation, paying close attention and nodding their heads as you make your points.



For some reason, the myth persists that imagining your audience in their pajamas – or something similarly silly – is an effective way to make standing in front of them seem less scary. Many of my students have discussed hearing “tips” like imagining the audience wearing pink bunny-ears as a way to make them less intimidating. These sorts of gimmicks don’t work! In fact, concentrating on anything other than what you are doing is distracting and not beneficial at all. Do your best to avoid such advice. Visualize success!

> Breathe. Let go. And remind yourself that this very moment is the only one you know you have for sure. ~ Oprah Winfrey

breathe and release

One type of pre-presentation exercise that might be helpful is based on a therapeutic idea called **systematic desensitization**, which is a multi-stage regimen to help patients deal with phobias through coping mechanisms. Going through both the cognitive and behavioral aspects of systematic desensitization often requires weeks of concerted effort to overcome the body’s involuntary reactions to stress. That sort of psychological therapy involves gradual exposure to what produces the anxiety, long-term self-reflection, and mental discipline. Here, we will discuss a shortened version called “**breathe and release**.” This is a short-cut relaxation technique that could be useful for nervous speakers – especially those who are concerned with the physical

manifestations of nervousness, such as shaky hands or knees.

The key to “breathe and release” is to understand that when nervous tension results in minor trembling, the effort of trying to keep one’s hands from shaking can contribute to the whole situation – that is, trying to stop literally can make it worse! Therefore, the best approach is through relaxation.



“Breathe and Release” involves three steps:

1. Imagine the nervousness within your body. Imagine that energy bubbling inside you, like liquid being cooked.
2. Draw that energy to a high point within your body with a deep, cleansing breath. Imagine this cleansing breath to be acting like a vacuum – drawing up all of the bubbling liquid.
3. Release the energy by deliberately relaxing the entirety of your upper extremities – not just your hands, or even your hands and arms – but all the way from your fingertips to the bottom edges of your shoulder blades. Imagine how keeping any part of your upper extremities tense would result in a “kink” in the release valve, and so complete relaxation is the key to success. Remember: Relaxeverything from the fingertips to the very bottom edges of your shoulder blades.



“Breathe and Release” is something that can be done even as one walks to the front of the classroom or boardroom to begin speaking. Many speakers, especially those who are concerned about the physical manifestations of nervousness, have used this relaxation technique effectively.

I've a grand memory for forgetting. ~ Robert Louis Stevenson

minimize what you memorize

One important hint for speech preparation involves avoiding the writing of an entirely scripted version of the presentation. Many people have the impression that writing a script of the entire speech is the necessary first step in preparation; that practicing can only happen after you are done writing the entire speech. Unfortunately, this common impression is mistaken. Remember that lunch with your friends? When you were describing the movie plot, you were being ***conversant*** in a prepared way. This means that you knew what you were describing, but you were not concerned with the specific words you were using. Being *conversant* is the condition of being prepared to discuss an issue intelligently. Fans of sports are *conversant* about their favorite teams. Experts are conversant in their fields. A well-prepared speaker is conversant with regard to her topic. Consider how being conversant in this manner allows freer, more fluid communication, with no stress associated with your ability to remember what words you wanted to use. Being conversant also gives the speaker the best chance to recognize and react to audience feedback. If you are completely focused on the integrity of scripted comments, then you will be unable to read and react to your audience in any meaningful way. Imagine how frustrating it would be for your friends at that lunch if you would not respond to any of their questions until you were finished reading a few descriptive paragraphs about the movie. They would probably just wait until you were done reading and then try to engage you in a conversation!

If you wish to forget anything on the spot, make a note that this thing is to be remembered. ~ Edgar Allan Poe

Many people have had experience being in a stage play or some other type of performance that involved memorized recitation of a script. Many of us might recall moments during rehearsals when our minds would “freeze” and we might need just a quick reminder – the next word or phrase, the next few notes – to get back on track. This is because people do not memorize in units, but in phrases or chunks. The mind attaches to a rhythm – not to each individual unit, word, or note. This is why it is best to minimize what you memorize. Prepare your opening carefully so that you start smoothly. Prepare your closing comments so that you can end sharply and with style. But avoid preparing and then memorizing an entire script.

Preparing for a speech by memorizing a written script engages your mind at a different level from that of a conversant speaker. Concentrating on remembering words is different from paying attention to how one’s audience is reacting. The pressure that arises from trying to remember the next word can be considerable, yet that pressure is entirely avoidable. The goal of public speaking should never be about loyal recreation of a script – it is about getting the appropriate response from your audience. Trying to remember an entirely scripted speech can result in the rather ironic situation of a person being able confidently and smoothly to discuss the topic in casual conversation, but still quite stressed about their ability to remember their scripted comments.

Many students forget their lines while discussing topics like their families and hometowns. Of course they knew what they were talking about, but their minds were focused on the task of remembering specific words – a task different from effective speaking. So, should you write any prepared comments at all? Yes, of course ,you should. Specifically, the feedback you should be most concerned with will happen during the body of the speech – when you are discussing the substance of your presentation. It is during the body of the speech when you need especially to retain the ability to adjust to how your audience reacts. Thus, memorizing your entire speech is ultimately detrimental to your ability to react to your audience. However, during the introduction and conclusion of your speech, the primary concerns are about connecting with your audience personally; which is something best assured through consistent eye contact. So, carefully preparing the introduction and the conclusion of your speech is a smart strategy – but don’t make the mistake of scripting everything that you plan to say. The best rule here: Minimize what you memorize – familiarize instead!

If I don't train enough, of course I'm nervous. ~ Haile Gebrselassie



practice out loud

Remember the very first time you tried to do anything – a game, a sport, an activity, anything at all. How good were you out of the gate? Perhaps you had talent or were gifted with a “feel” for what you were doing. But even then, didn’t you get better with more experience? Nobody does anything the very best they can on their very first attempt, and everyone – even the most talented among us – will benefit from effective practice.



Speaking in public is no different from any other activity in this way. To maximize the chance that your presentation will come out smooth and polished, you will need to hear it all the way through. By practicing out loud, from the beginning to the ending, you will be able to listen to your whole speech and properly gauge the flow of your entire presentation. Additionally, without at least one complete out-loud practice, there will be no way to accurately estimate the length of your speech and your preparation will remain insufficient. When dealing with CA, the last thing you want is to leave some questions unanswered in your own mind! The out-loud “dress rehearsal” is the single, most important element to your preparation. Without it, you will be delivering your presentation in full for the first time when it counts the most. Putting yourself at that sort of disadvantage isn’t wise, and is easily avoided.

Consider your current method of preparing a public presentation. At some point, you will have gathered notes and information together. That represents an opportune moment for your first out-loud practice. You might even consider trying that initial practice without the benefit of any notes. Stand up; start speaking; see what comes out! Such a practice can serve as an “oral first draft”

in the same vein as any written first draft of a paper, and can answer a number of questions for you:

1. Where, during your presentation, are you most – and least – conversant?
2. Where, during your presentation, are you most in need of supportive notes?
3. What do your notes need to contain?

Prepare for your public presentation by speaking and listening to yourself, rather than by writing, editing, and rewriting. Remember that when you are having a conversation, you never use the same sort of language and syntax as you do when you are writing a formal paper. Practice with the goal of becoming conversant in your topic, not fluent with a script.

> You can't hire someone to practice for you. ~ H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

customize your practice

We've discussed a variety of techniques in this chapter; from the importance of out-loud practice to suggestions of when, during your preparation, you should start the out- loud practice. We've discussed Cognitive Restructuring as a means of changing your attitude about presenting in a positive way. Depending on your personal brand of CA, you may choose to implement these hints in different ways. Take a moment to reflect on what causes your CA. Do you dislike the feeling of being the center of attention? Are you more concerned with who is in the audience and what they might think of you? Or are you worried about "freezing" in front of the audience and forgetting what you wanted to say? Write some of these concerns down and put them into a priority order. If you are worried about a particular issue or problem, how might you prepare to minimize the chance of that issue arising?



Then consider your current method of preparation. Do you prepare more for a written paper than for an oral presentation? Do you have the goal of presenting a scripted message? Do you practice out loud? When, during your process, do you practice aloud? Do you practice at all before you begin to compose your speaking notes; or do you only practice after? Remember that dealing with CA often involves the breaking of a mental habit. It is a good idea to change what you have done previously. Be deliberate. Observe what works for your situation.

Recall what was discussed at the beginning of this chapter: CA is a condition unique to each person dealing with it. CA is the result of many varied causes – some internal and personal, some external and experiential.



Dealing with anxiety may be as much dealing with your attitude as with your skills, as much a struggle with perception as with ability. Because of this, you are in the best position to know how to deal with your particular brand of CA. As stated earlier in the chapter: Each individual deals with CA most effectively through increased self- awareness and a willingness to take each of the steps in the entire process. After you acknowledge your reality, then you take the steps necessary to overcome apprehension. When you've read about the ways to overcome the debilitating impact of CA, the next steps in your process involve seeing what works best for you. Do not continue to prepare in exactly the same way as before. Speak more; write and revise less. Be sure to practice out-loud at least once during your preparation, in order to prepare yourself sufficiently. Reflect on your personal concerns and try Cognitive Restructuring on those concerns. Take your time. Do the work. Have confidence that your preparation will yield positive results.

> Nothing in the affairs of men is worthy of great anxiety. ~ Plato

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2.6: Conclusion

In this chapter, we've discussed *Communication Apprehension* or CA. This difficult condition can be the result of many, varied causes. Even professional researchers don't always agree on whether CA is inherent in the person, or the result of what the person experiences or perceives – with some calling it "trait-anxiety;" others "state- anxiety;" and still others classifying it as "scrutiny fear." The first step for any person to address this condition is self-reflection. Try to identify what has caused you to feel the way you do about public speaking. Careful introspection can result in a more productive level of self-awareness.

Whatever the root cause of CA might be for any particular individual, the first step in addressing CA is to objectively view the habitual frame of reference that has emerged in your mind regarding public speaking. Consider all those "what-if's" that keep cropping up in your mind and how you might begin to address them productively, rather than simply to ignore them and hope they go away. Go through the steps of Cognitive Restructuring or CR. Consider how many of those "what-if's" are nothing more than invented pressure that you place upon yourself.

Relaxation techniques, such as "Breathe and Release," have proven to be effective for many speakers, especially those concerned with the physical manifestations of nervousness like trembling hands or shaky knees. Remember that those sorts of tremors can often be exacerbated by efforts to hold still. Don't force yourself to hold still! Relax instead.

Lastly, we discussed the most effective means to prepare – which is toward the goal of becoming *conversant* in your topic, rather than being able to recite a memorized script. By familiarizing yourself with your topic, you become better able to consider the best way to talk to your audience, rather than becoming "married to your script" and ultimately consumed with saying the words in the right order. Practicing out-loud, without a mirror to distract you, is the best way to prepare yourself.

CA is a real issue, but it need not be an obstacle to success. Take the time to become more aware of your personal brand of CA. Take positive steps to minimize its impact. Your willingness to work and your positive attitude are the keys to your success.



Believe you can and you're halfway there. ~ Theodore Roosevelt

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3: LISTENING EFFECTIVELY

3.1: Introduction

3.2: Hearing versus Listening

3.3: The Value of Listening

3.4: The Three A's of Active Listening

3.5: Barriers to Effective Listening

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3.8: Encouraging Effective Listening

3.9: Conclusion

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3.1: Introduction

Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, you should be able to:

1. explain the difference between listening and hearing
2. understand the value of listening
3. identify the three attributes of active listeners
4. recognize barriers to effective listening
5. employ strategies to engage listeners
6. provide constructive feedback as a listener

“You’re not listening!” An unhappy teen shouts this at a concerned parent. A frustrated parent yells this as a toddler runs through a parking lot. A teacher says it while flicking the overheard lights on and off, trying to get her unruly students to heed her. A woman offers these three words as a parting shot before hanging up on her significant other. A man complains of this to his spouse during a couple’s counseling session. We can imagine all these scenarios and more; all of them rooted in a speaker wondering if his or her audience is truly listening.

Public speaking requires an audience to hear. Otherwise it’s private speaking, and anyone overhearing you might wonder if you’ve lost your wits. What makes public speaking truly effective is when the audience hears and listens. You might think the two are synonymous. But they aren’t, as you will soon understand. In a classic listening text, Adler (1983) notes, “How utterly amazing is the general assumption that the ability to listen well is a natural gift for which no training is required” (p. 5). Since listening requires great effort, this chapter offers the skills needed to listen effectively.



Developing your listening skills can have applications throughout your educational, personal, and professional lives. You will begin by examining the difference between hearing and listening. This module will also help you understand your role as a listener, not only in a public speaking class, but also in the world. You’ll read about attributes of an active listener, barriers to listening, and strategies to listen better. Finally, building on valuable lessons regarding listening, this chapter concludes with suggestions public speakers can use to encourage audiences to listen more attentively.

We have two ears and one tongue so that we would listen more and talk less. ~ Diogenes

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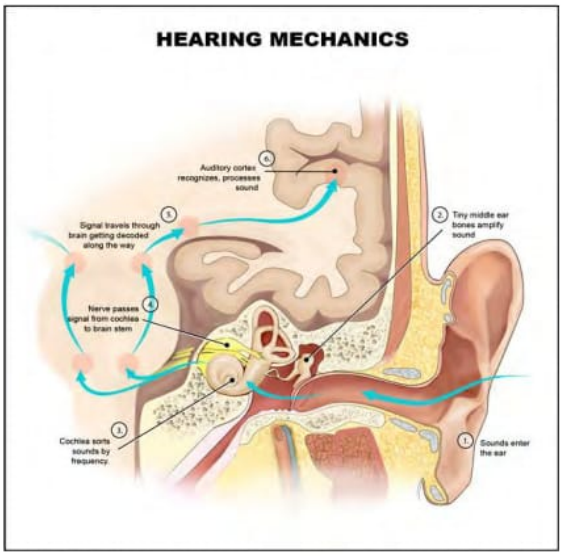
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3.2: Hearing versus Listening

A mother takes her four-year-old to the pediatrician reporting she's worried about the girl's hearing. The doctor runs through a battery of tests, checks in the girl's ears to be sure everything looks good, and makes notes in the child's folder. Then, she takes the mother by the arm. They move together to the far end of the room, behind the girl. The doctor whispers in a low voice to the concerned parent: "Everything looks fine. But, she's been through a lot of tests today. You might want to take her for ice cream after this as a reward." The daughter jerks her head around, a huge grin on her face, "Oh, please, Mommy! I love ice cream!" The doctor, speaking now at a regular volume, reports, "As I said, I don't think there's any problem with her hearing, but she may not always be choosing to listen."



Hearing is something most everyone does without even trying. It is a physiological response to sound waves moving through the air at up to 760 miles per hour. First, we receive the sound in our ears. The wave of sound causes our eardrums to vibrate, which engages our brain to begin processing. The sound is then transformed into nerve impulses so that we can perceive the sound in our brains. Our auditory cortex recognizes a sound has been heard and begins to process the sound by matching it to previously encountered sounds in a process known as **auditory association** (Brownell, 1996). Hearing has kept our species alive for centuries. When you are asleep but wake in a panic having heard a noise downstairs, an age-old selfpreservation response is kicking in. You were asleep. You weren't listening for the noise – unless perhaps you are a parent of a teenager out past curfew – but you hear it. Hearing is unintentional, whereas listening (by contrast) requires you to pay conscious attention. Our bodies hear, but we need to employ intentional effort to actually listen.



We regularly engage in several different types of listening. When we are tuning our attention to a song we like, or a poetry reading, or actors in a play, or sitcom antics on television, we are listening for pleasure, also known as **appreciative listening**. When we are listening to a friend or family member, building our relationship with another through offering support and showing empathy for her feelings in the situation she is discussing, we are engaged in **relational listening**. Therapists, counselors, and conflict mediators are trained in another level known as **empathetic or therapeutic listening**. When we are at a political event, attending a debate, or enduring a salesperson touting the benefits of various brands of a product, we engage in critical listening. This requires us to be attentive to key points that influence or confirm our judgments. When we are focused on gaining information whether from a teacher in a classroom setting, or a pastor at church, we are engaging in **informational listening** (Ireland, 2011).

Yet, despite all these variations, Nichols (1995) called listening a "lost art." The ease of sitting passively without really listening is well known to anyone who has sat in a boring class with a professor droning on about the Napoleonic wars or proper pain medication regimens for patients allergic to painkillers. You hear the words the professor is saying, while you check Facebook on your phone under the desk. Yet, when the exam question features an analysis of Napoleon's downfall or a screaming patient fatally allergic to codeine you realize you didn't actually listen. Trying to recall what you heard is a challenge, because without your attention and intention to remember, the information is lost in the caverns of your cranium.

Listening is one of the first skills infants gain, using it to acquire language and learn to communicate with their parents. Bommelje (2011) suggests listening is the activity we do most in life, second only to breathing. Nevertheless, the skill is seldom taught.

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3.3: The Value of Listening

Listening is a critical skill. The strategies endorsed in this chapter can help you to be a more attentive listener in any situation.

Academic Benefit

Bommelje, Houston, and Smither (2003) studied effective listening among 125 college students and found a strong link between effective listening and school success, supporting previous research in the field linking listening skills to grade point average. This finding is unsurprising as the better you listen while in class, the better prepared you will be for your assignments and exams. It is quite simple really. When students listen, they catch the instructions, pointers, feedback, and hints they can use to make the assignment better or get a better score on the test.

> Learning is a result of listening, which in turn leads to even better listening and attentiveness to the other person. ~ Alice Miller

Professional Benefits

Connecting listening skills to better leadership, Hoppe (2006) lists many professional advantages of active listening, indicating that it helps us: better understand and make connections between ideas and information; change perspectives and challenge assumptions; empathize and show respect or appreciation, which can enhance our relationships; and build self-esteem. When people aren't listening, it becomes much more difficult to get things done effectively and trust is broken while fostering resentments. Bell and Mejer (2011), identifying poor listening as a "silent killer of productivity and profit," state change becomes extremely difficult to implement in a work environment when people are not listening.

Effective listening can also help you to make a better impression on employers. This can begin at the interview. You really want the job, but you are really nervous. As a result, you are having trouble paying attention to what the CEO of the company is saying in your final interview. She asks you if you have any questions, and you ask something you were wondering about in the elevator on the way up to this penthouse office. You're unlikely to get the job if you ask something she's just talked about. Even if you, somehow, convince her to hire you, you will make little progress at the firm if your supervisors often have to tell you things again, or you make decisions that cost the company in lost profits because you weren't listening effectively in a team meeting.



Ferrari (2012) identifies listening as the "most critical business skill of all." He notes, "listening can well be the difference between profit and loss, between success and failure, between a long career and a short one" (p. 2).

Personal Benefits

If listening is done well, the **communication loop** is effectively completed between speaker and receiver. The speaker shares a message with the receiver, having selected a particular method to communicate that message. The receiver aims to interpret the message and share understanding of the message with the speaker. Communication effectiveness is determined by the level of shared interpretation of the message reached through listener response and feedback. When done successfully, the loop is complete, and both sender and receiver feel connected. The active listener who employs the positive attributes detailed in this chapter is more likely to be better liked, in turn increasing her selfesteem. She is also likely to be better able to reduce tension in situations and resolve conflict (Wobser, 2004). After all, the symbols for ears, eyes, undivided attention, and heart comprise the Chinese character for “to listen” (McFerran, 2009, p. G1). Truly listening to the words of a speaker is sure to make a positive difference in your interactions whether they are academic, professional, or personal.



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3.4: The Three A's of Active Listening

Effective listening is about selfawareness. You must pay attention to whether or not you are only hearing, passively listening, or actively engaging. Effective listening requires concentration and a focused effort that is known as active listening. Active listening can be broken down into three main elements.

> Know how to listen, and you will profit even from those who talk badly. ~ Plutarch



Attention

We know now that attention is the fundamental difference between hearing and listening. Paying attention to what a speaker is saying requires intentional effort on your part. Nichols (1957), credited with first researching the field of listening, observed, “listening is hard work. It is characterized by faster heart action, quicker circulation of the blood, a small rise in bodily temperature” (p. 9). Consider that we can process information four times faster than a person speaks. Yet, tests of listening comprehension show the average person listening at only 25% efficiency. A typical person can speak 125 wordsper-minute, yet we can process up to three times faster, reaching as much as 500 words-per-minute. The poor listener grows impatient, while the effective listener uses the extra processing time to process the speaker’s words, distinguish key points, and mentally summarize them (Nichols, 1957).

Hoppe (2006) advises active listening is really a state of mind requiring us to choose to focus on the moment, being present and attentive while disregarding any of our anxieties of the day. He suggests listeners prepare themselves for active attention by creating a **listening reminder**. This might be to write “Listen” at the top of a page in front of you in a meeting.

While reading a book, or having a discussion with an individual, you can go back and re-read or ask a question to clarify a point. This is not always true when listening. Listening is of the moment, and we often only get to hear the speaker’s words once. The key then is for the listener to quickly ascertain the speaker’s central premise or controlling idea. Once this is done, it becomes easier for the listener to discern what is most important. Of course, distinguishing the speaker’s primary goal, his main points, and the structure of the speech are all easier when the listener is able to listen with an open mind.



Attitude

Even if you are paying attention, you could be doing so with the wrong attitude, the second A. Telling yourself this is all a waste of time is not going to help you to listen effectively. You'll be better off determining an internal motivation to be attentive to the person speaking. Approaching the task of listening with a positive attitude and an open-mind will make the act of listening much easier. Bad listeners make snap judgments that justify the decision to be inattentive. Yet, since you're already there, why not listen to see what you can learn? Kaponya (1991) warns against psychological **deaf spots** which impair our ability to perceive and understand things counter to our convictions. It can be as little as a word or phrase that might cause "an emotional eruption" causing communication efficiency to drop rapidly (p. 194). For instance, someone who resolutely supports military action as the best response to a terrorist action may be unable to listen objectively to a speaker endorsing negotiation as a better tool. Even if the speaker is effectively employing logic, drawing on credible sources, and appealing to emotion with a heartrending tale of the civilian casualties caused by bombings, this listener would be unable to keep an open mind. Failing to acknowledge your deaf spots will leave you at a deficit when listening.

You will always need to make up your own mind about where you stand – whether you agree or disagree with the speaker – but it is critical to do so *after* listening. Adler (1983) proposes having four questions in mind while listening: "What is the whole speech about?" "What are the main or pivotal ideas, conclusions, and arguments?" "Are the speaker's conclusions sound or mistaken?" and "What of it?" Once you have an overall idea of the speech, determine the key points, and gauge your agreement, you can decide why it matters, how it affects you, or what you might do as a result of what you have heard. Yet, he notes it is "impossible" to answer all these questions at the same time as you are listening (p. 96). Instead, you have to be ready and willing to pay attention to the speaker's point of view and changes in direction, patiently waiting to see where she is leading you.

> There are things I can't force. I must adjust. There are times when the greatest change needed is a change of my viewpoint. ~ Denis Diderot

Adjustment

To do this well, you need the final of the three A's: adjustment. Often when we hear someone speak, we don't know in advance what he is going to be saying. So, we need to be flexible, willing to follow a speaker along what seems like a verbal detour down a rabbit hole, until we are rewarded by the speaker reaching his final destination while his audience marvels at the creative means by which he reached his important point. If the audience members are more intent on reacting to or anticipating what is said, they will be poor listeners indeed.

Take time now to think about your own listening habits by completing the listening profile, adapted from Brownell (1996) (see Appendix A). The next section will consider ways to address the challenges of listening effectively.

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3.5: Barriers to Effective Listening

We get in our own way when it comes to effective listening. While listening may be the communication skill we use foremost in formal education environments, it is taught the least (behind, in order, writing, reading, and speaking) (Brownell, 1996). To better learn to listen it is first important to acknowledge strengths and weaknesses as listeners. We routinely ignore the barriers to our effective listening; yet anticipating, judging, or reacting emotionally can all hinder our ability to listen attentively.

Anticipating

Anticipating, or thinking about what the listener is likely to say, can detract from listening in several ways. On one hand, the listener might find the speaker is taking too long to make a point and try to anticipate what the final conclusion is going to be. While doing this, the listener has stopped actively listening to the speaker. A listener who knows too much, or thinks they do, listens poorly. The only answer is humility, and recognizing there is always something new to be learned.

Anticipating what we will say in response to the speaker is another detractor to effective listening. Imagine your roommate comes to discuss your demand for quiet from noon to 4 p.m. every day so that you can nap in complete silence and utter darkness. She begins by saying, “I wonder if we could try to find a way that you could nap with the lights on, so that I could use our room in the afternoon, too.” She might go on to offer some perfectly good ideas as to how this might be accomplished, but you’re no longer listening because you are too busy anticipating what you will say in response to her complaint. Once she’s done speaking, you are ready to enumerate all of the things she’s done wrong since you moved in together. Enter the Resident Assistant to mediate a conflict that gets out of hand quickly. This communication would have gone differently if you had actually listened instead of jumping ahead to plan a response.

> An expert is someone who has succeeded in making decisions and judgments simpler through knowing what to pay attention to and what to ignore. ~ Edward de Bono



Judging

Jumping to conclusions about the speaker is another barrier to effective listening. Perhaps you’ve been in the audience when a speaker makes a small mistake; maybe it’s mispronouncing a word or misstating the hometown of your favorite athlete. An effective listener will overlook this minor gaffe and continue to give the speaker the benefit of the doubt. A listener looking for an excuse not to give their full attention to the speaker will instead take this momentary lapse as proof of flaws in all the person has said and will go on to say.

This same listener might also judge the speaker based on superficialities. Focusing on delivery or personal appearance – a squeaky voice, a ketchup stain on a white shirt, mismatched socks, a bad haircut, or a proclaimed love for a band that no one of any worth could ever profess to like – might help the ineffective listener justify a choice to stop listening. Still, this is always a choice. The effective listener will instead accept that people may have their own individual foibles, but they can still be good speakers and valuable sources of insight or information.

Reacting Emotionally

When the speaker says an **emotional trigger**, it can be even more difficult to listen effectively. A guest speaker on campus begins with a personal story about the loss of a parent, and instead of listening you become caught up grieving a family member of your own. Or, a presenter takes a stance on drug use, abortion, euthanasia, religion, or even the best topping for a pizza that you simply can't agree with. You begin formulating a heated response to the speaker's perspective, or searing questions you might ask to show the holes in the speaker's argument. Yet, you've allowed your emotional response to the speaker interfere with your ability to listen effectively. Once emotion is involved, effective listening stops.

Bore, n. A person who talks when you wish him to listen. ~ Ambrose Bierce

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3.6: Strategies to Enhance Listening

Keep An Open Mind

Thinking about listening might make you feel tense in the moment. The effective listener is instead calm with a focused and alert mind. You are not waiting to hear what you want to hear, but listening to "what is said as it is said" (Ramsland, 1992, p. 171). Effective listeners keep an open mind. Remember that listening to a point of view is not the same as accepting that point of view. Recognizing this can help you to cultivate a more open perspective, helping you to better adjust as you listen actively to a speaker. Also, it might help you to curtail your emotions. If you do encounter a point that incenses you, write it down to return to later. For now, you should keep on listening.

Identify Distractions

In any setting where you are expected to listen, you encounter numerous distractions. For instance, the father sitting in the living room watching television, might want to turn off the television to better enable him to listen to his son when he comes into the room saying, "Dad, I have a problem." In the classroom setting, you might be distracted sitting beside friends who make sarcastic comments throughout the class. In a new product meeting with the sales team, you could be unnerved by the constant beep of your phone identifying another text, email, or phone message has arrived. Identifying the things that will interrupt your attention, and making a conscious choice to move to a different seat or turn off your phone, can help position you to listen more effectively.



Come Prepared

Another useful strategy is to come prepared when you can. Any time you enter a listening situation with some advance working knowledge of the speaker and what might be expected of you as a listener, you will be better able to adjust and engage more deeply in what is being said. For instance, you might: read the assigned readings for class, do the lab work before the lecture writing up the results, read a biography of a guest speaker before you go to an event, review the agenda from the previous staff meeting, or consult with a colleague about a client before going on-site to make a sale.

Take Notes

Taking notes can also advance your ability to be actively engaged in the speaker's words. You need not write down everything the speaker is saying. First, this is quite likely to be impossible. Second, once you are caught up in recording a speaker's every

word, you are no longer listening. Use a tape recorder instead – having asked the speaker's permission first – if you feel you really must capture every word the speaker utters. You want to focus your efforts on really listening with an active mind. Learning to focus your attention on main points, key concepts, and gaining the overall gist of the speaker's talk is another skill to develop. You might endeavor to do this by jotting down a few notes or even drawing visuals that help you to recall the main ideas. The manner in which you take the notes is up to you; what is important is the fact that you are listening and working to process what is being said. Writing down questions that come to mind and asking questions of the speaker when it is possible, are two more ways to guarantee effective listening as you have found an internal motivation to listen attentively.

> Education is the ability to listen to almost anything without losing your temper or your self-confidence. ~ Robert Frost

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3.7: Providing Feedback to Speakers

There are many ways in which a listener can offer feedback to a speaker, sometimes even wordlessly. Keeping an openmind is something you do internally, but you can also demonstrate openness to a speaker through your **nonverbal communication**.

Nonverbal Feedback

Boothman (2008) recommends listening with your whole body, not just your ears. Consider how confident you would feel speaking to a room full of people with their eyes closed, arms and legs crossed, and bodies bent in slouches. These listeners are presenting nonverbal cues that they are uninterested and unimpressed. Meanwhile, a listener sitting up straight, facing you with an intent look on his face is more likely to offer reassurance that your words are being understood.



Eye contact is another nonverbal cue to the speaker that you are paying attention. You don't want to be bugeyed and unblinking; the speaker might assume there is a tiger behind her and begin to panic as you seem to be doing. However, attentive eye contact can indicate you are listening, and help you to stay focused too. There are some cultures where maintaining eye contact would cause discomfort, so keep that in mind. Also, you may be someone who listens better with eyes closed to visualize what is being said. This can be difficult for a speaker to recognize, so if this is you consider incorporating one of the following nonverbals while you listen with eyes closed.

Nodding your head affirmatively, making back-channel responses such as "Yes," "Umhum," or "OK" can help the speaker gauge your interest. Even the speed of your head nod can signal your level of patience or understanding (Pease and Pease, 2006). Leaning in as a listener is far more encouraging than slumping in your seat. Miller (1994) suggests the **"listener's lean"** demonstrates "ultimate interest. This joyous feedback is reflexive. It physically endorses our communiqué" (p. 184). Nevertheless, sending too many nonverbal responses to the speaker can go wrong too. After all, a conference room full of people shifting in their seats and nodding their heads may translate as a restless audience that the speaker needs to recapture.

> The only way to entertain some folks is to listen to them. ~ Kin Hubbard

Verbal Feedback

While speakers sometimes want all questions held until the end of a presentation, asking questions when the opportunity presents itself can help you as a listener. For one, you have to listen in order to be able to ask a question. Your goal should be to ask open-ended questions ("What do you think about....?" rather than "We should do ...., right?"). You can use questions to confirm your understanding of the speaker's message. If you're not entirely sure of a significant point, you might ask a clarifying question.

These are questions such as “What did you mean?” “Can you be more specific?” or “What is a concrete example of your point?” These can help your comprehension, while also offering the speaker feedback. When asking questions, approach the speaker in a positive, non-threatening way. A good listener doesn’t seek to put the speaker on the defensive. You want to demonstrate your objectivity and willingness to listen to the speaker’s response.

Finally, paraphrasing what has been said in your interactions with the speaker can be another useful tool for a good listener. Imagine the difference if, before you respond to an upset colleague, you take a moment to say, “I understand you are disappointed we didn’t consult you before moving forward with the product release…” before you say, “we didn’t have time to get everyone’s input.” Reflecting back the speaker’s point of view before you respond allows the speaker to know you were listening ands helps foster trust that everyone’s voice is being heard.



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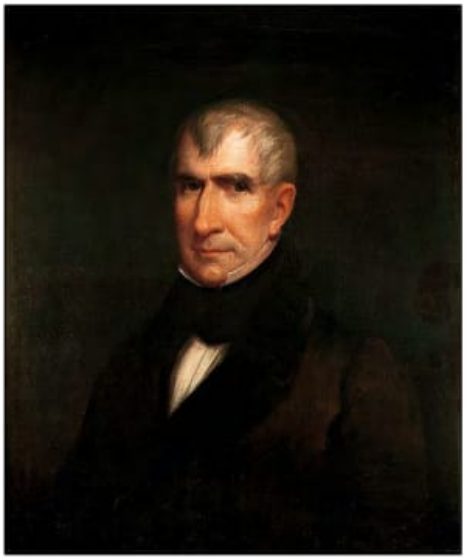
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3.8: Encouraging Effective Listening

William Henry Harrison was the ninth President of the United States. He's also recognized for giving the worst State of the Union address – ever. His two-hour speech delivered in a snowstorm in 1841 proves that a long speech can kill (and not in the colloquial "it was so good" sense). Perhaps it was karma, but after the President gave his meandering speech discussing ancient Roman history more than campaign issues, he died from a cold caught while blathering on standing outside without a hat or coat ("William Henry Harrison," 1989).

Now, when asked what you know about Abraham Lincoln, you're likely to have more answers to offer. Let's focus on his Gettysburg Address. The speech is a model of brevity. His "of the people, by the people, for the people" is always employed as an example of parallelism, and he kept his words simple. In short, Lincoln considered his listening audience when writing his speech.

The habit of common and continuous speech is a symptom of mental deficiency. It proceeds from not knowing what is going on in other people's minds. ~ Walter Bagehot



When you sit down to compose a speech, keep in mind that you are **writing for the ear** rather than the eye. Listeners cannot go back and re-read what you have just said. They need to grasp your message in the amount of time it takes you to speak the words. To help them accomplish this, you need to give listeners a clear idea of your overarching aim, reasons to care, and cues about what is important. You need to inspire them to want to not just hear but engage in what you are saying.

Make your listeners care

Humans are motivated by ego; they always want to know "what's in it for me?" So, when you want to want to get an audience's attention, it is imperative to establish a reason for your listeners to care about what you are saying.

Some might say Oprah did this by giving away cars at the end of an episode. But, that only explains why people waited in line for hours to get a chance to sit in the audience as her shows were taped. As long as they were in the stands, they didn't need to listen to get the car at the end of the show. Yet Oprah had audiences listening to her for 25 years before she launched her own network. She made listeners care about what she was saying. She told them what was in that episode for them. She made her audience members feel like she was talking to them about their problems, and offering solutions that they could use – even if they weren't multibillionaires known worldwide by first name alone.

Audiences are also more responsive when you find a means to tap their **intrinsic motivation**, by appealing to curiosity, challenging them, or providing contextualization (VanDeVelde Luskin, 2003). You might appeal to the audience's curiosity if you are giving an informative speech about a topic they might not be familiar with already. Even in a narrative speech, you can touch

on curiosity by cueing the audience to the significant thing they will learn about you or your topic from the story. A speech can present a challenge too. Persuasive speeches challenge the audience to think in a new way. Special Occasion speeches might challenge the listeners to reflect or prompt action. Providing a listener with contextualization comes back to the what's in it for me motivation. A student giving an informative speech about the steps in creating a mosaic could simply offer a step-by-step outline of the process, or she can frame it by saying to her listener, "by the end of my speech, you'll have all the tools you need to make a mosaic on your own." This promise prompts the audience to sit further forward in their seats for what might otherwise be a dry how-to recitation.

Cue your listeners



Audiences also lean in further when you employ active voice. We do this in speaking without hesitation. Imagine you were walking across campus and saw the contents of someone's room dumped out on the lawn in front of your dorm. You'd probably tell a friend: "The contents of Jane's room were thrown out the window by Julie." Wait, that doesn't sound right. You're more likely to say: "Julie threw Jane's stuff out the window!" The latter is an example of active voice. You put the actor (Julie) and the action (throwing Jane's stuff) at the beginning. When we try to speak formally, we can fall into passive voice. Yet, it sounds stuffy, and so unfamiliar to your listener's ear that he will struggle to process the point while you've already moved on to the next thing you wanted to say.

> Twice and thrice over, as they say, good is it to repeat and review what is good. ~ Plato

Knowing that your audience only hears what you are saying the one time you say it, invites you to employ repetition. Listeners are more likely to absorb a sound when it is repeated. We are often unconsciously waiting for a repetition to occur so we can confirm what we thought we heard (Brownell, 1996). As a result, employing repetition can emphasize an idea for the listener. Employing repetition of a word, words, or sentence can create a rhythm for the listener's ear. Employing repetition too often, though, can be tiresome.

If you don't want to repeat things so often you remind your listener of a sound clip on endless loop, you can also cue your listener through vocal emphasis. Volume is a tool speakers can employ to gain attention. Certainly parents use it all of the time. Yet, you probably don't want to spend your entire speech shouting at your audience. Instead, you can modulate your voice so that you say something important slightly louder. Or, you say something more softly, although still audible, before echoing it again with greater volume to emphasize the repetition. Changing your pitch or volume can help secure audience attention for a longer period of time, as we welcome the variety.

Pace is another speaker's friend. This is not to be confused with the moving back and forth throughout a speech that someone might do nervously (inadvertently inducing motion sickness in his audience). Instead it refers to planning to pause after an important point or question to allow your audience the opportunity to think about what you have just said. Or, you might speak more quickly (although still clearly) to emphasize your fear or build humor in a long list of concerns while sharing an anecdote. Alternately, you could slow down for more solemn topics or to emphasize the words in a critical statement. For instance, a persuasive speaker lobbying for an audience to stop cutting down trees in her neighborhood might say, "this can't continue. It's

up to you to do something." But imagine her saying these words with attention paid to pacing and each period representing a pause. She could instead say, "This. Can't. Continue. It's up to you. Do something."

Convince them to engage

Listeners respond to people. Consider this introduction to a speech about a passion for college football:

It's college football season! Across the nation, the season begins in late summer. Teams play in several different divisions including the SEC, the ACC, and Big Ten. Schools make a lot of money playing in the different divisions, because people love to watch football on TV. College football is great for the fans, the players, and the schools.



Now, compare it to this introduction to another speech about the same passion:

When I was a little boy, starting as early as four, my father would wake me up on Fall Saturdays with the same three words: "It's Game Day!" My dad was a big Clemson Tigers fan, so we might drive to Death Valley to see a game. Everyone would come: my mom, my grandparents, and friends who went to Clemson too. We would all tailgate before the game – playing corn hole, tossing a foam football, and watching the satellite TV. Even though we loved Clemson football best, all college football was worth watching. You never knew when there would be an upset. You could count on seeing pre-professional athletes performing amazing feats. But, best of all, it was a way to bond with my family, and later my friends.

Both introductions set up the topic and even give an idea of how the speech will be organized. Yet, the second one is made more interesting by the human element. The speech is personalized.

The college football enthusiast speaker might continue to make the speech interesting to his listeners by appealing to commonalities. He might acknowledge that not everyone in his class is a Clemson fan, but all of them can agree that their school's football team is fun to watch. Connecting with the audience through referencing things the speaker has in common with the listeners can function as an appeal to **ethos**. The speaker is credible to the audience because he is like them. Or, it can work as an appeal to **pathos**. A speaker might employ this emotional appeal in a persuasive speech about Habitat for Humanity by asking her audience to think first about the comforts of home or dorm living that they all take for granted.

> If you engage people on a vital, important level, they will respond. ~ Edward Bond

In speaking to the audience about the comforts of dorm living, the speaker is unlikely to refer to the "dormitories where we each reside." More likely, she might say, "the dorms we live in." As with electing to use active voice, speakers can choose to be more conversational than they might be in writing an essay on the same topic. The speaker might use contractions, or colloquialisms, or make comparisons to popular television shows, music, or movies. This will help the listeners feel like the speaker is in conversation with them – admittedly a one-sided one – rather than talking at them. It can be off-putting to feel the speaker is simply reciting facts and figures and rushing to get through to the end of their speech, whereas listeners respond to

someone talking to them calmly and confidently. Being conversational can help to convey this attitude even when on the inside the speaker is far from calm or confident. Nevertheless, employ this strategy with caution. Being too colloquial, for instance using “Dude” throughout the speech, could undermine your credibility. Or a popular culture example that you think is going to be widely recognized might not be the common knowledge you think it is, and could confuse audiences with non-native listeners.

> Choice of attention - to pay attention to this and ignore that - is to the inner life what choice of action is to the outer. In both cases, a man is responsible for his choice and must accept the consequences, whatever they may be. ~ W. H. Auden

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3.9: Conclusion



Admittedly, this discussion of listening may add a layer of intimidation for public speakers. After all, it can be daunting to think of having to get an audience to not only hear, but also truly listen. Nevertheless, once we recognize the difference and become aware of active listening and its barriers, we can better tailor our spoken words to captivate and engage an audience. A broader awareness of the importance of effective listening is another weapon in your arsenal as a public speaker. At the same time, building up your own effective listening skills can enhance your academic, professional, and personal success. Being heard is one thing, but speakers need listeners to complete the communication loop. Reap the rewards: Instead of saying “I hear you,” try out “I’m listening.”

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4: ETHICS IN PUBLIC SPEAKING

4.1: Introduction

4.2: Defining Ethics

4.3: Ethical Speaking

4.4: Ethical Listening

4.5: Conclusion

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4.1: Introduction

Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Define ethics and explain why ethics are important in public speaking.
2. Differentiate between morality and ethical dilemma.
3. Identify the three types of plagiarism and understand how to avoid them.
4. Explain how to cite sources in written and oral speech materials.
5. Develop responsible language use by avoiding hate language and using inclusive language.
6. Use a speech platform to promote diversity, raise social awareness, and understand free speech.
7. Employ ethical listening by readying both mind and body to avoid distractions.
8. Develop patterns of ethical feedback through praise and constructive criticism.
9. Apply ethical communication skills to public speaking situations.
10. Apply module concepts in final questions and activities.

Maggie is helping her older sister plan for her wedding. She loves event planning and decides to give an informative speech to her classmates on "Selecting a Florist." She knows all the other women in class will adore the topic and her visual aids (an assortment of flowers and a rose for everyone to take home). As Maggie begins the speech, she creates a listener relevance link that relates mostly to women in class. In fact, Most of the speech is directed at female listeners.

As she moves through the main points of her speech, Maggie realizes that she is running out of time and has only 1 minute left or the instructor will penalize her. During her third main point, she skips over some citations but shares the statistics of saving money on a trustworthy florist. The listeners don't notice that Maggie neglected to provide oral source citations, so she feels confident of the "expertise" she has derived. After Maggie finishes with her final main point, she concludes and reminds the ladies to find her later if they have any questions about prices or quality florists in the area.



When preparing for this speech, Maggie attempted an audience analysis. However, she failed to adequately involve all audience members by choosing a traditionally female topic and tailoring the language to females in the class. A second unethical decision made by Maggie was to omit oral citations, thereby failing to give credit to those who deserved it. Maggie's practices in her speech are just a few ways in which unethical public speaking can occur. The evolution of ethics is central to public speaking because it is through communication that our ideas about right and wrong or good and bad are formed.

> Ethics is knowing the difference between what you have a right to do and what is right to do ~Potter Stewart

Issues related to honesty, integrity, and morality are present in our everyday lives. We recognize the need for ethical

communication when leaders make deceitful statements. For instance, we all remember President Clinton's famous quote: "I did not have sexual relations with that woman." We recognize a crafty speaker when we hear one. Ethics, however, aren't just important for presidents and other public figures. Ethical concerns arise in a variety of public speaking contexts, as this chapter portrays.

The National Communication Association (NCA) suggests that communicators should be committed to following principles of ethical communication (NCA, 1999). The NCA Credo of Ethical Communication claims that "ethical communication is fundamental to responsible thinking, decision making, and the development of relationships and communities within and across contexts, cultures, channels, and media" (para. 1). Ethical communication also yields positive outcomes, such as truthfulness, respect, and accuracy of information. You can see that ethics is a very important part of the communication process. Likewise, it is an important part of the public speaking process.

Unethical communication can lead to poor decision-making or a lack of respect for self and others, and threaten the well-being of individuals and society. Early scholars of ethical communication, most notably Nielsen (1966) and Johannesen (1967), began to incorporate a discussion of ethics in all aspects of communication. These forerunners began exploring ethics in the area of public speaking. Communication experts agree that ethical communication is an important responsibility of the speaker. This chapter explores ethics and ethical communication in public speaking. First, ethics and ethical standards are defined. Second, this chapter describes principles of ethical public speaking, with guidelines for avoiding plagiarism, citing sources, and setting responsible speech goals. Lastly, your responsibilities as an ethical listener of public speaking are explored.

> But I want to say one thing to the American people. I want you to listen to me. I'm going to say this again: I did not have sexual relations with that woman, Miss Lewinsky. I never told anybody to lie, not a single time; never. These allegations are false. And I need to go back to work for the American people. Thank you. ~ President Bill Clinton, 1998



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4.2: Defining Ethics

hilosophy—Aristotle, Socrates, and Plato—spoke extensively about morality and ethical principles. As you learned in Chapter 2, Aristotle is frequently cited as a central figure in the development of ethics as we discuss them today in the communication discipline. Aristotle claimed that a person who had ethos, or credibility, was not only able to convey good sense and good will, but also good morals (Aristotle, 1954). Great philosophers have debated the merits of living well, doing good, and even communicating skillfully. Smitter (2004) describes early Greeks and Romans as teachers of public speaking; these philosophers argued that public communication is "a means of civic engagement" and ethics are "a matter of virtue" (p. 1). Ethics and ethical communication are not only an important part of our lives and our decision-making but also are crucial to the public speaking process. In 2011, when Representative Anthony Weiner faced accusations of sending sexually explicit photographs to a woman, he vehemently denied any wrongdoing and claimed that he had been set up. Shortly after, his denial turned to an admission and apology. This scandal called into question the ethics of Rep. Weiner, yet it was also his lack of ethical communication that exacerbated the situation (Schouten & Page, n.d.).

> Moral excellence comes about as a result of habit. We become just by doing just acts, temperate by doing temperate acts, brave by doing brave acts. ~ Aristotle

Ethics and Ethical Standards

Morality is the process of discerning between right and wrong. Ethics involves making decisions about right and wrong within a dilemma. For example, you might claim that stealing is morally wrong. But is stealing morally wrong when a mother steals a loaf of bread to feed her four starving children? It's this scenario that requires an understanding of ethics. In a moral dilemma, we apply ethics to make choices about what is good or bad, right or wrong. Sometimes, ethical dilemmas are simple. Other times, they require complex choices, such as the decision to report your immediate boss for misrepresenting expenses or the decision to move your grandmother into a retirement community. These scenarios are more complex than simple choices between right and wrong. Instead, these examples are ethical dilemmas because two "right" choices are pitted against one another. It's good to report an unethical supervisor, but it's also good to keep your job. It's good that your grandmother feels independent, but it's also positive for her to receive extra assistance as her health deteriorates.

As public speakers, we make ethical choices when preparing and delivering a speech. We can easily be faced with a moral dilemma over what information to provide or how to accurately represent that information. Knowing the speaking setting, the audience, and our knowledge of the topic, we are able to confront ethical dilemmas with a strong moral compass. This process is made easier by our ethical standards. Ethical standards, or moral principles, are the set of rules we abide by that make us "good" people and help us choose right from wrong. The virtuous standards to which we adhere influence our ethical understanding. For instance, followers of Buddha believe that communication should be careful—good communication should exhibit restraint, responsibility, and kindness (Merrill, 2009).

> If you want others to be happy, practice compassion. If you want to be happy, practice compassion. ~ Dalai Lama



This stance informs one's ethical standards. In fact, Merrill (2009) explains that the holy Dalai Lama, the Buddhist spiritual leader, believes compassion is even more essential than truth. Therefore, it is justifiable to be untruthful when the deception is part of the process of caring for another. This example illustrates how one's belief system influences his or her ethical standards. These ethical standards are the guidelines we use to interpret rightness and wrongness in life, in relationships, and in public speaking. Wallace (1955) claims that "ethical standards of communication should place emphasis upon the means used to secure the end, rather than upon achieving the end itself" (p. 2). This argument suggests that speakers must consider moral standards through every step of the speech process.

"Questions of right and wrong arise whenever people communicate" (NCA, 1999, para. 1). Once we have identified our ethical standards, we can apply these to make sure that we are communicating ethically. Ethical communication is an exchange of responsible and trustworthy messages determined by our moral principles. Ethical communication can be enacted in written, oral, and non-verbal communication. In public speaking, we use ethical standards to determine what and how to exchange messages with our audience. As you read further in this chapter, you will begin to understand the guidelines for how ethical communication should

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4.3: Ethical Speaking

In January, 2012, an Australian politician, Anthony Albanese, presented a speech to the National Press Club. Several people criticized this speech, saying that he stole lines from Michael Douglas's character (the U.S. President) in the movie ***The American President****. Several specific lines from Albanese's speech did seem to mirror Douglas's monologue, with only the names changed. The Liberal Party federal director, Brian Loughnane, claimed that this shows Albanese is "unoriginal and devoid of ideas." Others stated that he should be embarrassed and should apologize to the Parliament (ABC News, 2012).*

What do you think about Albanese's speech? Was this a simple mishap? A funny prank? Something more serious? What do you think this says about Albanese's character? His reputation as a politician? Assessing your attitudes and values toward this situation is the same as considering how ethics play a role in public speaking.



Ethical public speaking is not a onetime event. It does not just occur when you stand to give a 5-minute presentation to your classmates or coworkers. Ethical public speaking is a process. This process begins when you begin brainstorming the topic of your speech. Every time you plan to speak to an audience—whether it is at a formal speaking event or an impromptu pitch at your workplace—you have ethical responsibilities to fulfill. The two most important aspects in ethical communication include your ability to remain honest while avoiding plagiarism and to set and meet responsible speech goals.

> Integrity is telling myself the truth. And honesty is telling the truth to other people/ ~ Spencer Johnson

Be Honest and Avoid Plagiarism

plagiarism Credible public speakers are open and honest with their audiences. Honesty includes telling your audience why you're speaking (thesis statement) and what you'll address throughout your speech (preview). For instance, one example of dishonest speech is when a vacation destination offers "complimentary tours and sessions" which are really opportunities for a sales person to pitch a timeshare to unsuspecting tourists. In addition to being clear about the speech goal, honest speakers are clear with audience members when providing supporting information.



One example of dishonest public communication occurs in the music industry where many cases of illegal melody lifting exist.

For example, a famous Beach Boys song titled Surfin' USA is actually a note-for-note rendition of a 1958 Chuck Berry song (Pegg, 2000). Though it may be common, the practice of not properly crediting an author for his or her work is unethical. Other examples of deceitful communication include political speeches that intentionally mislead the public. For instance, a former White House press aide, Scott McClellan, claims that President Bush misled the American people about reasons for the Iraqi war (Shear, 2008). McClellan claims that the President had manipulated sources in order to gain support for the war. Such claims can be damaging to one's reputation. Thus, responsible public speakers must actively avoid plagiarism and remain committed to honesty and integrity at all costs.

Identify your sources

identify your sources The first step of ethical speech preparation is to take notes as you research your speech topic. Careful notes will help you remember where you learned your information. Recalling your sources is important because it enables speaker honesty. Passing off another's work as your own or neglecting to cite the source for your information is considered **plagiarism**. This unethical act can result in several consequences, ranging from a loss in credibility to academic expulsion or job loss. Even with these potential consequences, plagiarism is unfortunately common. In a national survey, 87 percent of students claimed that their peers plagiarized from the Internet at least some of the time (Cruikshank, 2004). This statistic does not take into account whether or not the plagiarism was intentional, occurring when the writer or speaker knowingly presented information as his or her own; or unintentional, occurring when careless citing leads to information being uncredited or miscredited (Wilhoit, 1994). However, it is important to note that being unaware of how to credit sources should not be an excuse for unintentional plagiarism. In other words, speakers are held accountable for intentional and unintentional plagiarism. The remainder of this section discusses how to ensure proper credit is given when preparing and presenting a speech.

> A liar should have a good memory. ~ Quintilian

There are three distinct types of plagiarism – global, patchwork, and incremental plagiarism (Lucas, 2011). **Global plagiarism**, the most obvious form of plagiarism, transpires when a speaker presents a speech that is not his or her own work. For example, if a student finds a speech on the Internet or borrows a former speech from a roommate and recites that speech verbatim, global plagiarism has occurred. Global plagiarism is the most obvious type of theft. However, other forms of plagiarism are less obvious but still represent dishonest public speaking.

> If you tell the truth, you don't have to remember anything. ~ Mark Twain



Sometimes a student neglects to cite a source simply because she or he forgot where the idea was first learned. Shi (2010) explains that many students struggle with plagiarism because they've reviewed multiple texts and changed wording so that ideas eventually feel like their own. Students engage in "'patchwriting' by copying from a source text and then deleting or changing a few words and altering the sentence structures" (Shi, 2010, p. 1). **Patchwork plagiarism** is plagiarism that occurs when one "patches" together bits and pieces from one or more sources and represents the end result as his or her own. Michael O'Neill (1980) also coined the term "paraplaging" to explain how an author simply uses partial text of sources with partial original writing. An example of patchwork plagiarism is if you create a speech by pasting together parts of another speech or author's work. Read the following hypothetical scenario to get a better understanding of subtle plagiarism.

Three months ago, Carley was talking to her coworkers about expanding their company's client base. Carley reported some of

the ideas she'd been pondering with Stephen and Juan. The three employees shared ideas and provided constructive criticism in order to perfect each notion, and then mentioned they'd revisit the conversation over lunch sometime soon. A week later, Carley shared one of her ideas during the company's Monday morning staff meeting. Carley came up with the idea, but Stephen and Juan helped her think through some of the logistics of bringing in more clients. Her peers' input was key to making Carley's client-building idea work. When Carley pitched her idea at the company staff meeting, she didn't mention Stephen or Juan. She shared her idea with senior management and then waited for feedback.



Did Carley behave unethically? Some would say: "No!" since she shared her own idea. Did Carley speak honestly? Perhaps not because she didn't account for how her idea took shape— with the help of Stephen and Juan. This scenario is an example of how complicated honesty becomes when speaking to an audience.

The third type of plagiarism is **incremental plagiarism**, or when most of the speech is the speaker's original work, but quotes or other information have been used without being cited. Incremental plagiarism can occur if, for example, you provide a statistic to support your claim, but do not provide the source for that statistic. Another example would be if a student included a direct quote from former president Ronald Reagan without letting the audience know that those were Reagan's exact words. Understanding the different types of plagiarism is the first step in ensuring that you prepare an honest speech.

Table 3.1 Purdue OWL APA Guide for Citing Sources

Cite	Don't Cite
Words or ideas presented in a magazine, book, newspaper, song, TV program, movie, Web page, computer program, letter, advertisement, or any other medium	Writing your own lived experiences, your own observations and insights, your own thoughts, and your own conclusions about a subject
Information you gain through interviewing or conversing with another person, face to face, over the phone, or in writing	When you are writing up your own results obtained through lab or field experiments
When you copy the exact words or a unique phrase	When you use your own artwork, digital photographs, video, audio, etc.
When you reprint any diagrams, illustrations, charts, pictures, or other visual materials	When you are using common knowledge—things like folklore, common sense observations, myths, urban legends, and historical events (but **not** historical documents)
When you reuse or repost any electronically-available media, including images, audio, video, or other media	When you are using generally-accepted facts, e.g., pollution is bad for the environment...

Source: Stolley & Brizee, 2011, para 5-6

Table 3.1 Purdue OWL APA Guide for Citing Sources

Decide when to cite

When speaking publically you must orally cite all information that isn't general knowledge. For example, if your speech claims that the sun is a star, you do not have to cite that information since it's general knowledge. If your speech claims that the sun's temperature is 15.6 million Kelvin (Nine Planets, 2011), then you should cite that source aloud. Ethical speakers are not required to cite commonly known information (e.g., skin is the largest human organ; Barack Obama was elected President of the U.S. in 2008). However, any information that isn't general knowledge must be orally cited during a speech. The same is true in the text of a speech outline: cite all non-general information.

The OWL, an online writing lab at Purdue University, provides an excellent guide for when you need to cite information (see Table 3.1). Understanding when to include source material is the first step in being able to ethically cite sources. The next step in this process is to determine how to appropriately cite sources orally and in written materials.

Cite Sources Properly

You've learned the importance of citing sources. Now that you know why written and oral citations are important to the ethical process of public speaking, let's focus on how to cite supporting speech material. Studies show that oftentimes students do not cite a source because they're unsure of how or when to cite a reference (Shi, 2010). Shi's study describes some typical responses for why students did not cite sources, such as "I couldn't remember where I learned the information," or "I had already cited that author and didn't want the audience to think all of my information was from some outside source." Though these rationales are understandable, they are not ethical.

Understand paraphrasing and direct quotations

Next, it is important to understand the process for paraphrasing and directly quoting sources in order to support your speech claims. First, what is the difference between paraphrasing and directly quoting a source? If you research and learn information from a source—the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), for instance— and then share that information in your own words; you don't use quotation marks; but you do credit the CDC as your source. This is known as a **paraphrase**—a sentence or string of sentences that shares learned information in your own words. A **direct quote** is any sentence or string of sentences that conveys an author's idea word-for-word. According to the APA (American Psychological Association) Publication Manual (2010), when writing speech content, you must include quotation marks around an author's work when you use his or her keywords, phrases, or sentences. This would be relevant for a speech outline, a handout, or a visual aid. It is also important to specify a direct quote when you are orally citing during your speech. This indicates to the audience that you are using the original author's exact words. While it is acceptable to use the phrases "begin quote" and "end quote" to indicate this to your audience, such phrases can be distracting to the audience. One way to clearly and concisely indicate a direct quote is to take a purposeful pause right before and after the quoted material. This differentiates between your words and the source material's words. See Table 3.2 for examples of how to paraphrase and directly quote an author, both in written speech materials and for an oral citation.

Develop accurate citations

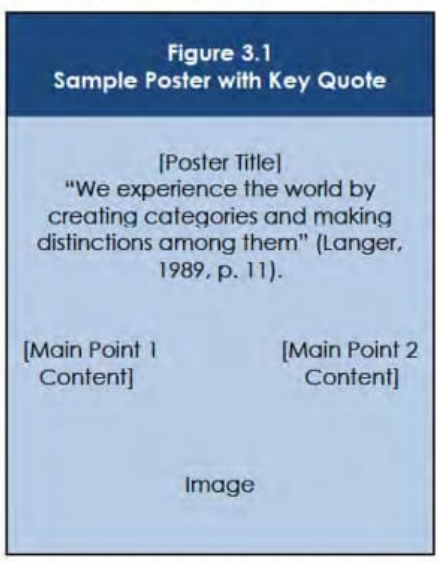
Ethical speakers share source information with the audience. On written materials, such as handouts or speech outlines, citations are handled much like they would be in any essay. In addition to written citations, oral citations provide source information to audience members who may not see your written speech. In all citations, enough information should be given so that the audience can easily find the source.

Table 3.2 Written and Oral Source Citations

	Written Citations	Oral Citations
Original Text	You cannot do a nonstop flight to the second half of life by reading lots of books about it, including this one. Grace must and will edge you forward.	Your best defense against influenza—and its possible complications—is to receive an annual vaccination. In fact, CDC recommends that everyone 6 months and older get an annual flu vaccination.
Paraphrase for Written Speech Materials	It is through the practice of showing grace that we grow and develop as individuals (Rohr, 2011).	The CDC (2008) suggests that people get a vaccination at least once a year to avoid the flu.
Direct Quote for Written Speech Materials	According to Rohr (2011), "Grace must and will edge you forward" (p. 2).	There is something you can do to avoid the flu. The CDC states that, "Your best defense against influenza—and its possible complications—is to receive an annual vaccination" (para. 6).
Oral Citation for Paraphrase	In Rohr's 2011 book, *Falling upward: A spirituality for the two halves of life,* he discussed how we show grace to others which allows us to grow and develop as individuals.	According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website (2008), people should get a preventative vaccination at least once a year to avoid the flu.
Oral Citation for Direct Quote	Rohr (2011), in his book Falling upward: A spirituality for the two halves of life, stated that, [pause] "Grace must and will edge you forward" [pause].	On their website, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2008) states that, [pause] "your best defense against influenza—and its possible complications—is to receive an annual vaccination" [pause].

You may choose to briefly describe the author before citing him or her to lend credibility to your supporting information. Writing style guidebooks, such as APA or MLA (Modern Language Association), teach that a source's credentials are not necessary in the text of your paper. We can interpret that the same is true for providing oral citations in a speech----the author's occupation, the source website, or the journal name are not required bu may be helpful verbal cues to explain the legitimacy of your chosen source. You should provide enough information so that an audience member can locate the source. For instance, if explaining the research of a medical doctor, it might be useful to describe the doctor as a leading pediatrician--after which you would state the doctor's last name, year of publication, and the quote or paraphrase. To orally paraphrase a Langer quote (see example poster in Figure 3.1), you might say to your audience:

I really agree with Langer (1989), who wrote in her book Mindfulness, that our world is constructed from the categories we build in our mind. I find that I interpret the world based in my initial understanding of things and have to mindfully force myself to question the categories and biases I've formally created in my head.



Note, the Langer paraphrase provides the author's last name, year of publication, and the title of the book should an audience member want to find the orally cited source.

Ethical speakers provide written, oral, *and* visual citations. Visual aids, discussed in Chapter 13, include posters, objects, models, PowerPoints, and handouts. Visual aids are used to enhance your speech message. Visual aids, just like speech content, must be displayed ethically for the audience. In other words, if you use a poster to display a famous quote, then you should cite the author on your poster (see Figure 3.1). Similarly, you should cite sources on your PowerPoint *throughout the presentation. It is not* sufficient to include a "Sources" or "References" slide at the end of your PowerPoint presentation because that does not accurately link each author to his or her work. Instead, ethical presenters provide an author reference on the slide in which the cited content is shown (see Figure 3.2).

Speakers should also carefully select and correctly cite images displayed in their visual aid. Images should be relevant to the keywords used on your PowerPoint slide. In other words, captions are not necessary because the image can stand alone; images you display should obviously correlate with your speech content (a caption is typically used because the picture *needs* explanation). In other words, the presence of a caption typically means your image does not directly correspond with the verbal speech material. Images should support, not distract, from the verbal or visual message. Hence, there is no need for blinking, rotating, or otherwise distracting visual aids (Danoff-Burg 2002). Images should be simple and relevant. All pictures should be cited, unless the presenter uses a personal clipart, or purchased stock image. To cite an image, simply include the credit (or web link) to that picture; note, however, the font of the link should be reduced so that it is visible to the audience without distracting from the content in your visual aid. Seeing an image link should not be distracting to audience members.

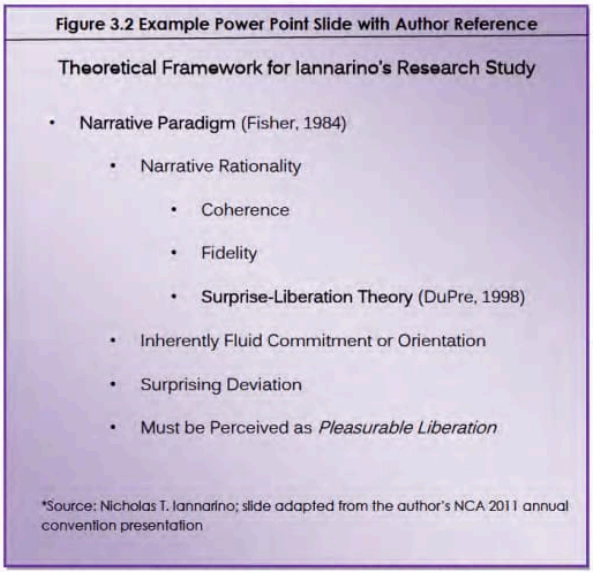


Figure 3.2 Example Power Point Slide with Author Reference

It's also important to understand how copyright law might affect what and how you include information in your speech and on your visual aid. The fair use provision allows for copyrighted information to be shared if it is used for educational benefits, news reporting, research, and in other situations. Nolo (2010) explains, "In its most general sense, a fair use is any copying of copyrighted material done for a limited and 'transformative' purpose, such as to comment upon, criticize, or parody a copyrighted work. Such uses can be done without permission from the copyright owner" (para. 1). In order to determine if the use of content falls under the fair use provision, there are four factors to consider:



1. How will this be used?

2. What is to be used?

3. How much will be used?

4. What effect does this have? (Harper, 2007)

You can find more about these four factors at the U.S. Copyright website – www.copyright.gov.

Ethical citing includes crediting authors in the text of your written speech materials, acknowledging authors aloud during your speech, and citing images and sources on your visual aid. However, ethics in public speaking encompass more than crediting

source material. It's also necessary to strive for responsible speech goals.

> Ethics and equity and the principles of justice do not change with the calendar. ~ David Herbert Lawrence

Set Responsible Speech Goals

Jensen (1997) coined the term "rightsabilities" to explain how a communicator must balance tensions between speaker rights and responsibility to others. Ensuring that you have responsible speech goals is one way to achieve ethical communication in public speaking. There are several speech goals that support this mission. This section will focus on five goals: 1) promote diversity, 2) use inclusive language, 3) avoid hate speech, 4) raise social awareness, and 5) employ respectful free speech.

Promote diversity

One important responsibility speakers have is fostering **diversity**, or an appreciation for differences among individuals and groups. Diversity in public speaking is important when considering both your audience and your speech content. Promoting diversity allows audience members who may be different from the speaker to feel included and can present a perspective to which audience members had not previously been exposed. Speakers may choose a speech topic that introduces a multicultural issue to the audience or can promote diversity by choosing language and visual aids that relate to and support listeners of different backgrounds. Because of the diversity present in our lives, it is necessary to consider how speakers can promote diversity.



One simple way of promoting diversity is to use both sexes in your hypothetical examples and to include co-cultural groups when creating a hypothetical situation. For example, you can use names that represent both sexes and that also stem from different cultural backgrounds. In the story about Carley and her co-workers, her co-workers were deliberately given male names so that both sexes were represented. Ethical speakers also encourage diversity in races, socioeconomic status, and other demographics. These choices promote diversity. In addition, ethical speakers can strive to break stereotypes. For instance, if you're telling a hypothetical story about a top surgeon in the nation, why not make the specialized surgeon a female from a rural area? Or make the hypothetical secretary a man named Frank? You could also include a picture in your visual aid of the female surgeon or the male secretary at work. Ethical speakers should not assume that a nurse is female or that a firefighter is male. Sexist language can alienate your audience from your discussion (Driscoll & Brizee, 2010).

Another way that sexist language occurs in speeches is when certain statements or ideas are directed at a particular sex. For example, the "Selecting a Florist" speech described at the beginning of this chapter may be considered sexist by many audience members. Another example is the following statement, which implies only males might be interested in learning how to fix a car: "I think that fixing a car is one of the most important things you can learn how to do. Am I right, guys?" Promoting diversity is related to using inclusive language, discussed in the following sections.

> Excellence is the best deterrent to racism or sexism. ~Oprah Winfrey

Use inclusive language

Avoiding sexist language is one way to use inclusive language. Another important way for speakers to develop responsible language is to use inclusionary pronouns and phrases. For example, novice speakers might tell their audience: "One way for you to get involved in the city's Clean Community Program is to pick up trash on your street once a month." Instead, an effective public speaker could exclaim: "One way for all of us to get involved in our local communities is by picking up trash on a regular basis." This latter statement is an example of **"we" language**—pronouns and phrases that unite the speaker to the audience. "We" language (instead of "I" or "You" language) is a simple way to build a connection between the speaker, speech content, and audience. This is especially important during a persuasive speech as "we" language establishes trust, rapport, and goodwill between the speaker and the audience. Take, for example, the following listener relevance statements in a persuasive speech about volunteering:

***"You" language**: You may say that you're too busy to volunteer, but I don't agree. I'm here to tell you that you should be volunteering in your community.*

***"We" language**: As college students, we all get busy in our daily lives and sometimes helpful acts such as volunteering aren't priorities in our schedules. Let's explore how we can be more active volunteers in our community.*

In this exchange, the "you" language sets the speaker apart from the audience and could make listeners defensive about their time and lack of volunteering. On the other hand, the "we" language connects the speaker to the audience and lets the audience know that the speaker understands and has some ideas for how to fix the problem. This promotes a feeling of inclusiveness, one of the responsible speech goals.

Avoid hate speech

Another key aspect of ethical speaking is to develop an awareness of spoken words and the power of words. The NCA Credo of Ethical Communication (1999) highlights the importance of this awareness: "We condemn communication that degrades individuals and humanity through distortion, intimidation, coercion, and violence, and through the expression of intolerance and hatred" (para. 2). Words can be powerful—both in helping you achieve your speech goal and in affecting your audience in significant ways. It is essential that public speakers refrain from hate or sexist language. Hate speech, according to Verderber, Sellnow, and Verderber (2012), "is the use of words and phrases not only to demean another person or group but also to express hatred and prejudice" (p. 195). **Hate language** isolates a particular person or group in a derogatory manner. Michael Richards, famous for the role of Cosmo Kramer on Seinfeld, came under fire for his hate speech during a comedy routine in 2006. Richards used several racial epithets and directed his hate language towards African-Americans and Mexicans (Farhi, 2006). Richards apologized for his outbursts, but the damage to his reputation and career was irrevocable. Likewise, using hate speech in any public speaking situation can alienate your audience and take away your credibility, leading to more serious implications for your grade, your job, or other serious outcomes. It is your responsibility as the speaker to be aware of sensitive material and be able to navigate language choices to avoid offending your audience.



No matter what people tell you, words and ideas can change the world. ~ Robin Williams

Raise social awareness

Speakers should consider it their ethical responsibility to educate listeners by introducing ideas of racial, gender, or cultural diversity, but also by raising **social awareness**, or the recognition of important issues that affect societies. Raising social awareness is a task for ethical speakers because educating peers on important causes empowers others to make a positive change in the world. Many times when you present a speech, you have the opportunity to raise awareness about growing social issues. For example, if you're asked to present an informative speech to your classmates, you could tell them about your school's athletic tradition ***or*** you could discuss *Peace One Day*—a campaign that promotes a single day of worldwide cease-fire, allowing crucial food and medicine supplies to be shipped into warzone areas (PeaceOneDay, n.d.). If your assignment is to present a persuasive speech, you could look at the assignment as an opportunity to convince your classmates to (a) stop texting while they drive, (b) participate in a program that supports US troops by writing personal letters to deployed soldiers or (c) buy a pair of TOMS (tomsshoes.com) and find other ways to provide basic needs to impoverished families around the world. Of course, those are just a few ideas for how an informative or persuasive speech can be used to raise awareness about current social issues. It is your responsibility, as a person and speaker, to share information that provides knowledge or activates your audience toward the common good (Mill, 1987).



One way to be successful in attaining your speech goal while also remaining ethical is to consider your audience's moral base. Moon (1993) identifies a principle that allows the speaker to justify his or her perspective by finding common moral ground with the audience. This illustrates to the audience that you have goodwill but allows you to still use your moral base as a guide for responsible speech use. For example, even though you are a vegetarian and believe that killing animals for food is murder, you know that the majority of your audience does not feel the same way. Rather than focusing on this argument, you decide to use Moon's principle and focus on animal cruelty. By highlighting the inhumane ways that animals are raised for food, you appeal to the audience's moral frame that abusing animals is wrong—something that you and your audience can both agree upon.

If we lose love and selfrespect for each other, this is how we finally die. ~ Maya Angelou



Employ respectful free speech

We live in a nation that values freedom of speech. Of course, due to the First Amendment, you have the right and ability to voice your opinions and values to an audience. However, that freedom of speech must be balanced with your responsibility as a speaker to respect your audience. Offending or degrading the values of your audience members will not inform or persuade them. For example, let's say you want to give a persuasive speech on why abortion is morally wrong. It's your right to voice that opinion. Nevertheless, it's important that you build your case without offending your audience members— since you don't know everyone's history or stance on the subject. Showing disturbing pictures on your visual aid may not "make your point" in the way you intended. Instead, these pictures may send audience members into an emotional tailspin (making it difficult for them to hear your persuasive points because of their own psychological noise). Freedom of speech is a beautiful American value, but ethical speakers must learn to balance their speech freedom with their obligation to respect each audience member.

> Fortunately for serious minds, a bias recognized is a bias sterilized. ~ Benjamin Haydon

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4.4: Ethical Listening

Just as you hope others are attentive to your speech, it is important to know how to listen ethically—in effort to show respect to other speakers.

Jordan stood to give his presentation to the class. He knew he was knowledgeable about his chosen topic, the Chicago Bears football team, and had practiced for days, but public speaking always gave him anxiety. He asked for a show of hands during his attention getter, and only a few people acknowledged him. Jordan's anxiety worsened as he continued his speech. He noticed that many of his classmates were texting on their phones. Two girls on the right side were passing a note back and forth. When Jordan received his peer critique forms, most of his classmates simply said, "Good job" without giving any explanation. One of his classmates wrote, "Bears SUCK!"

As we can see from the example above, communicating is not a one-way street. Jordan's peers were not being ethical listeners. All individuals involved in the communication process have ethical responsibilities. An ethical communicator tries to "understand and respect other communicators before evaluating and responding to their messages" (NCA, 1999, para. 2). As you will learn in Chapter 4, listening is an important part of the public speaking process. Thus, this chapter will also outline the ethics of ethical listening. This section explains how to improve your listening skills and how to provide ethical feedback. Hearing happens physiologically, but listening is an art. The importance of ethical listening will be discussed first.

Develop Ethical Listening Skills

The act of hearing is what our body does physically; our ear takes in sound waves. However, when we interpret (or make sense of) those sound waves, that's called **listening**. Think about the last time you gave a speech. How did the audience members act? Do you remember the people that seemed most attentive? Those audience members were displaying traits of ethical listening. An **ethical listener** is one who actively interprets shared material and analyzes the content and speaker's effectiveness. Good listeners try to display respect for the speaker. Communicating respect for the speaker occurs when the listener: a) prepares to listen and b) listens with his or her whole body.



One way you can prepare yourself to listen is to get rid of distractions (Sellnow, 2009). If you've selected a seat near the radiator and find it hard to hear over the noise, you may want to move before the speaker begins. If you had a fight with your friend before work that morning, you may want to take a moment to collect your thoughts and put the argument out of your mind—so that you can prevent internal distraction during the staff meeting presentation. As a professional, you are aware of the types of things and behaviors that distract you from the speaker; it is your obligation to manage these distractions before the speaker begins.

In order to ethically listen, it's also imperative to listen with more than just your ears— your critical mind should also be at work. According to Sellnow (2009), two other things you can do to prepare are to avoid prejudging the speaker and refrain from jumping to conclusions while the speaker is talking. Effective listening can only occur when we're actually attending to the

message. Conversely, listening is interrupted when we're pre-judging the speaker, stereotyping the speaker, or making mental counterarguments to the speaker's claims. You have the right to disagree with a speaker's content, but wait until the speaker is finished and has presented his or her whole argument to draw such a conclusion.

Ethical listening doesn't just take place inside the body. In order to show your attentiveness, it is necessary to consider how your body is listening. A listening posture enhances your ability to receive information and make sense of a message (Jaffe, 2010). An attentive listening posture includes sitting up and remaining alert, keeping eye contact with the speaker and his or her visual aid, removing distractions from your area, and taking notes when necessary. Also, if you're enjoying a particular speaker, it's helpful to provide positive nonverbal cues like head-nodding, occasional smiling, and eye-contact. These practices can aid you in successful, ethical listening. However, know that listening is sometimes only the first step in this process—many times listeners are asked to provide feedback.

> Constructive criticism is about finding something good and positive to soften the blow to the real critique of what really went on. ~ Paula Abdul

Provide Ethical Feedback

Ethical speakers and listeners are able to provide quality feedback to others. **Ethical feedback** is a descriptive and explanatory response to the speaker. Brownell (2006) explains that a response to a speaker should demonstrate that you have listened and considered the content and delivery of the message. Responses should respect the position of the speaker while being honest about your attitudes, values, and beliefs. Praising the speaker's message or delivery can help boost his or her confidence and encourage good speaking behaviors. However, ethical feedback does not always have to be positive in nature. Constructive criticism can point out flaws of the speaker while also making suggestions. Constructive criticism acknowledges that a speaker is not perfect and can improve upon the content or delivery of the message. In fact, constructive criticism is helpful in perfecting a speaker's content or speaking style. Ethical feedback always explains the listener's opinion in detail. Figure 3.3 provides examples of unethical and ethical feedback.

Figure 3.3
Unethical and Ethical Feedback

Unethical Feedback	▪ I really enjoyed your speech. ▪ Your speech lacks supportive information. ▪ You are the worst public speaker ever.
Ethical Feedback	▪ I really enjoyed your speech because your topic was personally interesting to me. ▪ Your speech lacked supportive information. You didn't cite any outside information. Instead your only source was YOU. ▪ I believe your speech was ineffective because you were clearly unprepared and made no eye contact with the audience.

As you can see from the example feedback statements (Figure 3.3), ethical feedback is always explanatory. Ethical statements explain why you find the speaker effective or ineffective. Another guideline for ethical feedback is to "phrase your comments as personal perceptions" by using "I" language (Sellnow, 2009, p. 94). Feedback that employs the "I" pronoun displays personal preference regarding the speech and communicates responsibility for the comments. Feedback can focus on the speaker's delivery, content, style, visual aid, or attire. Be sure to support your claims—by giving a clear explanation of your opinion—when providing feedback to a speaker. Feedback should also support ethical communication behaviors from speakers by asking for more information and pointing out relevant information (Jensen, 1997). It is clear that providing ethical feedback is an important part of the listening process and, thus, of the public speaking process.

> A man without ethics is a wild beast loosed upon this world. ~ Albert Camus

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4.5: Conclusion

This chapter addresses ethics in public speaking. As ethics is an important part of our daily lives, it also plays a significant role in any public speaking situation. This chapter defines ethics and provides guidelines for practicing ethics in public speaking and listening. An ethical public speaker considers how to be honest and avoid plagiarism by taking notes during the research process, identifying sources, and deciding when it is appropriate to cite sources. Ethical public speakers also cite sources properly by understanding how to paraphrase and directly quote sources. In addition, they know how to cite in written speech materials, during oral presentations, and on visual aids.

Ethical speakers strive to achieve responsible speech goals by promoting gender, racial, and cultural diversity, using inclusive language, refraining from using hate speech, raising social awareness about important issues when possible, and understanding the balance of free speech with responsibility to audience members. Lastly, this chapter discusses ethical listening. Listening is an important part of the public speaking situation. Ethical listeners consider their responsibilities when both listening and providing feedback to speakers. Ethical listeners should prepare to listen by removing distractions, avoiding prejudging the speaker, and listen with the whole body by giving supportive nonverbal feedback to the speaker. Ethical feedback is explanatory and descriptive. Ethical feedback can include both praise and constructive criticism. With this improved understanding of how to prepare and present a speech ethically, you can accomplish the goal of ethical public speaking. Consider ethics as you learn about the public speaking process in upcoming chapters.



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5: AUDIENCE ANALYSIS

5.1: Introduction
5.2: Approches to Audience Analysis
5.3: Categories of Audience Analysis
5.4: Conclusion

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5.1: Introduction

Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, you should be able to:

1. List techniques for analyzing a specific target audience.
2. Explain audience analysis by direct observation.
3. Describe audience analysis by inference.
4. Identify the purpose of a basic questionnaire.
5. Recognize and apply data sampling.
6. Determine when to use a Likert-type test.
7. Define the five categories of audience analysis.
8. Summarize the purpose of the situational analysis.
9. Explain audience analysis by demography.
10. Recognize the difference between beliefs, attitudes and values.
11. Identify reasons for sampling a multicultural audience.
12. Apply the chapter concepts in final questions and activities.

> *Robert E. Mullins, a well-known local bank officer, was preparing a speech for the Rotary Club in Dallas, Texas on the topic of "finding the right loan" for a rather diverse audience. He knew his topic extremely well, had put a lot of hard work into his research, and had his visual aids completely in order. One of the things he had not fully considered, however, was the audience to which he would be speaking. On the day of the presentation, Mr. Mullins delivered a flawless speech on "secured" car and home loans, but the speech was not received particularly well. You see, on this particular week, a major segment of the audience consisted of the "Junior Rotarians" who wanted to hear about "personal savings accounts" and "college savings plans." It was a critical error. Had Mr. Mullins considered the full nature and demographic makeup of his audience prior to the event, he might not have been received so poorly.*

In contemporary public speaking, the audience that you are addressing is the entire reason you are giving the speech; accordingly, the audience is therefore the most important component of all speechmaking. It cannot be said often or more forcefully enough: know your audience! Knowing your audience— their beliefs, attitudes, age, education level, job functions, language, and culture—is the single most important aspect of developing your speech strategy and execution plan. Your audience isn't just a passive group of people who come together by happenstance to listen to you. Your audience is assembled for a very real and significant reason: they want to hear what you have to say. So, be prepared.

> Spectacular achievement is always preceded by unspectacular preparation. ~ Robert H. Schuller

We analyze our audience because we want to discover information that will help create a bond between the speaker and the audience. We call this bond "identification." Aristotle loosely called it "finding a common ground." This isn't a one-way process between the speaker and the audience; rather, it is a two-way transactional process. When you ask an audience to listen to your ideas, you are inviting them to come partway into your personal and professional experience as an expert speaker. And, in return, it is your responsibility and obligation to go partway into their experience as an audience. The more you know and understand about your audience and their psychological needs, the better you can prepare your speech and your enhanced confidence will reduce your own speaker anxiety (Dwyer, 2005).

This chapter is dedicated to understanding how a speaker connects with an audience through **audience analysis** by direct observation, analysis by inference, and data collection (Clevenger, 1966). In addition, this chapter explores the five categories of audience analysis: (1) the situational analysis, (2) the demographic analysis, (3) the psychological analysis, (4) the multicultural analysis, and (5) the topic interest and prior knowledge analysis.

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5.2: Approches to Audience Analysis

Whenever thinking about your speech, it is always a good idea to begin with a thorough awareness of your audience and the many factors comprising that particular audience. In speech communication, we simply call this “doing an audience analysis.” An audience analysis is when you consider all of the pertinent elements defining the makeup and **demographic characteristics** (also known as **demographics**) of your audience (McQuail, 1997). From the Greek prefix demo (of the people), we come to understand that there are detailed accounts of human population characteristics, such as age, gender, education, occupation, language, ethnicity, culture, background knowledge, needs and interests, and previously held attitudes, beliefs, and values. Demographics are widely used by advertising and public relations professionals to analyze specific audiences so that their products or ideas will carry influence. However, all good public speakers consider the demographic characteristics of their audience, as well. It is thefundamental stage of preparing for your speech. Table 5.1 shows some examples of demographics and how they may be used when developing your speech. Of course, this is not an all-inclusive list. But, it does help you get a good general understanding of the demographics of the audience you will be addressing.

So now you may be saying to yourself: “Gee, that’s great! How do I go about analyzing my particular audience?” First, you need to know that there are three overarching methods (or “**paradigms**”) for doing an audience analysis: audience analysis by direct observation, audience analysis by inference, and audience analysis through data collection. Once you get to know how these methods work, you should be able to select which one (or even combination of these methods) is right for your circumstances.

> Nothing has such power to broaden the mind as the ability to investigate systematically and truly all that comes under thy observation in life. ~ Marcus Aurelius

Table 5.1 Tailoring a Speech to Demographic Characteristics

Demographic Characteristics	Do's and Don'ts
Ethnicity	Don't try to use words or phrases to "cuddle up" to one race or another. You would lose some credibility if you made a point in your speech and then said, "So get jiggy with it" or "You could enjoy that with your afternoon tea ceremony". (Pearson, et al, 2011).
Age	Stay away from jargon from one age range or another, like "OMG" or "the cat's pajamas" (Gamble & Gamble, 2013).
Sex/Gender	Use words that are not sex/gender-specific. Instead of policeman, fireman, and stewardess, use police officer, firefighter, and flight attendant. Do not use one-sex/gender pronouns, like assuming a teacher is a "she" and a dentist is a "he". (Eisenberg & Wynn, 2013).
Income	Some people in your audience will have more money than others. So if you keep fit by maintaining membership in a prominent gym and you take classes there also, don't assume everyone else can afford to do so. You can tell your audience what you do, but give them options like parking far from the store and working out with a yoga or Pilates CD at home.
Occupation	Unless you are speaking at a convention where everyone in your audience works in the same field, make your speech more explanatory. Your audience has not had extensive training in medical terms nor legal terms. So you need to explain what you are talking about, without using the big words which would make your audience feel confused, stupid, and put down.
Religion	Realize that your audience will likely have a wide variety of religions represented, and some people may have no religious or spiritual beliefs. So you can say that YOU read the Bible every night for 10 minutes, but that you are suggesting that everyone choose a religious or inspirational reading for pre-sleep relaxation (Gamble & Gamble, 2013).
Education Level	Even if you are speaking to an audience of college freshman, not everyone has had the same educational experiences. For example, some of the people in your class may have completed a high school equivalency program like the GED, some may be high school students who are taking a college class, some may have gone to secondary school in another country, some may be home-schooled, and some may have gone to a private honors-based prep school. You need to be careful not to talk down to your audience and not to use fancy sentences and words to try to impress your audience. Gauging the right level of communication for your speech is an important challenge.

Direct Observation

Audience analysis by direct observation, or direct experience, is, by far, the most simple of the three paradigms for “getting the feel” of a particular audience. It is a form of qualitative data gathering. We perceive it through one or more of our five natural senses—hearing, seeing, touching, tasting, and smelling. Knowledge that we acquire through personal experience has more impact on us than does knowledge that we learn indirectly. Knowledge acquired from personal experience is also more likely to affect our thinking and will be retained for a longer period of time. We are more likely to trust what we hear, see, feel, taste, and smell rather than what we learn from secondary sources of information (Pressat, 1972).

All you really need to do for this method of observation is to examine your audience. If you are lucky enough to be able to do this before speaking to your audience, you will be able to gather some basic reflective data (How old are they? What racial mix does this audience have? Does their non-verbal behavior indicate that they are excited to hear this speech?) that will help you arrange your thoughts and arguments for your speech (Nierenberg & Calero, 1994).

One excellent way to become informed about your audience is to ask them about themselves. In its most basic form, this is data collection. Whenever possible, have conversations with them – interact with members of your audience – get to know them on a personal level (Where did you go to school? Do you have siblings/pets? What kind of car do you drive?) Through these types of conversations, you will be able to get to know and appreciate each audience member as both a human being and as an audience member. You will come to understand what interests them, convinces them, or even makes them laugh. You might arouse interest and curiosity in your topic while you also gain valuable data.



For example, you want to deliver a persuasive speech about boycotting farm-raised fish. You could conduct a short attitudinal survey to discover what your audience thinks about the topic, if they eat farm-raised fish, and if they believe it is healthy for them. This information will help you when you construct your speech because you will know their attitudes about the subject. You would be able to avoid constructing a speech that potentially could do the opposite of what you intended.

Another example would be that you want to deliver an informative speech about your town's recreational activities and facilities. Your focus can be aligned with your audience if, before you begin working on your speech, you find out if your audience has senior citizens and/or high school students and/or new parents.

Clearly this cannot be done in every speaking situation, however. Often, we are required to give an **unacquainted-audience presentation**. Unacquainted-audience presentations are speeches when you are completely unfamiliar with the audience and its demographics. In these cases, it is always best to try and find some time to sit down and talk with someone you trust (or even several people) who might be familiar with the given audience. These conversations can be very constructive in helping you understand the context in which you will be speaking.

Not understanding the basic demographic characteristics of an audience, or further, that audience's beliefs, values, or attitudes about a given topic makes your presentation goals haphazard, at best. Look around the room at the people who will be listening to your speech. What types of gender, age, ethnicity, and educationallevel characteristics are represented? What are their expectations for your presentation? This is all-important information you should know before you begin your research and drafting your outline. Who is it that I am going to be talking to?

> If we knew what it was we were doing, it would not be called research, would it? ~ Albert Einstein

Inference

Audience analysis by inference is merely a logical extension of your observations drawn in the method above. It is a form of critical thinking known as inductive reasoning, and another form of qualitative data gathering. An inference is when you make a reasoned tentative conclusion or logical judgment on the basis of available evidence. It is best used when you can identify patterns in your evidence that indicate something is expected to happen again or should hold true based upon previous experiences. A good speaker knows how to interpret information and draw conclusions from that information. As individuals we make inferences—or reasonable assumptions—all the time. For example, when we hear someone speaking Arabic, we infer that they are from the Middle East. When we see this person carrying a copy of The Koran, we infer that they are also a follower of the Muslim faith. These are reasoned conclusions that we make based upon the evidence available to us and our general knowledge about people and their traits.

When we reason, we make connections, distinctions, and predictions; we use what is known or familiar to us to reach a conclusion about something that is unknown or unfamiliar for it to make sense. Granted, of course, inferences are sometimes wrong. Here's a familiar example: You reach into a jar full of jelly beans, and they turn out to be all black. You love black jelly beans. You reach back into the jar and take another hand full, which turn out to be, again, all black. Since you can't see the jelly beans inside the jar you make an assumption based on empirical evidence (two handfuls of jelly beans) that all of the jelly beans are black. You reach into the jar a third time and take a hand full of jelly beans out, but this time they aren't any black jelly beans, but white, pink, and yellow. Your conclusion that all of the jelly beans were black turned out to be fallacious.

Data Sampling

Unlike audience analysis by direct observation and analysis by inference, audience analysis by data sampling uses statistical evidence to quantify and clarify the characteristics of your audience. These characteristics are also known as variables (Tucker, et al, 1981), and are assigned a numerical value so we can systematically collect and classify them. They are reported as statistics, also known as quantitative analysis or quantitative data collection. Statistics are numerical summaries of facts, figures, and research findings. Audience analysis by data sampling requires you to survey your audience before you give your speech. You need to know the basics of doing a survey before you actually collect and interpret your data.



> If you make listening and observation your occupation, you will gain much more than you can by talk. ~ Robert Baden-Powell

Basic Questionnaire

There are a great number of survey methods available to the speaker. However, we will cover three primary types in this section because they are utilized the most. The first type of survey method you should know about is the basic questionnaire, which is a series of questions advanced to produce demographic and attitudinal data from your audience.

Clearly, audience members should not be required to identify themselves by name on the basic questionnaire. Anonymous questionnaires are more likely to produce truthful information. Remember, all you are looking for is a general read of your audience; you should not be looking for specific information about any respondent concerning your questionnaire in particular. It is a bulk sampling tool, only.

While you can easily gather basic demographic data (examples of demographic questions are shown in the chart following this section), we need to adjust our questions a bit more tightly, or ask more focused questions, in order to understand the audience's "predispositions" to think or act in certain ways. For example, you can put an attitudinal extension on the basic questionnaire (examples of attitudinal questions are shown in Figure 5.1).

These questions probe more deeply into the psyche of your audience members, and will help you see where they stand on certain issues. Of course, you may need to tighten these questions to get to the heart of your specific topic. But, once you do, you'll have a wealth of data at your disposal that, ultimately, will tell you how to work with your target audience.



Ordered Categories

Another method of finding out your audience's value set is to survey them according to their value hierarchy. A value hierarchy is a person's value structure placed in relationship to a given value set (Rokeach, 1968). The way to determine a person's value hierarchy is to use the ordered categories sampling method. Here, each audience member is given a list of values on a piece of paper, and each audience member writes these values on another piece of paper in order according to their importance to him/her. Each response is different, of course, because each audience member is different, but when analyzed by the speaker, common themes will present themselves in the overall data. Accordingly, the speaker can then identify with those common value themes. (Examples of an Ordered Value Set appear in Figure 5.1).

Figure 5.1 Examples of Survey Questions

Demographic Questions

1. Academic level in college
   a. freshman
   b. sophomore
   c. junior
   d. senior

2. Marital status:
   a. single
   b. married
   c. divorced
   d. widowed

3. Age
   a. less than 18 years old
   b. 18 – 30 years old
   c. 31 – 45 years old
   d. over 46 years of age

Attitudinal Questions

1. I regard myself as:
   a. conservative
   b. liberal
   c. socialist
   d. independent

2. I believe that abortion:
   a. should be illegal
   b. should remain legal
   c. should be legal only in cases of rape
   d. not sure

3. I think that prayer should be permitted in public schools:
   a. yes
   b. no
   c. undecided

Value Ordered Questions

Place the following list of values in order of importance, from most important (1) to least important (5).

Freedom Democracy
Liberty Safety
Justice

1._____
2._____
3._____
4._____
5._____

Likert-type Questions

Indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each question.

1. Unsolicited email should be illegal
Strongly Agree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Disagree

2. Making unsolicited email illegal would be fundamentally unfair to businesses.
Strongly Agree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Disagree

3. I usually delete unsolicited email before ever opening it.
Strongly Agree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Disagree

Likert-Type Testing

The final method of assessing your audience's attitudes deals with Likert-type testing. Likert-type testing is when you make a statement, and ask the respondent to gauge the depth of their sentiments toward that statement either positively or negatively, or neutrally. Typically, each scale will have 5 weighted response categories, being +2, +1, 0 -1, -2. What the Likert-type test does, that other rests do not do, is measure the extent to which attitudes are held. See how the Likert-type test does this in the example on "unsolicited email" in Figure 5.1.

A small Likert-type test will tell you where your audience, generally speaking, stands on issues. As well, it will inform you as to the degree of the audience's beliefs on these issues. The Likert-type test should be used when attempting to assess a highlt charged or polarizing issue, because it will tell you, in rough numbers, whether or not your audience agrees or disagrees with your topic.

No matter what kind of data sampling you choose, you need to allow time to collect the information and then analyze it. For example, if you create a survey of five questions, and you have your audience of 20 people complete the survey, you will need to deal with 100 survey forms. At high levels such as political polling, the audience members quickly click on their answers on a webpage or on a hand-held "clicker," and the specific survey software instantly collects and collates the information for the researchers. If you are in a small community group or a college class, it is more likely that you will be doing your survey "the old-fashioned way" -- so you will need some time to mark each individual response on a "master sheet" and then average or summarize the results in an effective way to use in your speech-writing and speech-giving.

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5.3: Categories of Audience Analysis

No matter which of the above inquiry methods you choose to do your audience analysis, you will , at some point, need to direct your attention to the five "categories" of audience analysis. These are the five categories through which you will learn to better appreciate your audience. Let's now examine these categories and understand the variables and constraints you should use to estimate your audience's information requirements.

Situational Analysis

The situational audience analysis category considers the situation for which your audience is gathered. This category is primarily concerned with why your audience is assembled in the first place (Caernaven-Smith, 1983). Are they willingly gathered to hear you speak? Have your audience members paid to hear you? Or, are your audience members literally "speech captives" who have somehow been socially ore systematically coerced into hearing you? These factors are decisively important because they place a major responsibility upon you as a speaker, whichever the case. The entire tone and agenda of your speech rests largely upon whether or not your audience even wants to hear from you.



Many audiences are considered captive audiences in that they have no real choice regarding the matter of hearing a given speech. In general, these are some of the most difficult audiences to address because these members are being forced to listen to a message, and do not have the full exercise of their own free will. Consider for a moment when you have been called to a mandatory work meeting. Were you truly happy to listen to the speaker, in all honesty? Some might say “yes,” but usually most would rather be doing something else with their time. This is an important factor to keep in mind when preparing your speech: some people simply do not want to listen to a speech they believe is compulsory.

The voluntary audience situation, in stark contrast, is completely different. A voluntary audience is willingly assembled to listen to a given message. As a rule, these audiences are much easier to address because they are interested in hearing the speech. To visualize how this works, reflect upon the last speech, concert, or show you’ve chosen to attend. While the event may or may not have lived up to your overall expectations, the very fact that you freely went to the occasion speaks volumes about your predisposition to listen to—and perhaps even be persuaded by—the information being presented.

Sometimes audiences are mixed in their situational settings, too. Take the everyday classroom situation, for instance. While students choose to attend higher education, many people in the college classroom environment sadly feel as if they are still “trapped” in school and would rather be elsewhere. On the other hand, some students in college are truly there by choice, and attentively seek out knowledge from their teacher-mentors. What results from this mixed audience situation is a hybrid captive-voluntary audience, with those who are only partially interested in what is going on in the classroom and those who are genuinely involved. You literally get to hone your speech skills on both types of audiences, thereby learning a skill set that many never get

to exercise. You should begin this wonderful opportunity by considering ways to inform, persuade, and humor a mixed situation audience. Think of it as a learning occasion, and you'll do just fine.

Being popular with an audience is a very rickety ladder to be on. ~ Louis C. K.

Demographic analysis

The second category of audience analysis is demography. As mentioned before, demographics are literally a classification of the characteristics of the people. Whenever addressing an audience, it is generally a good idea to know about its age, gender, major, year in school, race, ethnicity, religious affiliation, et cetera. There are two steps in doing an accurate demographic analysis: gathering demographic data and interpreting this data (Benjamin, 1969).

Sometimes, this information is gathered by the questionnaire sampling method, and is done formally. On other occasions, this information is already available in a database and is made available to the speaker. Some noteworthy speakers even have "scouts" who do demographic research on an audience prior to a speaking event, and make interpretations on that audience based upon key visual cues. For example, congresspersons and senators frequently make public appearances where they use stock speeches to appeal to certain audiences with specific demographic uniqueness. In order to know what type of audience he or she will be addressing, these politicians dispatch staff aides to an event to see how many persons of color, hecklers, and supporters will be in attendance. Of course, studying demographic characteristics is, indeed, more an art form than a science. Still, it is a common practice among many professional speakers.

Consider for a moment how valuable it would be to you as a public speaker to know that your audience will be mostly female, between the ages of 25 and 40, mostly married, and Caucasian. Would you change your message to fit this demographic? Or, would you keep your message the same, no matter the audience you were addressing? Chances are you would be more inclined to talk to issues bearing upon those gender, age, and race qualities. Frankly, the smart speaker would shift his or her message to adapt to the audience. And, simply, that's the purpose of doing demographics: to embed within your message the acceptable parameters of your audience's range of needs.



This, of course, raises an extremely important ethical issue for the modern speaker. Given the ability to study demographic data and therefore to study your audience, does a speaker shift his or her message to play to the audience entirely? Ethically, a speaker should not shift his or her message and should remain true to his or her motives. Only you will be able to alleviate the tension between a speaker's need to adapt to an audience and his or her need to remain true to form (Natalle & Bodenheimer, 2004).

My greatest challenge has been to change the mindset of people. Mindsets play strange tricks on us. We see things the way our minds have instructed our eyes to see. ~ Muhammad Yunus

Psychological Analysis

Unless your selected speech topic is a complete mystery to your audience, your listeners will already hold "attitudes, beliefs, and values" toward the ideas you will inevitably present. As a result, it is always important to know where your audience stands on the issues you plan to address ahead of time. The best way to accomplish this is to sample your audience with a quick questionnaire or survey prior to the event. This is known as the third category of audience analysis, or psychological description. When performing a description you seek to identify the audience's attitudes, beliefs, and values (Campbell & Huxman, 2003). They are your keys to understanding how your audience thinks.

Attitudes

In basic terms, an **attitude** is a learned disposition to respond in a consistently favorable or unfavorable manner with respect to a person, an object, an idea, or an event (Jastrow, 1918). Attitudes come in different forms. You are very likely to see an attitude present itself when someone says that they are "pro" or "anti" something. But, above all else, attitudes are learned and not necessarily enduring. Attitudes can change, and sometimes do, whereas beliefs and values do not shift as easily. A sample list of attitudes can be found in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2
Examples of Attitudes

Pro-/Anti-war
Pro-diversity
Anti-affirmative action
Pro-choice
Pro-life
Pro-/Anti-gambling
Pro-/Anti-prostitution
Pro-/Anti-capital punishment
Pro-/Anti-free trade
Pro-/Anti-outsourcing
Pro-/Anti-welfare
Pro-/Anti-corporate tax cuts
Pro-/Anti-censorship

These are just a small range of issues that one can either be "for" or "against." And, while we are simplifying the social scientific idea of an attitude considerably here, these examples serve our purposes well. Remember, attitudes are not as durable as beliefs and values. But, they are good indicators of how people view the persons, objects, ideas, or events that shape their world.

Other people's beliefs may be myths, but not mine. ~ Mason Cooley

Beliefs

Beliefs are principles (Bem, 1970) or assumptions about the universe. Beliefs are more durable than attitudes because beliefs are hinged to ideals and not issues. For example, you may believe in the principle: "what goes around comes around." If you do, you believe in the notion of karma. And so, you may align your behaviors to be consistent with this belief philosophy. You do not engage in unethical or negative behavior because you believe that it will "come back" to you. Likewise, you may try to exude behaviors that are ethical and positive because you wish for this behavior to return, in kind. You may not think this at all, and believe quite the opposite. Either way, there is a belief in operation driving what you think. Some examples of beliefs are located in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3 Examples of Beliefs
The world was created by God.
Marijuana is an addictive gateway drug.
Ghosts are all around us.
Smoking causes cancer.
Anyone can acquire HIV.
Evolution is fact, not fiction.
Marijuana is neither addictive nor harmful.
Ghosts are products of our imagination.
Smoking does not cause cancer.
Only high-risk groups acquire HIV.

Values

A value, on the other hand, is a guiding belief that regulates our attitudes (Rokeach, 1968). Values are the core principles driving our attitudes. If you probe into someone's attitudes and beliefs far enough, you will inevitably find an underlying value. Importantly, you should also know that we structure our values in accordance to our own value hierarchy, or mental schema of values placed in order of their relative individual importance. Each of us has our own values that we subscribe to and a value hierarchy that we use to navigate the issues of the world. But we really aren't even aware that we have a value hierarchy until some of our values come in direct conflict with each other. Then, we have to negotiate something called cognitive dissonance, or the mental stress caused by the choice we are forced to make between two considerable alternatives.

For example, let's assume that you value "having fun" a great deal. You like to party with your friends and truly enjoy yourself. And, in this day and age, who doesn't? However, now that you are experiencing a significant amount of independence and personal freedom, you have many life options at your disposal. Let's also say that some of your close personal friends are doing drugs. You are torn. Part of you wants to experience the "fun" that your close friends may be experiencing; but, the more sane part of you wants to responsibly decline. In honesty, you are juxtaposed between two of your own values—having "fun" and being responsible. This real life example is somewhat exaggerated for your benefit. Realize that we make decisions small and grand, based on our value hierarchies. Some basic values common to people around the world can be found in Table 5.4.

> Values aren't buses... They're not supposed to get you anywhere. They're supposed to define who you are. ~ Jennifer Crusie

Table 5.4 Examples of Values		
Inner Harmony	Enjoyment	Belonging
Friendship	Trust	Equality
Control	Family	Security
Peace	Wisdom	Tradition
Unity	Achievement	Power
Generosity	Conformity	Intelligence
Leadership	Creativity	Responsibility
Health	Independence	Loyalty

Multicultural Analysis

Demography looks at issues of race and ethnicity in a basic sense. However, in our increasingly diverse society, it is worthy to pay particular attention to the issue of speaking to a multicultural audience (as discussed in Chapter 14 *Speaking to a Global Audience*). Odds are that any real world audience that you encounter will have an underlying multicultural dimension. As a speaker, you need to recognize that the perspective you have on any given topic may not necessarily be shared by all of the members of your audience (Ting-Toomey & Chung, 2005). Therefore, it is imperative that you become a culturally effective speaker. Culturally effective speakers develop the capacity to appreciate other cultures and acquire the necessary skills to speak effectively to people with diverse ethnic backgrounds. Keep these factors in mind when writing a speech for a diverse audience.

Language

Many people speak different languages, so if you are translating words, do not use slang or jargon, which can be confusing. You could add a visual aid (a poster, a picture, a PowerPoint slide or two) which would show your audience what you mean – which instantly translates into the audience member's mind (Klopf & Cambra, 1991; Tauber & Mester, 1994).

Cognition

Realize that different cultures have different cultural-cognitive processes, or ways of looking at the very concept of logic itself. Accordingly, gauge your audience as to their diverse ways of thinking and be sensitive to these differing logics.



Ethnocentricity

Remember that in many cases you will be appealing to people from other cultures. Do not assume that your culture is dominant or better than other cultures. That assumption is called ethnocentrism, and ethnocentric viewpoints have the tendency to drive a wedge between you and your audience (Pearson, et al, 2011).

> Christian, Jew, Muslim, shaman, Zoroastrian, stone, ground, mountain, river, each has a secret way of being with the mystery, unique and not to be judged. ~ Rumi

Value

Not only do individuals have value systems of their own, but societies promote value systems, as well. Keep in mind the fact that you will be appealing to value hierarchies that are socially-laden, as well as those that are individually-borne.

Communication Style

While you are trying to balance these language, cognition, cultural, and value issues, you should also recognize that some cultures prefer a more animated delivery style than do others. The intelligent speaker will understand this, and adapt his or her verbal and nonverbal delivery accordingly.

Interest and Knowledge Analysis

Finally, if the goal of your speech is to deliver a unique and stirring presentation (and it should be), you need to know ahead of time if your audience is interested in what you have to say, and has any prior knowledge about your topic. You do not want to give a boring or trite speech. Instead, you want to put your best work forward, and let your audience see your confidence and preparation shine through. And, you don't want to make a speech that your audience already knows a lot about. So, your job here is to "test" your topic by sampling your audience for their topic interest and topic knowledge. Defined, topic interest is the significance of the topic to a given audience; often related to the uniqueness of a speaker's topic. Likewise, topic knowledge is the general amount of information that the audience possesses on a given topic. These are not mere definitions listed for the sake of argument; these are essential analytical components of effective speech construction.

Anyone who teaches me deserves my respect, honoring and attention. ~ Sonia Rumzi



Unlike multicultural audience analysis, evaluating your audience's topic interest and topic knowledge is a fairly simple task. One can do this through informal question and answer dialogue, or through an actual survey. Either way, it is best to have some information, rather than none at all. Imagine the long list of topics that people have heard over and over and over. You can probably name some yourself, right now, without giving it much thought. If you started listing some topics to yourself, please realize that this is the point of this section of this module; your audience is literally thinking the same exact thing you are. Given that, topic preparation is strategically important to your overall speech success.

Again, do not underestimate the power of asking your audience whether or not your topic actually interests them. If you find that many people are not interested in your topic, or already know a lot about it, you have just saved yourself from a potentially mindnumbing exercise. After all, do you really want to give a speech where your audience could care less about your topic—or even worse— they know more about the topic than you do yourself? Not at all! The purpose of this section is to help you search for the highly sought-after public speaking concept called **uniqueness**, which is when a topic rises to the level of being singularly exceptional in interest and knowledge to a given audience.

We know that you wish to excel in giving your speech, and indeed you shall. But first, let's make sure that your audience is engaged by your topic and hasn't already heard the subject matter so much that they, themselves, could give the speech without much (if any) preparation.

One final note: There's an old adage in communication studies that reasons: "know what you know; know what you don't know; and, know the difference between the two." In other words, don't use puffery to blind your audience about your alleged knowledge on a particular subject. Remember, there is likely to be someone in your audience who knows as much about your topic, if not more, than you do. If you get caught trying to field an embarrassing question, you might just lose the most important thing you have as a speaker: your credibility. If you know the answer, respond accordingly. If you do not know the answer, respond accordingly. But, above all, try and be a resource for your audience. They expect you to be something of an expert on the topic you choose to address.

> Given the choice between trivial material brilliantly told versus profound material badly told, an audience will always choose the trivial told brilliantly. ~ Robert McKee

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5.4: Conclusion

When considering topics for your speech, it is critical for you to keep your audience in mind. Not doing so will put your speech at risk of not corresponding with the information needs of your audience, and further jeopardize your credibility as a speaker. This chapter examined methods of conducting an audience analysis and five categories of audience analysis. In sum, this information equips you with the foundational knowledge and skillset required to ensure that your topic complements your audience. And, after all, if we are not adapting to meet the needs of our audience, we are not going to be informative or convincing speakers.



Winston Churchill is credited with the origin of the saying: “Fail to plan, plan to fail” (Lakein, 1989). We, your authors, believe that if you have failed to fully consider the nature, make-up, and characteristics of your audience, you are—for all intents and purposes— neglecting the spirit of the public speaking exercise. Confidently speaking to audiences can be somewhat addictive. The experience, when properly executed, can be empowering and help you succeed personally and professionally throughout your life. But, you must first consider the audience you will be addressing and take their every requirement into account (Lewis, 1989). We are linked to, joined with, if not bound by, our audiences. Your main speaking ambition should be to seek identification with them, and for them to seek identification with you.

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6: SPEAKING TO A GLOBAL AUDIENCE

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6.4: Understanding a Diverse Audience

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6.6: Speech Organization

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6.1: Introduction

Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Identify four reasons for learning to speak to global audiences.
2. Explain three barriers to speaking effectively to diverse audiences.
3. Utilize the concepts of high- and low-context cultures and polychronic and monochronic time to tailor your speech to diverse audiences.
4. Explain how Hofstede'scultural dimensions can influence the preparation of speeches for diverse audiences.
5. Elaborate on ways to make supporting materials culturally appropriate.
6. Compare and contrast linear and holistic patterns of organizing speeches.
7. Describe three holistic patterns of speech organization.
8. Discuss how verbal expression can influence audiences.
9. Explain how a speaker'snonverbal behavior can impact audiences.
10. Discuss how visual aids can be culturally appropriate.

On the first day of class, the lecturer, who was new to the job, walked into the lecture theatre, looked up at the class that was like a "mini United Nations" of first- and second-year undergraduates, took a deep breath to calm the butterflies in her stomach and said, "Good morning class! Welcome to the class on intercultural communication! It's wonderful to see so many of you from diverse nations and cultures. I am sure we will have a great time sharing our experiences of intercultural communication and learning from each other. By the way, you may call me anything you are most comfortable with — Ms. Megan, Dr. Megan, Dr. Tan, Prof., Ma'am, or just Megan."

Megan Tan was off to a great start! She understood the importance of being audience centered, especially when the audience is drawn from diverse nationalities, as her class was. She had been extremely nervous the night before her class, but she had prepared well. She had studied the student profiles on the class website, had carefully selected topics that would be appropriate for the audience and had chosen examples with an eye on keeping them inclusive. She structured her delivery in a way that balanced textual content with visual material and deliberately used language that was non-judgmental. The students were delighted that they could address her according to the norms of their own cultures.

> We inhabit a universe that is characterized by diversity. ~ Desmond Tutu

Public speaking has often been rated the number number-one stress inducer in people. When a diverse, global audience is added, public speaking can become a minefield that has to be navigated with care and sensitivity.

Speaking effectively to a global audience requires both knowledge of speaking principles and an awareness of intercultural differences. To this end, this chapter will begin by examining the need to speak to a global audience and then the strategies that can be used to manage the process effectively. In addition to stressing the need for sensitivity and respect that underlies the basic principles of speaking to global audiences, the chapter will offer specific strategies that can be employed at each stage of the speech process, from speech planning, preparation and organization, to delivery.

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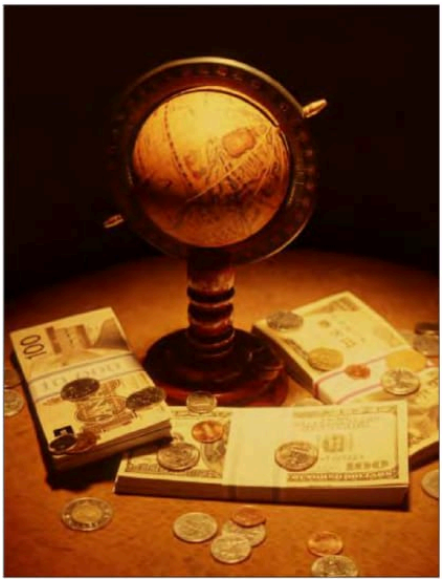
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6.2: Reasons to Adopt a Global Perspective

Martin and Nakayama (2010) argued that key reasons to adopt a global perspective in communication include economic, technological, demographic and peace imperatives. These motives can be extended to the realm of public speaking too.

the economic imperative

Globalization was perhaps one of the most distinctive phenomena of the 20th century, resulting in feverish exchanges of people, ideas, goods and money across national boundaries. Friedman (2005) contended that the world has "become flat" with India, China and other countries becoming an integral part of the global supply chain for services and manufacturing. The top 500 multinational corporations account for nearly 70 percent of worldwide trade (www.gatt.org). These global flows of resources have highlighted the need for organizations, whether profit, non-profit or governmental, to address diverse audiences. Moreover, local neighborhoods from Seattle to Singapore are becoming increasingly diverse. As a result, people who speak on behalf of organizations need to be sensitive to audience diversity while making speeches in public.



snapshot from real life

British Petroleum [BP] appointed a new American CEO, Robert Dudley, who replaced Tony Hayward, a British national who had been in charge of BP in 2010 when the Deepwater Horizon disaster occurred in the Gulf of Mexico. In addition to the obvious issue of being responsible for oneof the world's worst ecological disasters, one of the key reasons for thechange could be the role that culture played. Hayward was unable to strike the right emotional chord with the American public.

Americans are used to seeing politicians and leaders display emotionin situations that call for it. In such a context, Hayward's British tendencyto crack a joke to defuse the tension made him look as though he wasnot taking the situation seriously enough. In contrast to Hayward's notorious comment, "I'd like my life back" the new American CEO Dudley, when asked whether he felt guilty, replied, "I just feel sad. I'vebeen working in the oil and gas business my whole career. It provides aproduct that people need, it's energy, and all of us can't believe this has happened."

If Hayward had taken cultural differences into account, he could have adapted his crisis communication to his audience, and his comments might have been more positively received (Crooks & Edgecliffe- Johnson, 2010).

the technological imperative

Due to the rapid proliferation of information and communication technologies and the advent of modern transportation systems, the world has simultaneously shrunk and expanded. Shrunk because ,in a Twitter moment, one can communicate with millions of people, and expanded because technologies and transportation systems have enabled access to diverse cultures and societies across the world. This situation makes it vital for public speakers to be conscious of the

diversity of audiences who could be dispersed around the world but can be reached instantly over the Internet's social networks.

the demographic imperative

Even though the history of the human race has been characterized by continual migration and socialization, one of the most extensive waves of migration and cultural mixing occurred during the 20th century. First- generation immigrants often carried with them a strong sense of cultural and ethnic identities that made issues of integration and assimilation hot-button issues in countries from the United States to Germany in Western Europe and to Singapore in Southeast Asia. Any attempt at public speaking that is not sensitive to the plurality of the audience in such an increasingly diverse and multicultural world is almost certainly bound to fail.

snapshot from real life

President Barack Obama's speech at Cairo University has been highly commended for the respect and sensitivity he accorded to the host audience. Here is an excerpt from his speech that demonstrates not only respect towards the hosts, but also sensitivity towards the host culture by using a common salutation among Muslims, "assalaamualaykum." During his speech, President Obama (2009) said:

> *"I am honored to be in the timeless city of Cairo, and to be hosted by two remarkable institutions. For over a thousand years, al-Azhar has stood as a beacon of Islamic learning, and for over a century, Cairo University has been a source of Egypt's advancement. Together, you represent the harmony between tradition and progress. I am grateful for your hospitality, and the hospitality of the people of Egypt. I am also proud to carry with me the goodwill of the American people, and a greeting of peace from Muslim communities in my country: assalaamu alaykum."*

the peace imperative

Worse still, intolerance reflected and magnified in public speeches can breed feelings of hatred and violence. Noreiga and Iribarren's (2009) study on hate speech and its relation to hate crimes in conservative talk radio in Los Angeles found extensive evidence of hate speech against vulnerable groups such as foreign nationals and racial and ethnic minorities. Further, Yanagizawa-Drott (2012) found that around 10% of genocidal violence in Rwanda could be attributed to propagandist broadcasts on a radio station that had called for the extermination of the Tutsi minority during the Rwandan genocide in which around 800,000 people died over a span of 100 days in 1994.



These compelling reasons for public speakers to adopt a global perspective require an examination of the basics of speaking effectively to a global audience.

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6.3: Sensitivity and Respect

Perhaps the most important advice in speaking to a global audience would be to cultivate a sense of sensitivity and respect — a keen awareness of and sensitivity to differences among people from diverse cultures and respect for others who are unlike the speaker. When speaking to a global audience, it is imperative for public speakers to suspend ethnocentric judgments and engage audiences in an open, tolerant, sensitive and respectful manner. According to Chen & Starosta (2005), the basic components of intercultural communication competence include intercultural sensitivity, awareness and effectiveness. Intercultural sensitivity requires speakers to know and control themselves. Intercultural awareness requires speakers to know and respect others. Intercultural effectiveness requires speakers to manage their behavior. Potential roadblocks to achieving intercultural communication competence include stereotyping people, harboring prejudices against people and being ethnocentric.

stereotypes

A stereotype is a standardized conception or image of a group of people. Stereotypes are akin to a mental cookie cutter, forcing a simple pattern upon a complex mass of people and assigning a limited number of characteristics to all members of a group. Stereotypes are simple, acquired, often erroneous and resistant to change. People usually acquire stereotypes through the process of socialization and through the mass media, such as cultural stereotypes portrayed in advertising. Stereotypes become problematic when they reduce the wide range of differences among people to simplistic categories and transform these categories into imagined realities, fueling attitudes of us versus them (Gudykunst & Kim, 1997). It is important for public speakers to be aware of the stereotypes they might harbor so that they can steer clear of using stereotypes that might offend diverse audience members and harm the speaker's credibility.

snapshot from real life

Rush Limbaugh, the conser- vative radio talk show host, has often been lambasted for using sexist and racist stereotypes in his broadcasts. In an article on the CNN website, Jane Fonda, Robin Morgan and Gloria Steinem (2012) of the Women's MediaCenter argued that the Federal Communications Commission should ban Limbaugh from the airwaves. Some instances of stereotypes of women he employed included referring tofemale cabinet members as "sex-retaries". On another occasion,he used a racial stereotype, telling an African-American female caller he could notunderstand to "take that boneout of your nose and call me back."

prejudices

Similarly, prejudices are negative attitudes toward a cultural group, often based on little or no experience. Prejudices may arise from multiple sources, such as tensions between groups, unfavourable past encounters, status differences and perceived threats. The causes of prejudices could include societal sources, an innate need to maintain social identity, and scapegoating. Expressions of prejudice can range from subtle non-verbal acts to outright hostility. Public speakers can best avoid or overcome prejudices by increasing personal contact with groups with whom they do not regularly interact or through education (Cooper, Calloway-Thomas & Simonds, 2007). Similar to stereotypes, prejudices must be handled carefully. Public speakers should question themselves and identify potential prejudices they might have toward certain groups, steer clear of these negative attitudes, withhold judgment and deliver speeches free of baseless prejudices.

snapshot from real life

A recent example of prejudice vocalized by a prominent person was the case of John Galliano. The French fashion house Christian Dior dismissed its chief designer, John Galliano, after the broadcast of a video that showed his anti-Semitic outbursts at a Paris bar in March 2011. The video appeared to show Mr.Galliano declaring that ''I loveHitler'' and that ''people like you would be dead,'' and ''your mothers, your forefathers'' would all be ''gassed.'' While Galliano hashis defenders and the content of the video has been contested, observers said that the company might have acted swiftly in order to deflect mounting public criticism (Saltmarsh, 2011).



ethnocentrism

Ethnocentrism refers to the notion that one's own culture is superior to any other. It perpetuates the idea that other cultures ought to be judged by the extent to which they measure up to one's own cultural standards. While ethnocentrism is universal and contributes to cultural identity, if left unchecked, it can stand in the way of achieving intercultural communication competence (Samovar, Porter & McDaniel, 2010). In the quest for intercultural communication competence, speakers can aim for ethnorelativism, the acquired ability to see multiple values and behaviors as cultural rather than universal. This notion assumes that no one culture is central to describing and evaluating reality. Moving from realms of ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism helps public speakers move from egocentric to empathetic attitudes while preparing speeches for a diverse audience.

Samovar et al. (2010) proposed some guidelines to intercultural ethics, such as respecting differences, seeking commonalities, recognizing the validity of differences, looking past the superficial, withholding judgment and taking responsibility for one's own actions. Suspending ethnocentrism and choosing the path to ethnorelativism and intercultural communication competence are undoubtedly sound advice. There are specific ways to prepare and deliver speeches to global audiences, and the next section explains the techniques that can be adopted at each step of the speechmaking process.

snapshot from real life

An American professor was in Singapore to talk about his research on environmental sustainability. He was an authority in the field and the audience, comprising mostly Singaporeans, was looking forward to the talk. However, he alienated the audience right from the start of the speech. He said that after traveling all over the world, he had decided not to reside in Singapore because of pollution and that he would continue to reside in his home country, which was far cleaner. While he continued to speak eloquently on the topic of his speech, he had remarkably reduced the audience's enthusiasm by displaying an ethnocentric attitude. To make matters worse, he singled out the Formula One night race Singapore was then embarking on (and the audience was justifiably proud of) and the resultant pollution it would cause as a key reason affecting his decision.

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6.4: Understanding a Diverse Audience

The previous section brought out the importance of addressing diverse audiences and highlighted the need to suspend ethnocentric judgments in favor of ethnorelativism. This section will examine how a speaker can be sensitive to diversity in the audience during the speech planning process.

> Diversity in the world is a basic characteristic of human society, and also the key condition for a lively and dynamic world as we see today. ~ Hu Jintao

Cultural patterns refer to common themes through which different cultures can be understood. They consist of beliefs, values and norms shared among members of a group and which remain stable over time. They make most members of a culture respond or behave in more or less similar ways in similar situations. Of course, not all people in a cultural group behave in exactly the same way. Behavior will vary depending on personality orientations, individual values and self- construals, or the way people think about themselves (Lustig & Koester, 2010).

Scholars have proposed different cultural patterns to explain cultural differences among people. Among the most widely accepted patterns are Hall's (1976) categories of high- and low-context cultures and Hofstede's (2001) cultural value dimensions. Public speakers need to stay critical and examine how their culture fits into these patterns and how the speaker as an individual fits or does not fit into these patterns. This awareness helps speakers stay conscious of their cultural background while avoiding notions of ethnocentrism as they prepare speeches for diverse audiences.



high- and low-context cultures

Hall proposed that communication patterns are organized by the "amount of information implied by the setting or the context of the communication itself, regardless of the specific words spoken" (Lustig & Koester, 2010, p.109). **Low-context cultures** prefer to use low-context messages, where the message is encoded in the words used, or in the verbal expression, and not in the context. However, **high-context cultures** prefer to use high-context messages, where the meaning is implied by the physical setting or is presumed to be part of the culture's shared beliefs, values and norms.

People from high- and low-context cultures differ in their preferences for types of messages. People from low- context cultures tend to use more overt messages where the meaning is made very explicit. Low-context messages are intended to convey exact meaning through clear, precise and specific words. Verbal expression is of paramount importance, while the context of the speech is relatively unimportant. On the other hand, people from high-context cultures tend to use more covert messages where the meaning is implicit in the context in which the words are spoken. Nonverbal expressions take on more importance than verbal. Communication is intended to promote and sustain harmony and not necessarily to convey exact, precise meaning.

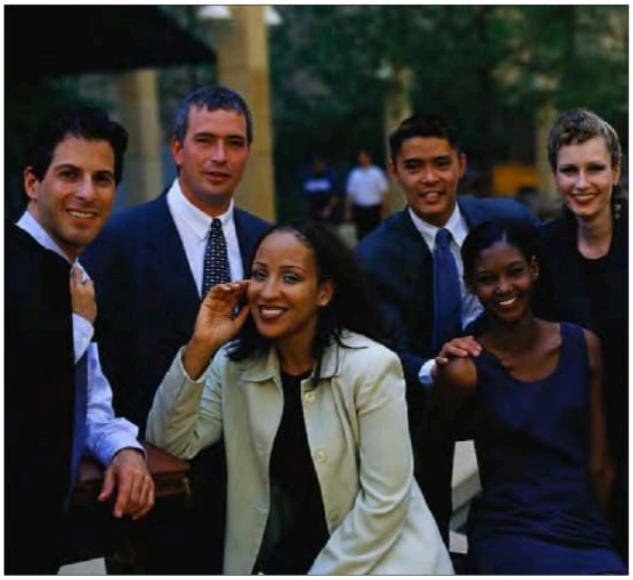
When preparing speeches for audiences that use low-context messages, public speakers will need to focus on their verbal expressions, using clear, specific and precise words that convey exact meaning. On the other hand, while preparing speeches for audiences that use high-context messages, speakers should focus more on non-verbal expressions and the specifics of the context.

Hofstede (2001), in his study of more than 100,000 employees of IBM in more than 70 countries, identified four cultural value dimensions that would differentiate diverse cultures. These dimensions were power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism- collectivism and masculinity- femininity.

power distance

The dimension of power distancerefers to "the degree to which the culture believes that institutional and organizational power should be distributed unequally and the decisions of the power holders should be challenged or accepted" (Lustig & Koester, 2010, p.114). Cultures that have low-power distances tend to minimize social inequalities and challenge authority figures, and they prefer reduced hierarchical organizational structures. On the other hand, cultures that have high-power distances tend to ascribe a rightful place for each person in the order, to not question or challenge authority and to have hierarchical organization structures. Public speakers must keep in mind that audiences from high- power distance cultures are discouraged from asking questions because it is seen as questioning the speaker's authority. On the other hand, listeners from low- power distance cultures might be more used to questioning authority and to challenge the assertions of the speaker.

> Don't walk behind me; I may not lead. Don't walk in front of me; I may not follow. Just walk beside me and be my friend.
> ~ Albert Camus



uncertainty avoidance

The **uncertainty avoidance** dimension refers to "the extent to which the culture feels threatened by ambiguous, uncertain situations and tries to avoid them by establishing more structure" (Lustig & Koester, 2010, p.116). In other words, cultures with low uncertainty avoidance will have high tolerance for ambiguity and uncertainty, encourage dissent, tolerate social deviance and generally take more risks and experiment with new things. However, cultures with high uncertainty avoidance prefer to avoid uncertainty. They try to ensure security and certainty through an extensive set of rules and regulations. They do not tolerate dissent or social deviance and have a low-risk appetite. Therefore, when public speakers are preparing to speak to audiences from high uncertainty avoidance cultures, they must keep in mind that there are likely to be more and stricter rules and protocols governing speeches. On the other hand, speeches prepared for low uncertainty avoidance groups might be more creative or improvised. Audiences ranked low in uncertainty avoidance, or greater tolerance for ambiguity, can consider abstract ideas without many specifics.

individualism-collectivism

The dimension of **individualism-collectivism** refers to “the degree to which a culture relies on and has allegiance to the self or the group” (Lustig & Koester, 2010, p.117). Cultures that rank low on individualism are highly collectivistic in nature and demand loyalty to the group. They believe that an individual’s primary obligations lie with the group, and they stress the dependence of individuals on organizations. On the other hand, in cultures that rank high on individualism, the autonomy of the individual is paramount and people are expected to take care of themselves. Audience members from individualistic cultures are responsive to ideas that emphasize personal achievement and highlight individual achievement. On the contrary, audience members from more collectivistic cultures might prefer recognition of group or team achievement to recognition of individual accomplishment.

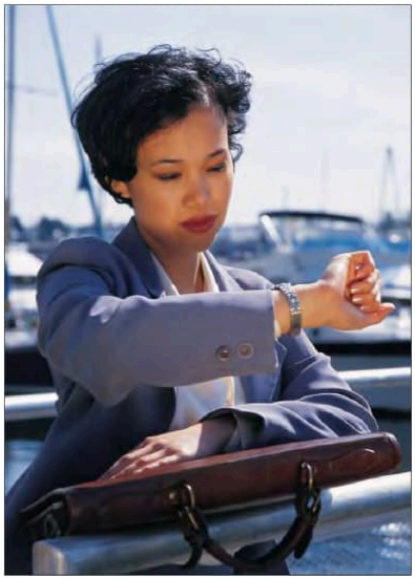
> America's strength is not our diversity; our strength is our ability to unite people of different backgrounds around common principles. A common language is necessary to reach that goal. ~ Ernest Istook

masculinity-femininity

The dimension of **masculinity-femininity** refers to “the degree to which a culture values ‘masculine’ behaviors, such as assertiveness and the acquisition of wealth, or ‘feminine’ behaviors, such as caring for others and the quality of life” (Lustig & Koester, 2010, p.118). Cultures that rank low on the masculinity index tend to believe in life choices that improve aspects of quality of life, such as service to others and sympathy for the less fortunate. They prefer nurturing roles for both men and women, and have fewer prescriptive behaviors based on gender. On the other hand, cultures that rank high on the masculinity index stress ambition and achievement. When preparing speeches for audiences from predominantly masculine cultures, public speakers can emphasize, for example, performance and achievement. On the other hand, when preparing speeches for audiences from predominantly feminine cultures, public speakers can emphasize ideas such as cooperation and solidarity.

time orientation

People from different cultural backgrounds can vary in their perceptions of time, irrespective of what the clock shows. Hall distinguished between a **monochronic**, or linear, time orientation and a **polychronic**, or cyclical, time orientation (Samovar et al., 2010). To people in monochronic cultures, linear time is tangible and can be ‘saved, spent, lost, wasted,’ etc. People from monochronic cultures tend to focus on one thing at a time. Schedules and deadlines are sacrosanct and punctuality is highly regarded. On the other hand, to people in polychronic cultures, cyclical time is less tangible and is seldom considered “wasted.” People from polychronic cultures can often be involved in multiple activities at the same time, with no strict division among the different activities. They usually stress involvement with people and cultivating relationships more than schedules and deadlines, so punctuality is not highly regarded.



Understanding an audience’s time orientation can enhance the effectiveness of a speech to a global audience. For example, an

audience from a predominantly monochronic culture might expect the speech to start and end on time. However, an audience from a predominantly polychronic culture might not expect a strict adherence to a schedule. Further, in the two different contexts, you would also have to deal very differently with latecomers. An understanding of cultural time orientation will help you in these situations.

I am not struck so much by the diversity of testimony as by the many-sidedness of truth. ~ Stanley Baldwin

Table 6.4.1 Countries/Cultures that Vary on Cultural Patterns

Cultural Patterns	Examples of Countries/Cultures
Low-context, explicit communication style	Germany, Sweden, England
High-context, implicit communication style	Japanese, African American, Mexican, Latino
High Power Distance	Guatemala, Malaysia, Philippines, Arab countries
Low Power Distance	Austria, Denmark, New Zealand
Individualistic	Austria, Belgium, Netherlands, United States
Collectivistic	Guatemala, Indonesia, Pakistan, West Africa
High Uncertainty Avoidance	Greece, Portugal, Guatemala, Uruguay
Low Uncertainty Avoidance	Denmark, Jamaica, Ireland, Singapore
Masculine Cultures	Austria, Italy, Mexico, Japan
Feminine Cultures	Sweden, Thailand, Chile, Portugal
Monochronic Time Orientation	Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Unites States
Polychronic Time Orientation	Arab, African, Indian, Latin American, South Asian Countries
Sources: Lustig & Koester, (2010); Samovar et al. (2010)	

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6.5: Selecting Supporting Materials

The credibility of the materials chosen to support a speech's main idea is culturally dependent. This rule applies to the choice of stories, facts and statistics and testimonies, the materials most often used to support a speech.

stories

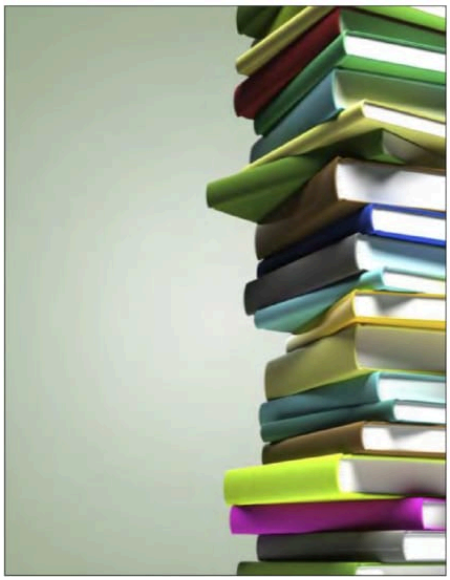
In many cultures, anecdotes, stories or parables enjoy high credibility as supporting materials. For instance, in Kenya the success of persuasive messages will often depend on the effective use of personal stories and anecdotes (Miller, 2002). Similarly, East and South East Asian cultures influenced by Confucianism also tend to rely on analogies, metaphors and parables to convey the main message of the speech (Xiao, 1996). An effective strategy for public speakers would be to choose stories and anecdotes to support their main arguments when addressing audiences predominantly from cultures that value such supporting materials.

facts and statistics

European American cultures often value facts and statistics as the most credible form of supporting materials (Lustig & Koester, 2010). Most public speaking textbooks include a section that emphasizes the importance of strengthening main points with facts and statistics. And, most public speeches made by politicians, activists or corporate CEOs are often peppered with statistics that appear to highlight or buttress their arguments. However, "facts" do not enjoy currency in all cultures. In cultures that value stories and parables, facts and statistics are not as well received.

testimonies

The acceptance of expert testimonies also varies from culture to culture. In some African cultures, no one is regarded as being objective. For instance, the testimony of a witness would have low credibility, because when someone speaks up about something, that person is expected to have a personal agenda in mind (Chang, 2004). On the contrary, in the United States, testimonies of witnesses are vital pieces of evidence. These differences in relative credibility accorded to testimonies by different cultures can affect the effectiveness of a public speech. Employing a mix of supporting materials might enhance credibility with a diverse audience.



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6.6: Speech Organization

Members of different cultural groups have varying preferences for different organizational patterns such as linear and holistic.

linear pattern

Speakers from low-context cultures often use linear patterns, such as cause- and-effect, problem-solution, chronological and spatial. In these patterns the speaker develops the main idea step by step, relying on facts and data to support the main argument. The main points and sub-points are connected via transitions, internal previews and summaries. The speaker relies more on facts and data, rather than on stories and emotional appeals, and contextual understanding is not emphasized. However, other speakers, mostly from high-context cultures, use holistic and configural organizational patterns that are more indirect than the linear patterns (Lieberman, 1994).

> We have no hope of solving our problems without harnessing the diversity, the energy, and the creativity of all our people. ~ Roger Wilkins



holistic pattern

In holistic patterns, instead of directly and explicitly presenting key ideas, the speaker uses examples and stories to convey the main idea and leaves it to the audience to interpret the message encoded in the examples and stories told. The main points and sub- points are connected through implication rather than by clear bridges and transitions. Cheryl Jorgensen Earp (1993; as cited in Jaffe, 2004) has identified three distinct types of holistic organizational patterns: wave, spiral and star.

wave pattern

In the wave pattern, speakers adopt a crest-trough wave pattern in which they use examples and stories to slowly build up to the main point at the crest of the wave. The speaker then winds down and repeats the pattern, reiterating main points or introducing new points at the peaks. Speeches that follow the wave pattern usually end dramatically, at the crest. Ceremonial speakers often employ this pattern, using repetitive phrases to build up to the crest.

spiral pattern

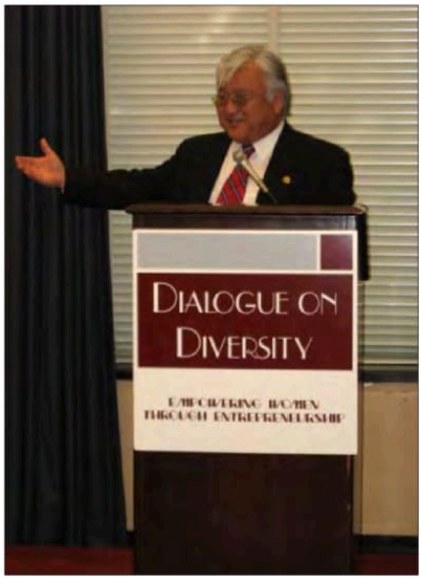
A speaker employing the spiral pattern builds up dramatic intensity by moving from smaller and less-intense scenarios to bigger

and more-intense scenarios, in an upward spiral. A speech about disciplining a child might use a spiral pattern. First, the speaker could say that for a small transgression a child might be given a time-out. The next scenario could describe a larger transgression and a bigger punishment such as being grounded for a day. Subsequent scenarios could build further in intensity.

star pattern

A variation of the more linear topical pattern, the star pattern presents a set of main points connected by an underlying common theme. For different audiences, speakers will start with different main points, but all main points will be united by one theme. For instance, while delivering a speech on “save the dolphins” to primary school students, the speaker might start with a main point that appeals to children, such as the “born to be free” argument, and then cover the other main points. However, when addressing marine biologists, the speaker might start with the main point that keeping dolphins in captivity is harmful to their health. Then the speaker would cover the remaining points, all tied to the theme of saving dolphins.

All patterns, whether linear or holistic, require careful and skillful planning and organization. When addressing a diverse audience, public speakers should make an effort to adjust their organizational patterns to reflect their audiences’ preference.



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6.7: Appropriate Verbal Expression

“That’s not what I meant!” Most people have made a statement like that at least once, if not many times. Oral communication between people can often result in misunderstanding, frustration and, if you are lucky, lots of laughter. Why does this happen? Words can hold different meanings for different people, because meaning inheres in people’s minds and not in the word itself. Public speakers are increasingly being challenged to reach beyond the comfort zone of speaking to audiences predominantly from their own culture, where their communicative ability is fairly high and to study and adapt to diverse audiences, where their intercultural communication competency will be challenged. This section explains how language and culture influence each other and what public speakers can do to use words effectively with multi- cultural audiences.

> What we have to do... is to find a way to celebrate our diversity and debate our differences without fracturing our communities. ~ Hillary Clinton

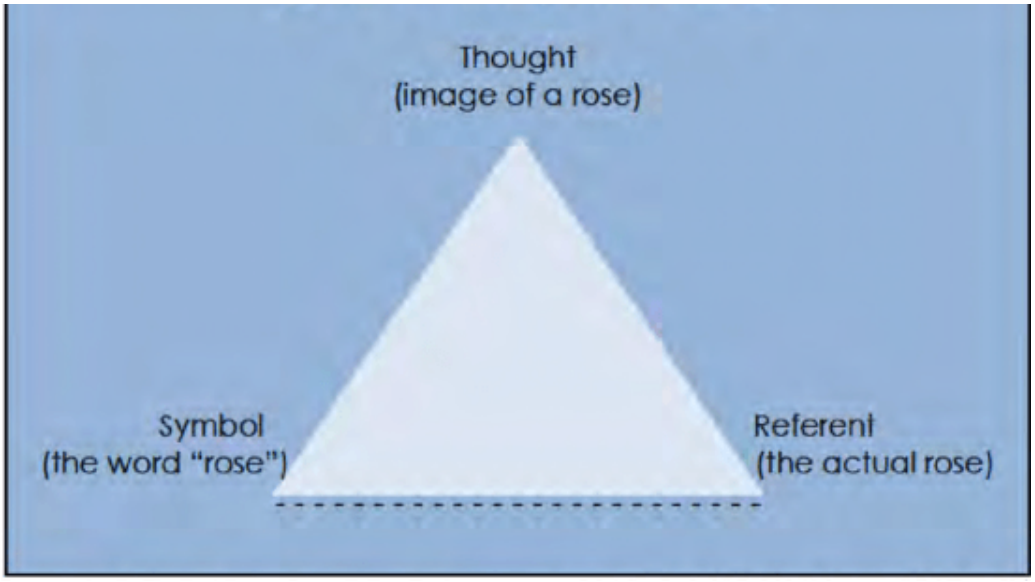


Figure 6.7.1. Triangle of Meaning

the triangle of meaning

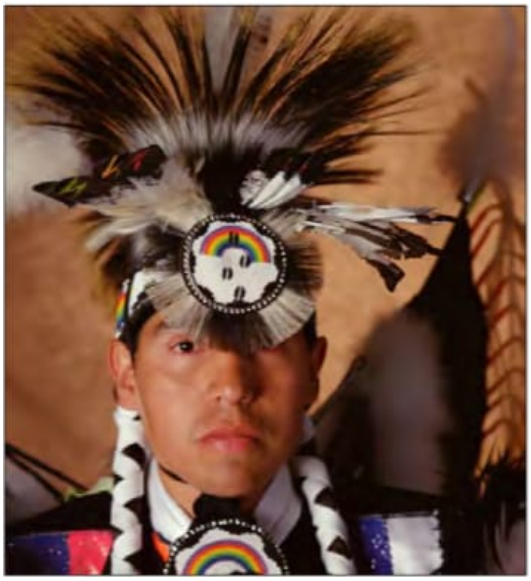
"What's in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet." This quote from Shakespeare reminds us that words are merely symbols, with little or no logical or semantic connection with the real life object or action they represent. Words as symbols are created through mutual social agreement and are fairly arbitrary. For instance, the word "rose" refers to a sweet-smelling flower that comes in different colors. Why call it a "rose"? We could have decided to call it "chethi." In other words, the word "rose" is arbitrary and must be learned. Speakers of each language have to learn to associate their language's symbols with their referents. The symbolic. arbitrary nature of language has been represented as the triangle of meaning, with symbol. referent and thought foaming the points of the triangle, as shown in the diagram below (Ogden and Richards, 1927; as cited in Cooper et al., 2007). To illustrate, the word rose is a symbol of the actual object in nature. The actual object is the referent, and the image of a rose that comes to mind is the thought.

In Figure 6.7.1 above, the symbol and the referent are connected by a dotted line, indicating that the symbol and its referent are not directly connected. Rather. they are connected only by the thought in the minds of speakers and recipients. This lack of direct connection between the symbol and the referent can cause issues especially when the referent is an abstract concept such as duty and respect. Culturally diverse audiences, who will have different symbols and thoughts regarding everyday objects or abstract concepts, challenge public speakers. Further, public speakers must also be aware of different meanings that words can take.

Table 6.7.1 Words to Avoid in Speeches	
Sexist Words	Mankind, Chairman, Manpower, Firemen (instead use gender-neutral words such as humanity, chairperson, human resources and firefighters)
Racist Words	Jap, Paki, Polack, etc., especially when used in a negative tone (instead say people from Japan, Pakistan, Poland, etc.)
Ageist words	Crone (old woman, used in a derogatory tone), geezer (a queer, odd, or eccentric person, used especially of elderly men), old goat (an elderly man who is usually disliked for being disapproving of younger people)
Stereotypes	Women talk too much, Blondes are dumb, Asians are good at science
Patronizing Language	For a woman, she is an effective manager. He is a caring nurse, for a male. She is just a stay-at-home mother.
Ethnic Slurs	Dirty Jew, Russian pig, Stupid American
Ethnic Epithets	Chinky (people perceived as of Chinese descent), Golliwog (people with dark skin), Redskin (refers to Native Americans)
Sources: Lustig & Koester, (2010); Samovar et al. (2010)	

denotative versus connotative meaning

Words can have denotative or connotative meanings A denotative meaning is the socially agreed-upon meaning that can be found in a conventional dictionary. On the other hand, connotative meaning is the meaning attached to a word over time based on personal experiences and associations. For instance, the word "immigrant" is defined in the Merriam-Webster online dictionary as "a person who comes to a country to take up permanent residence." However, the connotative meaning of immigrant arises in part from people's experience with immigrants. whether positive or negative. Public speakers must stay aware of the connotative meanings that diverse audiences might attach to their words. Interculturally competent speakers need to carefully choose words that will encode their ideas well to evoke the intended reaction and that will not offend the audience. Gamble and Gamble (1998) contend that strategic word choice might be public speakers' most powerful tool. Appropriate word choice refers to choosing words that are inclusive and avoiding sexist, racist and ageist language. For instance, in certain cultures elders are highly valued and given a lot of respect. While talking to a diverse audience, speakers must avoid language that demeans the elderly, or any other segment of the audience for that matter. Some examples of the types of words to avoid are given in Table 6.7.1.



communication style

The interculturally competent public speaker strives to learn the preferences in communication styles that a diverse audience may have. For example, Asians often prefer an implicit, subtle style of communication, while North Americans prefer more explicit, direct styles. Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey (1988) have identified two classes of communication styles that have a direct bearing on speech delivery: the direct- versus-indirect styles and the elaborate- versus-succinct styles.

direct versus indirect

Whether speech is direct or indirect is determined by the extent to which speakers place emphasis on the explicitness of verbal communication. In a direct style, speakers place emphasis on the words spoken. Words are chosen for clarity and precision. The intention of the direct-style speaker is to convey as clearly and logically the main idea of the speech, without "beating about the bush." In such a style, non-verbal cues are not as important as the verbal message. Speakers from low-context cultures most often use this communication style.

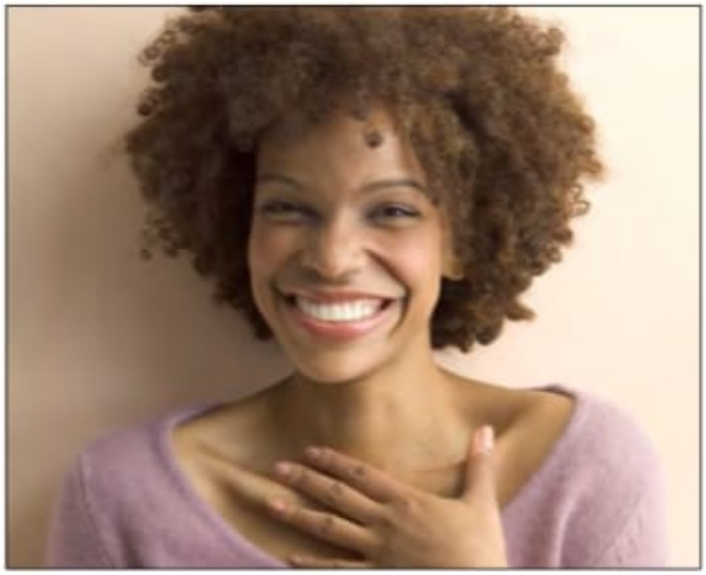
In an indirect style, speakers place emphasis on the context of the speech rather than the words spoken. In the indirect style, meaning inheres in the context or is internalized with the people who are communicating. A competent speaker or listener in such a situation would be one who understands the context: where the words are spoken, who is speaking and to whom. People from high-context cultures usually employ the indirect style. Often people from high-context cultures might find people from low-context cultures too abrupt, straightforward and insensitive, while people from low-context cultures might not understand why people from high- context cultures never seem to "get to the point."

> Sometimes one creates a dynamic impression by saying something, and sometimes one creates a significant an impression by remaining silent. ~ Dalai Lama

elaborate versus succinct

These styles range on a continuum, with elaborate and succinct styles at the extremes and an exacting style at the mid-point. In an elaborate style, speakers use fairly rich language filled with proverbs, idioms, quotations and metaphors. For example, speakers from Arab countries and Mexico tend to use this style. On the other end of the spectrum, speakers employing a succinct style use a lot of silences, pauses, indirectness, circumlocution and understatement to convey their main ideas. The Japanese and people from a number of other Asian countries tend to use this style. In the middle of the continuum lies the exacting style wherein the speaker will give precisely the required amount of information — nothing more, nothing less. Speakers from Northern Europe and the United States tend to prefer an exacting style of communication.

Faced with a diverse audience, competent speakers will first identify their own communication style and the preferred communication styles of their audience. They then adjust and adapt their communication style so that the audience will welcome the message.



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6.8: Effective Nonverbal Expression

While interculturally competent speakers watch their words and verbal expression, they are also aware of their non-verbal expression. Linguist Deborah Tannen estimated that as much as 90% of all human communication is non-verbal (cited in Neuliep, 2006). What's more, when verbal and non-verbal messages conflict with each other, receivers tend to believe the non-verbal cues more than the verbal. This insight takes on added significance in the context of speaking to a global audience, because scholars maintain that even though a substantial portion of our non-verbal behavior, including the expression of emotion, is innate and hardly varies across cultures, much of non-verbal communication is learned and varies significantly across cultures. This section examines several different categories of non-verbal communication, how they differ across cultures, and how public speakers can use this knowledge for diverse audiences.

kinesics

Kinesic behavior, or body movement, includes gestures, hand, arm and leg movements, facial expressions, eye contact and stance or posture. Ekman and Friesen (1969) classified kinesic behavior into four broad categories: (1) emblems, (2) illustrators, (3) affect displays, and (4) regulators.



emblems and illustrators

Emblems refer to hand gestures that translate directly into words. For instance, putting index finger to lips indicates a "shhh..." requesting silence. Illustrators, on the other hand, are hand and arm movements that accent or complement the words being used, such as pounding a fist on the lectern to emphasize a verbal message.

Both emblems and illustrators differ widely across cultures. For instance, in the United States, making a circle with the thumb and index finger while extending the other fingers indicates "okay." However, in Japan and Korea it indicates money. African-Americans and people from Mediterranean countries, the Middle East, and South America tend to be animated speakers and use hand gestures liberally, while in many Asian countries, such as Japan and China, excessive use of gestures is not encouraged. Speakers from these cultures tend to use fewer gestures and speak in a more restrained and subdued manner (Gamble & Gamble, 1998).

> Why do people always gesture with their hands when they talk on the phone? ~ Jonathan Carroll



affect displays

Scholars contend that human beings tend to adopt universal facial expressions to convey basic emotions such as happiness, sadness, anger, fear, distrust and surprise. However, when, where and to whom these emotions are displayed depends on the cultural context (Ekman & Friesen, 1969). For instance, in many Mediterranean cultures, people tend to emphasize signs of grief or sadness. Conversely, the Japanese, Chinese and Koreans tend to play down public expressions of sorrow, as well as anger, confusion and disgust. Further, while a smile can be a sign of happiness, it can convey multiple meanings in some cultures. For instance, in Japan, a smile can be used to mask another emotion or to avoid answering a question, as well as a sign of happiness (Samovar et al., 2010). An understanding of these cultural differences can help public speakers to gauge an audience's emotional response or lack thereof. Speakers can also tailor their emotional display to the cultural context.

regulators

Regulators are the actions and behaviors that manage the flow of conversation. These include eye contact, head movements, and communicator distance. One of the most important regulators in public speaking is eye contact. Determining an appropriate amount of eye contact between the speaker and audiences varies across cultures. Public speakers are encouraged to establish direct eye contact with audiences in North America, but this is often not the case in other cultures. For instance, Japanese communicators use less eye contact, as prolonged eye contact is considered rude in Japan. Eye contact is expected from receivers in Arab cultures as a mark of interest in the speaker's words. In France, eye contact is not only frequent but often intense, and this might be intimidating to some (Cooper et al., 2007).



paralanguage

Paralanguage refers to the vocal cues, such as volume, rate and pitch that accompany spoken language. These cues contribute to the meanings people associate with the words spoken. Some paralinguistic devices, such as volume, are learned and vary across cultures. For instance, Latinos and Arabs tend to speak more loudly than people from other cultures (Gamble & Gamble, 1998). To Arab listeners a higher volume indicates strength and sincerity, while speaking too softly implies that the speaker lacks confidence or is timid. On the other hand, speaking softly is much appreciated by Asians. South Koreans avoid talking loudly in any situation, as it is seen as rude and unbecoming since it tends to draw attention to one's self (Cooper et al., 2007).

A related and important paralinguistic device is silence. Hasegawa and Gudykunst (1998) found that culture influences the use of silence. They found that in the United States silence is used to mark a pause or break in verbal communication. When meeting strangers, Americans tend to be conscious of and uncomfortable with silence. On the other hand, for the Japanese, silence during verbal communication holds immense meaning. Since the Japanese place a lot of importance on maintaining harmony and encourage indirectness and ambiguity to maintain harmony, silence is often used to avoid directly saying "no" to a request.

Yet another paralinguistic device, pitch refers to the highness or lowness of a voice on a tonal scale. Varying pitch adds expressiveness to messages and reveals information such as whether the speaker is asking a question or expressing concern. Many Asian languages such as Mandarin, Thai and Vietnamese are tonal languages in which the same syllable can take on different meanings depending on the tone used to deliver the sound. For instance, the meaning of the word "Ma" could vary from "mother" to "horse" to "grass" or "to scold," depending on the tone used (Neuliep, 2006). Understanding these paralinguistic devices and how they apply to public speaking situations can enhance the effectiveness of speeches.

> Nothing strengthens authority so much as silence. ~ Leonardo da Vinci

physical appearance

The physical appearance of the speaker can also affect speechmaking to a diverse audience. This is because people often draw inferences about a person's socio-economic status, gender, age and cultural background based on physical appearance (Ruben, 1992). These inferences in turn affect whether listeners are positively or negatively predisposed to the speaker.

In public speaking, the two main categories of physical appearance that could affect audience perceptions are beauty and clothing, both of which can feed ethnocentrism. For instance, in the United States, the cultural ideal of beauty tends to value the appearance of tall, slender women and men with muscular bodies. However, in many parts of Africa, plumpness is valued as a sign of beauty (Gardiner & Kosmitzki, 2002). Interculturally competent speakers guard against culturally ingrained notions that could impede communication. In addition, competent speakers adapt their clothing for diverse audiences.



Two of the most important cultural issues regarding clothing are modesty and formality. Culturally acceptable levels of modesty vary from culture to culture. For example, in Muslim communities, women are often expected to wear loose fitting, flowing garments that do not reveal the contours of the body or expose parts of it (Samovar, Porter & McDaniel, 2010), and a woman may be expected to cover her head with a scarf or a hijab. While delivering speeches to a diverse audience, competent speakers consider culturally based sartorial preferences. For instance, Hillary Clinton's wearing of a headscarf while on a trip to Cairo was particularly appreciated in Cairo (Huffington Post, 2009).

> Wearing the correct dress for any occasion is a matter of good manners. ~ Loretta Young

In terms of formality, the United States has an informal culture where professors on campuses and organizations in Silicon Valley often adopt casual dress codes. Some other cultures such as in Japan and Germany are more formal. Among corporate employees in Japan and in many Asian countries, there is a general proclivity for conservative dress styles that emphasize conforming to society's collectivistic nature (Samovar, Porter & McDaniel, 2010). While addressing audiences that place high importance on formal attires, competent speakers dress appropriately.

As emphasized throughout this chapter, the most important thing that interculturally competent public speakers must keep in mind is to be sensitive to differences among cultures and to respect diversity. Successful public speakers will research their audience and adapt as far as they can. At the very least, public speakers must show respect for audience diversity while preparing and delivering speeches. This section has offered a few examples of how non-verbal communication can vary across cultures. Public speakers who need to address a diverse audience must be keenly aware of these variations among cultures and employ culturally appropriate kinesic behavior, paralinguistic devices and dress appropriately.

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6.9: Constructing Visual Aids

The more varied the listeners' cultural backgrounds, the more important it is for speakers to use visual materials to illustrate their ideas. Well- chosen visual aids are especially useful to help address language differences (Gamble & Gamble, 1998; Jaffe, 2004). However, interculturally competent public speakers are sensitive to the diverse sensibilities of their audience and choose visual aids that would likely be most effective with their audience. Research on intercultural website design has shown that low context cultures prefer more text heavy websites that state ideas explicitly and directly and follow a more consistent color scheme and structure. On the other hand, high context cultures prefer visually heavy websites that state ideas intuitively and indirectly and follow a more diverse color scheme and structure (Usunier & Roulin, 2010; Wurtz, 2005). Borrowing from this literature, public speakers could choose between literal, direct visual aids that follow a consistent color scheme and structure; or more subtle, abstract ones that employ more diversity in colors and structure, depending on whether the audience hails from low- or high-context cultures.



Further, color holds additional significance in different cultural contexts. For instance, a professor of Dutch origin was lecturing to a group of students in Singapore. She was happy that she had inserted a slide at the end of her presentation wishing the students "Gong Xi Fa Cai" (Happy Chinese New Year). However, she was greeted with frozen faces instead of friendly smiles. Later, a student enlightened her that instead of using red, which is seen as an auspicious color, she had used a black background. which is seen as inauspicious!

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6.10: Conclusion

This chapter started by exploring the technological, demographic. economic and peace imperatives for learning how to speak to global audiences. It then addressed ways in which this could be done. At the most basic level, public speakers must cultivate sensitivity to and respect for differences among diverse cultures and societies. At the same time, they must overcome barriers such as stereotypes. prejudices and ethnocentrism to achieving intercultural communication competence. Then the chapter examined ways in which public speeches can be made culturally acceptable and appropriate to diverse audiences.

The chapter discussed ways to understand a diverse audience through learning about cultural patterns and value dimensions. The chapter reviewed Hall's categories of high- and low-context cultures and Hofstede's value dimensions of individualism-collectivism-, power distance; uncertainty avoidance: and masculinity-femininity. This knowledge could help speakers address diverse audiences. The chapter also considered monochronic and polychronic time orientations, and it offered tips on choosing supporting materials, such as stories, analogies, facts. statistics and testimonies. that are culturally acceptable. The chapter then explained that speeches might be organized for diverse audiences using linear and/or holistic structures, and within holistic structures substructures such as wave, star and spiral patterns.

Next, the chapter focused on choosing culturally appropriate verbal and non-verbal expressions during speech delivery. It covered challenges to effective verbal delivery to diverse audiences, including the triangle of meaning: the pitfalls of denotative and connotative meanings: and different communication style preferences, such as explicit and implicit styles. The chapter also examined culturally appropriate non-verbal expressions. including cultural variations in the use of kinesics. paralanguage and physical appearance. It also suggested making visual aids culturally appropriate.



The ability to make effective speeches to global audiences is a skill of the utmost importance in this time when disparate cultures are brought together by globalization, immigration and information and communication technologies. These skills will also come in handy for a variety of situations, from job interviews and presentations with companies in other countries, to local community speeches to welcome new immigrants into the neighborhood. The skills can also be utilized in a myriad of other situations where people will be making public speeches to increasingly global audiences, like Megan Tan, who was well prepared for her "mini-United Nations" of undergraduate students.

Design is the method of putting form and content together. Design, just as art, has multiple definitions; there is no single definition. Design can be art. Design can be aesthetics. Design is so simple, that's why it is so complicated. ~Paul Rand

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7: ORGANIZING AND OUTLINING

7.1: Introduction

7.2: The Topic, Purpose and Thesis

7.3: Organizational Styles

7.4: Connecting Your Main Points

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7.6: Conclusion

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7.1: Introduction

Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Select a topic appropriate to the audience and occasion.
2. Formulate a specific purpose statement that identifies precisely what you will do in your speech.
3. Craft a thesis statement that clearly and succinctly summarizes the argument you will make in your speech.
4. Identify and arrange the main points of your speech according to one of many organizational styles discussed in this chapter.
5. Connect the points of your speech to one another.
6. Create a preparation and speaking outline for your speech.

Meg jaunted to the front of the classroom—her trusty index cards in one hand and her water bottle in the other. It was the mid-term presentation in her entomology class, a course she enjoyed more than her other classes. The night before, Meg had spent hours scouring the web for information on the Woody Adelgid, an insect that has ravaged hemlock tree populations in the United States in recent years. But when she made it to the podium and finished her well- written and captivating introduction, her speech began to fall apart. Her index cards were a jumble of unorganized information, not linked together by any unifying theme or purpose. As she stumbled through lists of facts, Meg—along with her peers and instructor—quickly realized that her presentation had all the necessary parts to be compelling, but that those parts were not organized into a coherent and convincing speech.

Giving a speech or presentation can be a daunting task for anyone, especially inexperienced public speakers or students in introductory speech courses. Speaking to an audience can also be a rewarding experience for speakers who are willing to put in the extra effort needed to craft rhetorical masterpieces. Indeed, speeches and presentations must be crafted. Such a design requires that speakers do a great deal of preparatory work, like selecting a specific topic and deciding on a particular purpose for their speech. Once the topic and purpose have been decided on, a thesis statement can be prepared. After these

things are established, speakers must select the main points of their speech, which should be organized in a way that illuminates the speaker's perspective, research agenda, or solution to a problem. In a nutshell, effective public speeches are focused on particular topics and contain one or more main points that are relevant to both the topic and the audience. For all of these components to come together convincingly, organizing and outlining must be done prior to giving a speech.

This chapter addresses a variety of strategies needed to craft the body of public speeches. The chapter begins at the initial stages of speechwriting— selecting an important and relevant topic for your audience. The more difficult task of formulating a purpose statement is discussed next. A purpose statement drives the organization of the speech since different purposes (e.g., informational or persuasive) necessitate different types of evidence and presentation styles. Next, the chapter offers a variety of organizational strategies for the body of your speech. Not every strategy will be appropriate for every speech, so the strengths and weaknesses of the organizational styles are also addressed. The chapter then discusses ways to connect your main points and to draw links between your main points and the purpose you have chosen. In the final section of this chapter, one of the most important steps in speechwriting, outlining your speech, is discussed. The chapter provides the correct format for outlines as well as information on how to write a preparation outline and a speaking outline.

> Chaos is inherent in all compounded things. Strive on with diligence. ~ Buddha

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7.2: The Topic, Purpose and Thesis

Before any work can be done on crafting the body of your speech or presentation, you must first do some prep work—selecting a topic, formulating a purpose statement, and crafting a thesis statement. In doing so, you lay the foundation for your speech by making important decisions about what you will speak about and for what purpose you will speak. These decisions will influence and guide the entire speechwriting process, so it is wise to think carefully and critically during these beginning stages.

> I think reading is important in any form. I think a person who's trying to learn to like reading should start off reading about a topic they are interested in, or a person they are interested in. ~ Ice Cube

Selecting a Topic

Generally, speakers focus on one or more interrelated topics—relatively broad concepts, ideas, or problems that are relevant for particular audiences. The most common way that speakers discover topics is by simply observing what is happening around them—at their school, in their local government, or around the world. This is because all speeches are brought into existence as a result of circumstances, the multiplicity of activities going on at any one given moment in a particular place. For instance, presidential candidates craft short policy speeches that can be employed during debates, interviews, or town hall meetings during campaign seasons. When one of the candidates realizes he or she will not be successful, the particular circumstances change and the person must craft different kinds of speeches—a concession speech, for example. In other words, their campaign for presidency, and its many related events, necessitates the creation of various speeches. Rhetorical theorist Lloyd Bitzer (1968) describes this as the rhetorical situation. Put simply, the **rhetorical situation** is the combination of factors that make speeches and other discourse meaningful and a useful way to change the way something is. Student government leaders, for example, speak or write to other students when their campus is facing tuition or fee increases, or when students have achieved something spectacular, like lobbying campus administrators for lower student fees and succeeding. In either case, it is the situation that makes their speeches appropriate and useful for their audience of students and university employees. More importantly, they speak when there is an opportunity to change a university policy or to alter the way students think or behave in relation to a particular event on campus.

Questions for Selecting a Topic

- What important events are occurring locally, nationally and internationally?
- What do I care about most?
- Is there someone or something I can advocate for?
- What makes me angry/happy?
- What beliefs/attitudes do I want to share?
- Is there some information the audience needs to know?

But you need not run for president or student government in order to give a meaningful speech. On the contrary, opportunities abound for those interested in engaging speech as a tool for change. Perhaps the simplest way to find a topic is to ask yourself a few questions. See the textbox entitled “Questions for Selecting a Topic” for a few questions that will help you choose a topic.

There are other questions you might ask yourself, too, but these should lead you to at least a few topical choices. The most important work that these questions do is to locate topics within your pre-existing sphere of knowledge and interest. David Zarefsky (2010) also identifies brainstorming as a way to develop speech topics, a strategy that can be helpful if the questions listed in the textbox did not yield an appropriate or interesting topic.

Starting with a topic you are already interested in will likely make writing and presenting your speech a more enjoyable and meaningful experience. It means that your entire speechwriting process will focus on something you find important and that you can present this information to people who stand to benefit from your speech.



formulating the purpose statements

By honing in on a very specific topic, you begin the work of formulating your **purpose statement**. In short, a purpose statement clearly states what it is you would like to achieve. Purpose statements are especially helpful for guiding you as you prepare your speech. When deciding which main points, facts, and examples to include, you should simply ask yourself whether they are relevant not only to the topic you have selected, but also whether they support the goal you outlined in your purpose statement. **The general purpose statement** of a speech may be to inform, to persuade, to inspire, to celebrate, to mourn, or to entertain. Thus, it is common to frame a **specific purpose statement** around one of these goals. According to O'Hair, Stewart, and Rubenstein (2004), a specific purpose statement "expresses both the topic and the general speech purpose in action form and in terms of the specific objectives you hope to achieve" (p. 111). For instance, the bog turtle habitat activist might write the following specific purpose statement: At the end of my speech, the Clarke County Zoning Commission will understand that locating businesses in bog turtle habitat is a poor choice with a range of negative consequences. In short, the general purpose statement lays out the broader goal of the speech while the specific purpose statement describes precisely what the speech is intended to do.

> Success demands singleness of purpose. ~ Vince Lombardi



Once you have answered these questions and narrowed your responses, you are still not done selecting your topic. For instance, you might have decided that you really care about conserving habitat for bog turtles. This is a very broad topic and could easily

lead to a dozen different speeches. To resolve this problem, speakers must also consider the audience to whom they will speak, the scope of their presentation, and the outcome they wish to achieve. If the bog turtle enthusiast knows that she will be talking to a local zoning board and that she hopes to stop them from allowing businesses to locate on important bog turtle habitat, her topic can easily morph into something more specific. Now, her speech topic is two-pronged: bog turtle habitat and zoning rules.

Writing the thesis statement

The specific purpose statement is a tool that you will use as you write your talk, but it is unlikely that it will appear verbatim in your speech. Instead, you will want to convert the specific purpose statement into a thesis statement that you will share with your audience. A thesis statement encapsulates the main points of a speech in just a sentence or two, and it is designed to give audiences a quick preview of what the entire speech will be about. The thesis statement for a speech, like the thesis of a research-based essay, should be easily identifiable and ought to very succinctly sum up the main points you will present. Moreover, the thesis statement should reflect the general purpose of your speech; if your purpose is to persuade or educate, for instance, the thesis should alert audience members to this goal. The bog turtle enthusiast might prepare the following thesis statement based on her specific purpose statement: Bog turtle habitats are sensitive to a variety of activities, but land development is particularly harmful to unstable habitats. The Clarke County Zoning Commission should protect bog turtle habitats by choosing to prohibit business from locating in these habitats. In this example, the thesis statement outlines the main points and implies that the speaker will be arguing for certain zoning practices.



writing the body of your speech

Once you have finished the important work of deciding what your speech will be about, as well as formulating the purpose statement and crafting the thesis, you should turn your attention to writing the body of your speech. All of your main points are contained in the body, and normally this section is prepared well before you ever write the introduction or conclusion. The body of your speech will consume the largest amount of time to present; and it is the opportunity for you to elaborate on facts, evidence, examples, and opinions that support your thesis statement and do the work you have outlined in the specific purpose statement. Combining these various elements into a cohesive and compelling speech, however, is not without its difficulties, the first of which is deciding which elements to include and how they ought to be organized to best suit your purpose.

> Good design is making something intelligible and memorable. Great design is making something memorable and meaningful. ~ Dieter Rams

The **main points** of any speech are the key pieces of information or arguments contained within the talk or presentation. In other words, the main points are what your audience should remember from your talk. Unlike facts or examples, main points are broad and can be encapsulated in just a sentence or two and represent the big ideas you want to convey to your audience. In general, speeches contain two to seven main points (Bower, 1990) that collectively lead to some understanding by the end of the speech. For informative speeches, main points might include historical details that advance a particular understanding of an

event. For a persuasive speech, however, your main points may be your separate arguments that, when combined, help to make your case. When writing your main points, you may want to do so in parallel structure. **Parallel structure** refers to main points that are worded using the same structure, perhaps by starting with a common introductory clause (Verderber, Verderber, & Sellnow, 2008). Main points do not stand alone; instead, speakers must substantiate their main points by offering up examples, statistics, facts, anecdotes, or other information that contribute to the audience's understanding of the main points. All of these things make up the **sub-points**, which are used to help prove the main points. This is where all of your research and supporting information comes into play.

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7.3: Organizational Styles

After deciding which main points and sub-points you must include, you can get to work writing up the speech. Before you do so, however, it is helpful to consider how you will organize the ideas. From presenting historical information in chronological order as part of an informative speech to drawing a comparison between two ideas in a persuasive speech to offering up problems and solutions, there are many ways in which speakers can craft effective speeches. These are referred to as organizational styles, or templates for organizing the main points of a speech.



Chronological

When you speak about events that are linked together by time, it is sensible to engage the chronological organization style. In a **chronological speech**, main points are delivered according to when they happened and could be traced on a calendar or clock. Arranging main points in chronological order can be helpful when describing historical events to an audience as well as when the order of events is necessary to understand what you wish to convey. Informative speeches about a series of events most commonly engage the chronological style, as do many demonstrative speeches (e.g., how to bake a cake or build an airplane). Another time when the chronological style makes sense is when you tell the story of someone's life or career. For instance, a speech about Oprah Winfrey might be arranged chronologically (see textbox). In this case, the main points are arranged by following Winfrey's life from birth to the present time. Life events (e.g., birth, her early career, her life after ending the Oprah Winfrey Show) are connected together according to when they happened and highlight the progression of Winfrey's career. Organizing the speech in this way illustrates the interconnectedness of life events.

> Doing the best at this moment puts you in the best place for the next moment. ~ Oprah Winfrey

Oprah Winfrey (Chronological Arrangement)
Thesis: Oprah's career can be understood by four key, interconnected life stages. I. Oprah's childhood was spent in rural Mississippi, where she endured sexual abuse from family members. II. Oprah's early career was *characterized* by stints on local radio and television networks in Nashville and Chicago. III. Oprah's tenure as host ofthe Oprah Winfrey Showbegan in 1986 and lasted until 2011, a period of time marked by much success. IV. Oprah's most recentmedia venture is OWN: The Oprah Winfrey Network, which plays host to a variety of television shows including Oprah'sNext Chapter.

topical

When the main points of your speech center on ideas that are more distinct from one another, a topical organization style may be engaged. In a **topical speech**, main points are developed separately and are generally connected together within the introduction and conclusion. In other words, the topical style is crafted around main points and sub-points that are mutually exclusive but related to one another by virtue of the thesis. It makes sense to use the topical style when elements are connected to one another because of their relationship to the whole. A topical speech about the composition of a newspaper company can be seen in the following textbox. The main points are linked together by the fact that they are all a part of the same business. Although they are related in that way, the topical style illustrates the ways in which the four different departments function apart from one another. In this example, the topical style is a good fit because the four departments are equally important to the function of the newspaper company.



Composition of a Newspaper Company (Topical Arrangement)
Thesis: The newspaper has four primary departments. I. The advertising department sells display advertisements to local and national businesses. II. The editorial department produces the written content of the newspaper, including feature stories. III. The production department lays out the pages and manages pre- press work such as distilling the pages and processing colors. IV. The business department processes payments from advertisers, employee paperwork, and the bi- weekly payroll.

spatial

Another way to organize the points of a speech is through a **spatial speech**, which arranges main points according to their physical and geographic relationships. The spatial style is an especially useful organization style when the main point's importance is derived from its location or directional focus. In other words, when the scene or the composition is a central aspect of the main points, the spatial style is an appropriate way to deliver key ideas. Things can be described from top to bottom, inside to outside, left to right, north to south, and so on. Importantly, speakers using a spatial style should offer commentary about the placement of the main points as they move through the speech, alerting audience members to the location changes. For instance, a speech about The University of Georgia might be arranged spatially; in this example, the spatial organization frames the discussion in terms of the campus layout. The spatial style is fitting since the differences in architecture and uses of space are related to particular geographic areas, making location a central organizing factor. As such, the spatial style highlights these location differences.

University of Georgia (Spatial Arrangement)
Thesis: The University of Georgia is arranged into four distinct sections, which are characterized by architectural and disciplinary differences. 1. In North Campus, one will find the University's oldestbuilding, a sprawling tree- lined quad, and the famous Arches, all of which are nestled against Athens' downtowndistrict. 2. In West Campus, dozens of dormitories provide housing for theUniversity's largeundergraduate population and students can regularly be found lounging outside or at one of the dining halls. 3. In East Campus, students delight in newly constructed, modern buildings and enjoy the benefits of the University's health center, recreational facilities, and science research buildings. 4. In South Campus, pharmacy, veterinary, and biomedical science students traverse newly constructed parts of campus featuring well- kept landscaping and modern architecture.

comparative

When you need to discuss the similarities and differences between two or more things, a comparative organizational pattern can be employed. In **comparative speeches,** speakers may choose to compare things a couple different ways. First, you could compare two or more things as whole (e.g., discuss all traits of an apple and then all traits of an orange). Second, you could compare these things element by element (e.g., color of each, smell of each, AND taste of each). Some topics that are routinely spoken about comparatively include different cultures, different types of transportation, and even different types of coffee. A comparative speech outline about eastern and western cultures could look like this.

Eastern vs. Western Culture (Comparison Arrangement)
Thesis: There are a variety of differences between Eastern and Western cultures. 1. Eastern cultures tend to be more collectivistic. 2. Western cultures tend to be more individualistic. 3. Eastern cultures tend to treat health issues holistically. 4. Western cultures tend to treat health issues more acutely.

In this type of speech, the list of comparisons, which should be substantiated with further evidence, could go on for any number of main points. The speech could also compare how two or more things are more alike than one might think. For instance, a speaker could discuss how singers Madonna and Lady Gaga share many similarities both in aesthetic style and in their music.



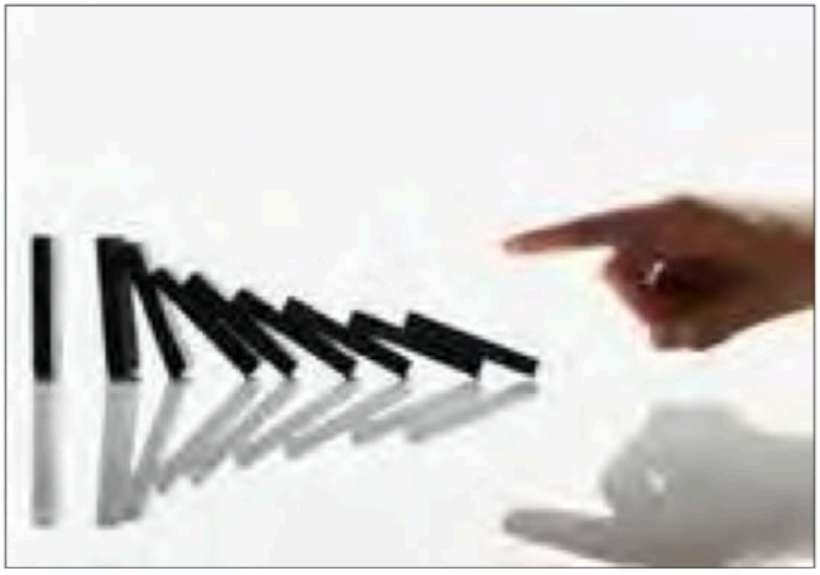
problem-solution

Sometimes it is necessary to share a problem and a solution with an audience. In cases like these, the **problem-solution speech** is an appropriate way to arrange the main points of a speech. One familiar example of speeches organized in this way is the political speeches that presidential hopefuls give in the United States. Often, candidates will begin their speech by describing a problem created by or, at the very least, left unresolved by the incumbent. Once they have established their view of the problem, they then go on to flesh out their proposed solution. The problem- solution style is especially useful when the speaker wants to convince the audience that they should take action in solving some problem. A political candidate seeking office might frame a speech using the problem-solution style (sse texbox).

> The difference between what we do and what we are capable of doing would suffice to solve most of the world's problems. ~ Mahatma Gandhi

Presidential Candidate'sSpeech (Problem-Solution Arrangement)
Thesis: The US energy crisis can be solved by electing me as president since I will devote resources to the production of renewable forms of energy. I. The United States is facing an energy crisis because we cannot produce enough energy ourselves to sustain the levels of activity needed to run the country. (problem) 2. The current administration has failed to invest enough resources in renewable energy practices. (problem) 3. We can help create a more stable situation if we work to produce renewable forms of energy within the United States. (solution) 4. If you vote for me, I will ensure that renewable energy creation is a priority. (solution)

This example illustrates the way in which a problem-solution oriented speech can be used to identify both a general problem (energy crisis) and a specific problem (incumbent's lack of action). Moreover, this example highlights two kinds of solutions: a general solution and a solution that is dependent on the speaker's involvement. The problem-solution speech is especially appropriate when the speaker desires to promote a particular solution as this offers audience members a way to become involved. Whether you are able to offer a specific solution or not, key to the problem-solution speech is a clear description of both the problem and the solution with clear links drawn between the two. In other words, the speech should make specific connections between the problem and how the solution can be engaged to solve it.



causal

Similar to a problem-solution speech, a **causal** speech informs audience members about causes and effects that have already happened. In other words, a causal organization style first addresses some cause and then shares what effects resulted. A causal speech can be particularly effective when the speaker wants to share the relationship between two things, like the creation of a vaccine to help deter disease. An example of how a causal speech about a shingles vaccine might be designed follows:

Shingles Speech (Cause-Effect Arrangement)
Thesis: The prevalence of the disease shingles led to the invention of a vaccine. I. Shingles is a disease that causes painful, blistering rashes in up to one million Americans every year. (cause) II. In 2006, a vaccine for shingles was licensed in the United States and has been shown to reduce the likelihood that people over 60 years old will get shingles. (effect)

As the example illustrates, the basic components of the causal speech are the cause and the effect. Such an organizational style is useful when a speaker needs to share the results of a new program, discuss how one act led to another, or discuss the positive/negative outcomes of taking some action.

> Every choice you make has an end result.~ Zig Ziglar

Choosing an organizational style is an important step in the speechwriting process. As you formulate the purpose of your speech and generate the main points that you will need to include, selecting an appropriate organizational style will likely become easier. The topical, spatial, causal, comparative and chronological methods of arrangement may be better suited to informative speeches, whereas the refutation pattern may work well for a persuasive speech. Additionally, Chapter 16 offers additional organization styles suited for persuasive speeches, such as the refutation speech and Monroe's Motivated Sequence (Monroe, 1949). Next, we will look at statements that help tie all of your points together and the formal mode of organizing a speech by using outlines.



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7.4: Connecting Your Main Points

Since main points are discrete and interconnected ideas, and since every speech contains more than one main point, it is necessary to strategically make connections between one point and another. To link the ideas of your speech, you will need to develop **signposts**, "words and gestures that allow you to move smoothly from one idea to the next throughout your speech, showing relationships between ideas and emphasizing important points" (Beebe & Beebe, 2005, p. 204). There are several ways to incorporate signposts into your speech, and it is important to do so since these small signals keep listeners engaged and informed about where you are in the speech. Transitional statements, internal previews, and summaries are all signposts that can help keep your speech moving along.

> If you cry 'forward', you must without fail make plain in what direction to go. ~ Anton Chekhov

One way to connect points is to include **transitional statements**. Transitional statements are phrases or sentences that lead from one distinct-but-connected idea to another. They are used to alert audiences to the fact that you are getting ready to discuss something else. When moving from one point to another, your transition may just be a word or short phrase. For instance, you might say "next," "also," or "moreover." You can also enumerate your speech points and signal transitions by starting each point with "First," "Second," "Third," et cetera. The textbox above offers a short list of transitional statements that are helpful when you need to show similarity or difference between the points. You might also incorporate non-verbal transitions, such as brief pauses or a movement across the stage. Pausing to look at your audience, stepping out from behind a podium, or even raising or lowering the rate of your voice can signal to audience members that you are transitioning.

Transitional Statements to Show Similarity and Difference	
To Show Similarity Between Points:	◈ "Similarly" ◈ "In the same way" ◈ "Also" ◈ "Likewise" ◈ "In other words"
To Show Difference Between Points:	◈ "However" ◈ "Unlike the last point" ◈ "On the other hand" ◈ "Conversely" ◈ "In opposition" ◈ "Another view is that"

connecting your main points

Since main points are discrete and interconnected ideas, and since every speech contains more than one main point, it is necessary to strategically make connections between one point and another. To link the ideas of your speech, you will need to develop

Another way to incorporate signposts into your speech is by offering **internal previews** within your speech. Internal previews, like the name implies, lay out what will occur during your speech. They tell the audience what to expect. Because audience members

cannot flip back and forth between pages, internal previews help keep them on track and aware of what to be listening for and what to remember. Internal previews are similar to the preview statements you will learn about in the chapter on introductions and conclusions (Chapter 9), except that they appear within the body of your speech and are more small-scale than the broad preview you should provide at the beginning of your speech. In general, internal previews are longer than transitional statements. If you were giving a problem-solution speech, you might include a variation of this internal preview: "Now that I have described the problems, let's now discuss some ways that we can solve these issues." The internal preview offers a natural segue from problems to solutions and makes audience members aware that another point is about to be made.

When speeches are longer than a few minutes and include complex ideas and information, speakers often include **summaries** within the body of their speech. Summaries provide a recap of what has already been said, making it more likely that audiences will remember the points that they hear again. Additionally, summaries can be combined with internal previews to alert audience members that the next point builds on those that they have already heard.

The speaker below has just finished discussing several reasons trout habitats need federal protection, and next he will discuss some ways that audience members can agitate for government action on these issues. His combined internal preview and summary would look something like this:

So, in review, trout habitats need federal protection because they bear a large pollution burden, they mostly exist on private property, and they are indicators of other environmental health issues. Next, I will discuss some ways that you can encourage the federal government to protect these habitats

In this example, the speaker first reminds audience members of what he has already addressed and then tells them what he will talk about next. By repeating the main points in summary fashion, the speaker gives audience members another opportunity to consider his main ideas.

> Good communication does not mean that you have to speak in perfectly formed sentences and paragraphs. It isn't about slickness. Simple and clear go a long way. ~ John Kotter

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7.5: Outlining Your Speech

Most speakers and audience members would agree that an organized speech is both easier to present as well as more persuasive. Public speaking teachers especially believe in the power of organizing your speech, which is why they encourage (and often require) that you create an outline for your speech. **Outlines**, or textual arrangements of all the various elements of a speech, are a very common way of organizing a speech before it is delivered. Most extemporaneous speakers keep their outlines with them during the speech as a way to ensure that they do not leave out any important elements and to keep them on track. Writing an outline is also important to the speechwriting process since doing so forces the speakers to think about the main points and sub-points, the examples they wish to include, and the ways in which these elements correspond to one another. In short, the outline functions both as an organization tool and as a reference for delivering a speech.

outline types

There are two types of outlines. The first outline you will write is called the **preparation outline**. Also called a working, practice, or rough outline, the preparation outline is used to work through the various components of your speech in an inventive format. Stephen E. Lucas (2004) put it simply: "The preparation outline is just what its name implies—an outline that helps you prepare the speech" (p. 248). When writing the preparation outline, you should focus on finalizing the purpose and thesis statements, logically ordering your main points, deciding where supporting material should be included, and refining the overall organizational pattern of your speech. As you write the preparation outline, you may find it necessary to rearrange your points or to add or subtract supporting material. You may also realize that some of your main points are sufficiently supported while others are lacking. The final draft of your preparation outline should include full sentences, making up a complete script of your entire speech. In most cases, however, the preparation outline is reserved for planning purposes only and is translated into a speaking outline before you deliver the speech.

A **speaking outline** is the outline you will prepare for use when delivering the speech. The speaking outline is much more succinct than the preparation outline and includes brief phrases or words that remind the speakers of the points they need to make, plus supporting material and signposts (Beebe & Beebe, 2005). The words or phrases used on the speaking outline should briefly encapsulate all of the information needed to prompt the speaker to accurately deliver the speech. Although some cases call for reading a speech verbatim from the full-sentence outline, in most cases speakers will simply refer to their speaking outline for quick reminders and to ensure that they do not omit any important information. Because it uses just words or short phrases, and not full sentences, the speaking outline can easily be transferred to index cards that can be referenced during a speech.



outline structure

Because an outline is used to arrange all of the elements of your speech, it makes sense that the outline itself has an organizational hierarchy and a common format. Although there are a variety of outline styles, generally they follow the same pattern. Main ideas are preceded by Roman numerals (I, II, III, etc.). Sub-points are preceded by capital letters (A, B, C, etc.), then Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, etc.), and finally lowercase letters (a, b, c, etc.). Each level of subordination is also differentiated from its predecessor by indenting a few spaces. Indenting makes it easy to find your main points, sub-points, and the supporting points and examples below them. Since there are three sections to your speech— introduction, body, and conclusion— your outline needs to include all of them. Each of these sections is titled and the main points start with Roman numeral I.

In addition to these formatting suggestions, there are some additional elements that should be included at the beginning of your outline: the title, topic, specific purpose statement, and thesis statement. These elements are helpful to you, the speechwriter, since they remind you what, specifically, you are trying to accomplish in your speech. They are also helpful to anyone reading and assessing your outline since knowing what you want to accomplish will determine how they perceive the elements included in your outline. Additionally, you should write out the transitional statements that you will use to alert audiences that you are moving from one point to another. These are included in parentheses between main points. At the end of the outlines, you should include bibliographic information for any outside resources you mention during the speech. These should be cited using whatever citations style your professor requires. The textbox entitled “Outline Formatting Guide” provides an example of the appropriate outline format.

> If you do not change direction, you may end up where you are heading. ~ Lao Tzu

Outline Formatting Guide

Title: Organizing Your Public Speech
Topic: Organizing public speeches
Specific Purpose Statement: To inform listeners about the various ways in which they can organize their public speeches.
Thesis Statement: A variety of organizational styles can used to organize public speeches.

Introduction

Paragraph that gets the attention of the audience, establishes goodwill with the audience, states the purpose of the speech, and previews the speech and its structure.
(Transition)

Body

I. Main point
A. Sub-point

B. Sub-point

C. Sub-point

1. Supporting point

2. Supporting point

(Transition)
II. Main point

A. Sub-point
1. Supporting point

a. Example

b. Example

2. Supporting point

B. Sub-point (Transition)

Conclusion

Paragraph that prepares the audience for the end of the speech, presents any final appeals, and summarizes and wraps up the speech.

Bibliography

preparation outline

This chapter contains the preparation and speaking outlines for a short speech the author of this chapter gave about how small organizations can work on issues related to climate change (see appendices). In this example, the title, specific purpose, thesis, and list of visual aids precedes the speech. Depending on your instructor's requirements, you may need to include these details plus additional information. It is also a good idea to keep these details at the top of your document as you write the speech since they will help keep you on track to developing an organized speech that is in line with your specific purpose and helps prove your thesis. At the end of the chapter, in Appendix A, you can find a full length example of a Preparation (Full Sentence) Outline rewarding. Like cleaning up a messy kitchen or organizing your closet, doing the more tedious work of organizing your speech is an activity you will appreciate most once it is done. From the very beginning stages of organization, like choosing a topic and

writing a thesis statement, to deciding how best to arrange the main points of your speech and outlining, getting organized is one step toward an effective and engaging speech or presentation.



speaking outline

In Appendix B, the Preparation Outline is condensed into just a few short key words or phrases that will remind speakers to include all of their main points and supporting information. The introduction and conclusion are not included since they will simply be inserted from the Preparation Outline. It is easy to forget your catchy attention-getter or final thoughts you have prepared for your audience, so it is best to include the full sentence versions even in your speaking outline.

using the speaking outline

Once you have prepared the outline and are almost ready to give your speech, you should decide how you want to format your outline for presentation. Many speakers like to carry a stack of papers with them when they speak, but others are more comfortable with a smaller stack of index cards with the outline copied onto them. Moreover, speaking instructors often have requirements for how you should format the speaking outline. Whether you decide to use index cards or the printed outline, here are a few tips. First, write large enough so that you do not have to bring the cards or pages close to your eyes to read them. Second, make sure you have the cards/pages in the correct order and bound together in some way so that they do not get out of order. Third, just in case the cards/pages do get out of order (this happens too often!), be sure that you number each in the top right corner so you can quickly and easily get things organized. Fourth, try not to fiddle with the cards/pages when you are speaking. It is best to lay them down if you have a podium or table in front of you. If not, practice reading from them in front of a mirror. You should be able to look down quickly, read the text, and then return to your gaze to the audience.

> Any intelligent fool can make things bigger and more complex... It takes a touch of genius - and a lot of courage to move in the opposite direction. ~ Albert Einstein

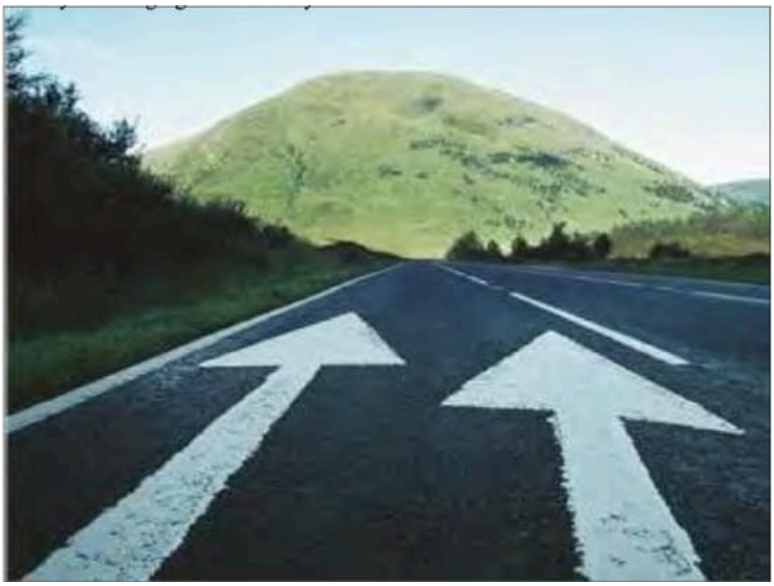
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7.6: Conclusion

If you have been using this chapter to guide you through the organizational stages of writing your speech, you have likely discovered that getting organized is very challenging but also very rewarding. Like cleaning up a messy kitchen or organizing your closet, doing the more tedious work of organizing your speech is an activity you will appreciate most once it is done. From the very beginning stages of organization, like choosing a topic and writing a thesis statement, to deciding how best to arrange the main points of your speech and outlining, getting organized is one step toward an effective and engaging speech or presentation.

Had Meg, the student mentioned in the opening anecdote, taken some time to work through the organizational process, it is likely her speech would have gone much more smoothly when she finished her introduction. It is very common for beginning speakers to spend a great deal of their time preparing catchy introductions, fancy PowerPoint presentations, and nice conclusions, which are all very important. However, the body of any speech is where the speaker must make effective arguments, provide helpful information, entertain, and the like, so it makes sense that speakers should devote a proportionate amount of time to these areas as well. By following this chapter, as well as studying the other chapters in this text, you should be prepared to craft interesting, compelling, and organized speeches.



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8: INTRODUCTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

8.1: Introduction

8.2: Functions of Introductions

8.3: Attention-Getting Strategies

8.4: Preparing the Introduction

8.5: Functions of Conclusions

8.6: Composing the Conclusion

8.7: Conclusion

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8.1: Introduction

Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, you should be able to:

1. List and describe the four functions of an introduction
2. List and describe the common types of attention getters
3. Describe and implement strategies for preparing introductions
4. List and describe the four functions of a conclusion
5. List and describe common types of conclusions
6. Describe and implement strategies for preparing conclusions
7. Apply chapter concepts in review questions and activities

First impressions count. Carlin Flora (2004), writing in Psychology Today, recounts an experiment in which people with no special training were shown 20-to 32- second video clips of job applicants in the initial stages of a job interview. After watching the short clips, the viewers were asked to rate the applicants on characteristics including self-assurance and likeability— important considerations in a job interview. These ratings were then compared with the findings from the trained interviewers who spent 20 minutes or more with the job applicants. The result: The 20-to 32- second ratings were basically the same as the ratings from the trained interviewers.

When we stand in front of an audience, we have very little time to set the stage for a successful speech. As seen from the example above, audience members begin evaluating us immediately. What we sometimes forget since we are so focused on the words we have to say is that we are being evaluated even before we open our mouths.

> He has the deed half done who has made a beginning. ~ Horace

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8.2: Functions of Introductions

Speech introductions are an essential element of an effective public speech. Introductions have four specific functions that need to be met in a very short period of time. Introductions must gain the audience's attention and their goodwill, they must state the purpose of the speech and they must preview the main points.

These first two functions of the introduction, gaining the attention of the audience and the good will of the audience, have most to do with getting the audience to want to listen to you. The other two functions of the introduction, stating the purpose of the speech and previewing the structure of the speech, have to do with helping the audience understand you.

gain attention and Interest

The first function of the introduction is to the get the attention AND the interest of the audience. The "and" here is important. Anyone can walk into a room full of people sitting quietly, and YELL AT THE TOP OF THEIR LUNGS. That will get attention. However, it will probably not garner much interest—at least not much positive interest.

> The secret of successful speakers? Passion and compassion with a purpose. ~ Lily Walters



Gaining attention and interest is essential if you want the audience to listen to what you have to say, and audiences will decide fairly quickly if they want to pay attention. Standing in front of an audience, slouched, hands in pockets, cap pulled low over your head, and mumbling, "my name is... and I am going to tell you about..." is an effective method of NOT getting attention and interest. Before you even open your mouth, your attire, stance and physical presence are all sending out loud signals that you have no interest in the speech, so why should the audience.

gain the goodwill of the audience

Over 2000 years ago, probably the pre-eminent speech teacher of all time, Aristotle (1982), noted the importance of gaining the goodwill of the audience:

> *...it is not only necessary to consider how to make the speech itself demonstrative and convincing, but also that the speaker should show himself to be of a certain character...and that his hearers should think that he is disposed in a certain way toward them; and further, that they themselves should be disposed in a certain way towards him (p. 169).*

When an audience has decided to listen to you—when you have gained their attention and interest—you still need them to think

favorably of you. The most effective way of doing this is by establishing your credibility to speak. Credibility is your believability. You are credible when the audience thinks you know what you are talking about. There are a number of methods for developing credibility, and you will use them throughout the speech. In the introduction, however, since you have comparatively little time to develop this credibility, your options are a bit more limited.

> To be persuasive, we must be believable. To be believable, we must be credible. To be credible, we must be truthful. ~ Hellmut Walters

Essentially, credibility has two elements: external credibility and internal credibility. **External credibility** is the type of credibility you as a speaker gain by association: use of sources that the audience finds credible, for example. In an introduction, you may be able to develop external credibility by this means, as we will see later in this section.

More importantly, given the immediate nature of an introduction, is **internal credibility**. You develop internal credibility as the speaker through specific actions. First, be appropriately attired for a public presentation. Second, make eye contact with the audience before you speak. Third, speak clearly, fluently and confidently.



You can also demonstrate internal credibility by demonstrating personal experience with or knowledge of the topic of your speech. Audiences are more positively disposed toward a speaker who has had experience with the topic of his or her speech. You can also demonstrate credibility and goodwill by showing a connection to your audience, demonstrating shared experiences or shared values.

A student giving a speech to a class about a month before spring break, right in the middle of an extended cold spell of a long Midwestern winter, offered this introduction as a way to show shared values and experiences:

I need everyone to close his or her eyes. All right, now I need everyone to picture how he or she got to school today. Did you bundle up with a hat, some mittens, boots, and two jackets because it's so cold outside before you left for class? While walking to class, was it cold? Did your ears burn from the icy wind blowing through the air? Were your hands cold and chapped? Now I want you all to think about the sun beating down on your body. Picture yourself lying on the beach with sand between your toes and the sound of the ocean in the background. Or picture yourself poolside, with a Pina Coloda perhaps, with tropical music playing in the background. Picture yourself in Mazatlan, Mexico (Townsend, 2007).



When speakers can identify with the audience and can show how the audience and the speaker share experiences, then the audience is more receptive to what the speaker has to say. The speaker is both more credible and more attractive to the audience.

> The secret of success is constancy of purpose. ~ Benjamin Disraeli

clearly state the purpose

This seems like such a basic step, yet it is one too often missed; and without this step, it is difficult for the audience to follow, much less evaluate and comprehend, a speech. In both basic composition classes and basic public speaking classes, this function is much the same: State the **thesis** of your speech. In all speeches, there should be that one sentence, that one statement that succinctly and accurately lets the audience know what the speech will be about and what the speaker plans to accomplish in the speech. Speakers, especially novice speakers but also experienced ones, are so concerned with the content of the speech that they forget to let us know about the purpose. A good thesis statement clearly announces the topic and purpose of the speech.

For example, a standard problem- solution speech should have a thesis statement that clearly states the problem and the need for a solution.

So right now let's see how dependence on fossil fuels costs you money and how use of ethanol as a supplement will save you money and save the world from energy dependence.

We know the topic and we know what the speaker will be attempting to prove. Once a thesis statement is clearly announced, the final function of the introduction is ready.

preview and structure the speech

The thesis statement lets the audience know what the speech is about and what you as speaker want to accomplish. The **preview** statement lets the audience know HOW you will develop the speech. A preview can be understood as a roadmap—a direction for the speech that leads to a successful conclusion. A preview lets the audience know what will come first, what comes next, and so on, to the end of the speech.

The preview is essentially an outline—an oral outline—of the basic organizational pattern of the speech. Previews help the audience follow the content because they already know the structure. Remember, though, that the basic structure of a speech is not linear, it is circular. Organizational patterns for speeches have a conclusion which, as we will see later, brings the audience back to the beginning.

Taking as an example the thesis statement from above, a sample preview for that speech could appear as the following:

To see how we can end our dependence on fossil fuels, we will first take a look at why we as a society are so dependent upon fossil fuels; secondly, find out what continues to cause this dependence; and finally, see how ethanol as a fuel supplement will help end this dependence and make the world a better place for all of us.



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8.3: Attention-Getting Strategies

Now that we have discussed the four basic functions of the introduction, let's look at ten potential attention-getting strategies. This is not an exhaustive list, and many of these attention getters can be combined or adapted to fit the

needs of the speaker, the occasion and the audience. Regardless of the specific strategy used for the introduction, all introductions still need to meet the four basic functions of an introduction.

> You will get good attention and people will be more inclined to listen to you if you can make a statement whereby their response is... "No kidding!" ~ Gael Boardman

tell a story

Human beings love stories. In all cultures, stories are used to communicate and share values, traditions and knowledge. Rhetorician Walter Fisher (1987) argues that human beings are best understood as homo narrans, as people who tell stories. As an introductory device, stories (and anecdotes and illustrations) are very effective attention getters.

First, stories have a built-in structure that everyone recognizes and expects. Stories have a beginning, middle and end, and this built-in structure allows the audience and the speaker to immediately share this experience.

Secondly, because this built-in structure, stories as attention getters lend themselves readily to a well- structured speech. You as speaker can start the story, get right to the climax, and then stop. You have the attention of the audience; you have shared experiences with them; and now you also have the conclusion of the speech all set to go—the end of the story.

> Speakers who talk about what life has taught them never fail to keep the attention of their listeners. ~ Dale Carnegie

refer to the occasion

You are presenting this speech for a reason. The audience is present at this speech for a reason. These reasons can provide you with an effective attention getter. Referring to the occasion is often used as an introduction to tribute speeches, toasts, dedication ceremonies and historical events. Speech scholar Lloyd Bitzer (1968) argues that all speeches are made at least in part in response to specific occasions, so referring to the occasion seems a good idea.

Bono (2006), lead singer of the rock group U2 and an activist for a number of humanitarian issues, addressed the 54th annual National Prayer Breakfast, and started his speech with these words:

Well, thank you. Thank you Mr. President, First Lady, King Abdullah of Jordan, Norm [Coleman], distinguished guests. Please join me in praying that I don't say something we'll all regret.



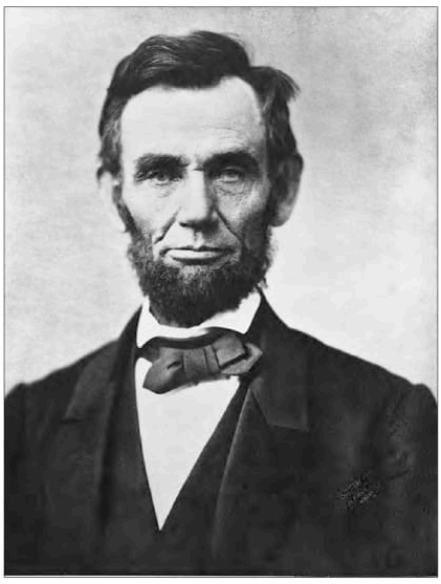
refer to recent or historical events

In addition to referring to the occasion, another effective attention- getting device is to refer to current events or to historical events. This style of reference again helps to create a shared experience for the speaker and the audience, as the speaker reminds all present that they have these events in common. Additionally, referring to current or historical events can also help establish goodwill and personal credibility by demonstrating that the speaker is aware of the relationship between this particular speech and what is going on in the world at that time, or what has occurred in the past.

Abraham Lincoln (1863), in one of the most well-known speeches in American history, refers both to historical events and current events in the beginning of the Gettysburg Address:

Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation or any nation so conceived and so dedicated can long endure.

History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be unlived, but if faced with courage, need not be lived again. ~ Maya Angelou



refer to previous speeches

Most of you reading this material are doing so because you are in a public speaking or introductory communication class of some kind. And that means that most of you will be presenting your speeches right after someone else has presented his or her speech. Even if you are not in a classroom situation, many other speaking situations (such as presenting at a city council or other government meeting, or taking part in a forum or lecture series) result in speakers presenting right after another person has spoken.

In these situations, speakers before you may have already addressed some of the information you were planning to discuss, or perhaps have given a speech on the same topic you are now planning to address. By referring to the previous speeches, you enhance your credibility by showing your knowledge of the previous speech, and you have the opportunity to either compare or contrast your speech to the previous speeches.



Edward Kennedy, at the 1980 Democratic National Convention, began his speech with a short tribute and acknowledgement to the previous speaker, member of Congress Barbara Mikulski:

> *Thanks very much, Barbara Mikulski, for your very eloquent, your eloquent introduction. Distinguished legislator, great spokeswoman for economic democracy and social justice in this country, I thank you for your eloquent introduction.*

refer to personal interest

One of the key considerations in choosing an appropriate topic for your speech is that you have a personal interest in that topic. An effective attention getter then, can be your description of that personal interest. By noting your personal interest, you will demonstrate your credibility by showing your knowledge and experience with this topic, and because you have a personal interest, you are more likely to present this information

in a lively and clear manner—again, enhancing your credibility. Referring to your personal interest in this topic in the introduction also helps you set the stage for additional anecdotes or examples from your personal experience later in the speech.

In speaking at the 1992 Democratic National Convention, Elizabeth Glaser began her speech by acknowledging her very personal interest in the topic:

I'm Elizabeth Glaser. Eleven years ago, while giving birth to my first child, I hemorrhaged and was transfused with seven pints of blood. Four years later, I found out that I had been infected with the AIDS virus and had unknowingly passed it to my daughter, Ariel, through my breast milk, and my son, Jake, in utero (Glaser, 1992).



use startling statistics

Startling statistics startle an audience and catch its attention, and encourage that audience to listen further as you present the context of the surprising statistic. Long-time radio announcer Paul Harvey is well known for the catch phrase “And now, the rest of the story.” The same function should be at work here. When you startle the audience, you set them up to want to hear the “rest of the story.”

Be careful, though. Use of startling statistics requires that you do a number of things. First, make sure the statistic is accurate. Second, make sure the statistic is relevant to the topic of the speech. Startling an audience with an irrelevant statistic diminishes the speech and decreases your credibility. Third, make sure you then present “the rest of the story.” You need to place this startling statistic in the context of your speech so that everything fits together.

One speaker used an effective startling statistic to help introduce a speech on the dangers of heart disease:

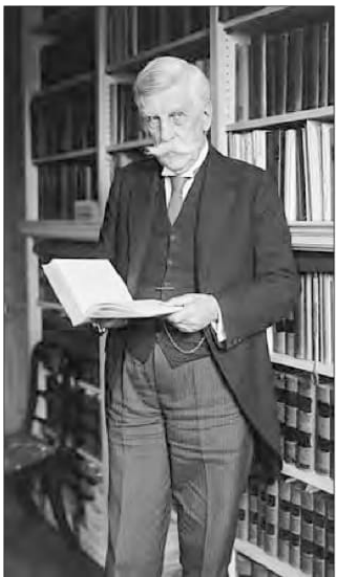
According to the Center for Disease Control, in the United States 26.6 million adults have heart disease. This would be about 12% of adults, or three people in this room.

use an analogy

Analogies compare something that your audience knows and understands with something new and different. For your speech, then, you can use an **analogy** to show a connection between your speech topic (something new and different for the audience) and something that is known by your audience.

Analogies can be effective because they use ideas, information and values of the audience to draw a connection to your speech topic—and to you as a speaker. Analogies create connections between you and the audience.

One very common (and often misquoted) analogy comes from the 1919 Supreme Court case of Schenck v United States. Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes used this analogy to support his reasoning that some forms of expression can be suppressed because they present a “clear and present danger.” Holmes noted that “[t]he most stringent protection of free speech would not protect a man falsely shouting fire in a theater and causing a panic” (Schenck vs. United States).



One good analogy is worth three hours discussion. ~ Dudley Field Malone

use a quotation

Using a quotation from a well- known figure, or using a quotation from a lesser-known figure if the quotation is particularly suitable for your speech topic, is a common attention-getting technique. When you quote that well-known figure, you are in a sense, borrowing some of that person's credibility for your speech, enhancing your credibility with the audience. Even when you use a less than well-known figure, the quotation can be effective if it nicely sets up your speech topic and is something to which your audience can relate.

Be careful with quotations, however. First, just using the quotation is not sufficient. You need to place the quotation in the context of your speech (as well as meet the other required functions of an introduction, of course). Second, it is easy to fall into a bad (and somewhat lazy) habit of simply finding a quotation and using it to start every speech. Third, simply using a quotation is no guarantee that your audience will find that quotation interesting or apt for the speech, and may also find the author of the quotation to be lacking in credibility—or your audience may simply not like the author of the quotation. Finally, beware of overly-long quotations (three or more sentences): Remember, this is just part of the introduction, not a main point of the speech.



In his farewell address, former President Ronald Reagan (1989) utilized a very short quotation to emphasize his feelings upon

leaving office.

People ask how I feel about leaving. And the fact is, "parting is such sweet sorrow." The sweet part is California and the ranch and freedom. The sorrow -- the goodbyes, of course, and leaving this beautiful place.

> Using rhetorical questions in speeches is a great way to keep the audience involved. Don't you think those kinds of questions would keep your attention? ~ Bo Bennett

ask a question

The use of questions can be a very effective way to get attention, whether those questions are rhetorical in nature, and are only meant to be considered and pondered by the audience, or are meant to be answered by the audience (generally a good technique to get audience involvement and interest).

Rhetorical questions are designed to allow you as speaker to get the audience to think about your topic without actually speaking the answer to the question. Rhetorical questions allow you as speaker to maintain the most control over a speech situation, and allow you to guard against an inappropriate or even offensive response.

Using questions that ask for real responses, however, has additional benefits, if a speaker feels comfortable with his or her audience, and is able to handle some impromptu situations. Getting the audience to physically and verbally involve themselves in your topic guarantees that they're paying attention. Using questions that lead to positive answers can also enhance your connection to and credibility with the audience.

Starting a speech with a question whether rhetorical or actual does require thought and practice on your part. You need to carefully consider the question and possible answers. Remember—even if you think the question is rhetorical, your audience may not know this and may answer the question. You also need to carefully deliver the question. Too often, speakers will use a question as an introduction—but then give the audience no time to either think about the answer or answer the question. You need to use timing and pause when starting with a question. You also need to be careful to use eye contact in asking questions, since you are above all asking for audience involvement, and your eye contact requests that involvement.

> It is not enough for me to ask questions; I want to know how to answer the one question that seems to encompass everything I face: What am I here for? ~ Abraham Joshua Heschel

In 1992, Ross Perot selected a little- known retired military figure, Admiral James Stockdale, as his Vice Presidential running mate. In the fall debates, Stockdale began his opening statement with two questions: "Who am I? Why am I here?" (Stockdale, 1992). The questions received applause and also laughter, though the later reaction to these questions was mixed at best. Some saw this as confusion on the part of Stockdale (Lehrer, 1999). Stockdale considered these two questions to illustrate his difference from the other two "mainstream" candidates, Al Gore and then Vice President Dan Quayle. Traditional politicians, Gore and Quayle were readily recognized as compared to Stockdale.

> Humor is the affectionate communication of insight. ~ Leo Rosten



use humor

The use of humor in an introduction can be one of the most effective types of introductions—if done well. Humor can create a connection between the speaker and audience, can get an audience relaxed and in a receptive frame of mind, and can allow an audience to perceive the speaker (and the topic) in a positive light.

Humor done badly can destroy the speech and ruin a speaker's credibility.

So first, a word of warning: None of us (those reading this, those teaching this class, and those writing this) are as funny as we think we are. If we were that funny, we would be making our living that way. Humor is hard. Humor can backfire. Humor is to a

large extent situation-bound. Most likely, there will be a number of members of your audience who do not use English as a first language (there are plenty of people reading this who are English as a Second Language learners). Much humor requires a native understanding of English. Most likely, there will be a number of people in your audience who do not share your cultural upbringing—and humor is often culture-bound. Be careful with humor.



In general, there is basically only one safe and suitable style of humor: light and subtle self-deprecation. In other words, you as speaker are the only really safe subject for humor.

Using humor to tell stories about other people, other groups, and even other situations, may work—but it is just as likely to offend those people, members of those groups, and people in that situation. Using self-deprecating humor will not offend others, but unless you can do this with a light and subtle touch, you may be harming your credibility rather than creating a connection between yourself and the audience.

Now, with all these warnings, you may want to stay far away from humor as an introduction. Humor can work, however.

Ann Richards, at the 1988 Democratic National Convention, used humor in the introduction to her Keynote Address. Knowing the audience, Richards was able to use partisan humor to establish a connection to the audience and score points against the political opposition.

I'm delighted to be here with you this evening, because after listening to George Bush all these years, I figured you needed to know what a real Texas accent sounds like.

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8.4: Preparing the Introduction

construct the introduction last

While this may seem both counter- intuitive and somewhat strange, you really do want to leave the development of the introduction for the last part of your speech preparation. Think of it this way: You can't introduce the ideas in your speech until you have determined these ideas.

The introduction is prepared last because you want to make sure that the body of the speech drives the introduction, not the other way around. The body of the speech contains most of your content, your arguments, your evidence, and your source material: The introduction sets up the body, but it should not overwhelm the body of the speech, nor should it dictate the content or structure of the speech.

Once you have the body of the speech complete, then you consider the introduction. With the body of the speech complete, it is relatively simple to complete two of the four functions of the introduction. You already know the purpose of the speech, so now you need to put it in a one-sentence statement. And you already know the structure and main points of the speech, so you can put that structure into the preview.

With the structural functions of the introduction complete, you can carefully choose and craft the type of introduction you wish to use, and concentrate on making sure that the introduction also fulfills the other two necessary functions: gaining the attention and interest of the audience, and gaining the goodwill of the audience.

make it relevant

Another reason why your introduction should be the last part of your speech you prepare is so that the introduction can relate to the speech. If you prepare the introduction before you prepare the body of the speech, your introduction may be wonderful—but completely disconnected from the rest of the speech.

When you consider the type of introduction you wish to use, you might note that many of the types could easily lend themselves to disconnection from the speech. A startling statistic may shock and get an audience's attention— but if it is not relevant to the speech itself, the introduction is at best wasted and more likely distracting to the audience. A quotation may be both profound and catchy—but if the quotation has little to do with the speech itself, the introduction is once again wasted or distracting.



Now, because your introduction will contain the thesis statement and preview, at least part of the introduction will be relevant to

the rest of the speech. However, the entire introduction needs to be relevant. If your audience hears an introduction that they perceive to lack connection to the rest of the speech, they will have difficulty following your main ideas, any attention and interest you may have gained will be more than off-set by the loss of goodwill and personal credibility, and your speech will not make the positive impression you desire.

> The wise ones fashioned speech with their thought, sifting it as grain is sifted through a sieve. ~ Buddha

be succinct

In most classroom speeches, and in most speech situations outside the classroom, the speaker will be on a time limit. Even if you are giving a speech in a setting where there is no stated time limit, most people will simply not pay attention to a speech that goes on and on and on.

Since you are on a time limit, and since, as noted above, the body of the speech is the heart of your speech, the introduction of your speech needs to be concise and succinct. There is no magic formula for the length of an introduction, and you do need to meet all four functions in your introduction. Many authors suggest that the introduction be no more than 10-15% of the total speaking time.



Most audiences expect you to introduce your speech and then move quickly into the body of the speech. While the expectations vary from culture to culture, most of the speaking situations in which you will find yourself will involve audiences that have been taught to listen for an introduction with a main thesis statement of some type. This is the standard speech format with which the majority of your audience will be familiar and comfortable. Failing to meet that expectation of your audience is in a sense a violation, and communication scholars Burgoon and Hale (1988) have shown that **expectancy violations** create difficulties in communication situations.

write it out word for word

In another chapter, you may have read and studied speech delivery techniques, and in your class, you may be encouraged to use an extemporaneous style of delivery for your speeches. That is good advice. However, introductions are best written out word for word and then delivered as memorized.

Introductions are succinct (as we learned above), and introductions have to do a lot of work in a short period of time. Because of this, you as a speaker need to carefully consider every word of your introduction. The best method for doing so is to write your introduction out word for word. Then you can more easily see if you have met all four functions, and can also have a very good idea just how long the introduction will be. Just as importantly, memorizing and then delivering the introduction word for word gives you the most control over this important (yet short) part of your speech.

Finally, in conclusion, let me say just this. ~ Peter Sellers

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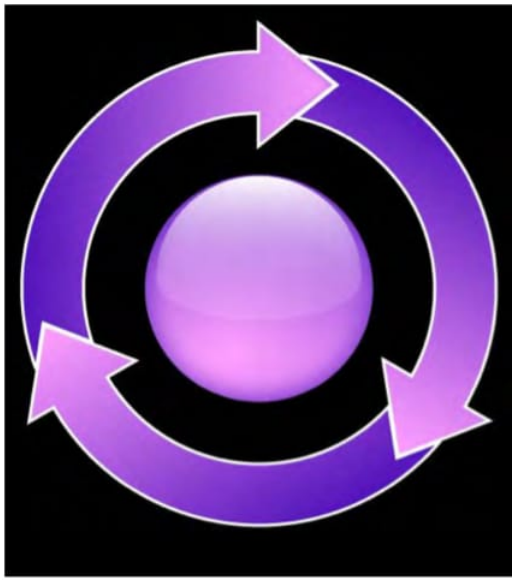
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8.5: Functions of Conclusions

So: You are at the end of your speech, and you can't wait to sit down and be done! You start speeding up your rate of delivery, but your volume goes down a bit because you are rushing and running out of breath. You finish the last main point of your speech and race off to your seat: That is not the best way to conclude a speech.

Just as with introductions, conclusions have specific functions to fulfill within a speech. And just as with introductions, there are a number of types of conclusions. In this section of this chapter, we will look at these functions, discuss the relationship between introductions and conclusions, and offer some strategies for preparing and delivering an effective conclusion.

The basic structure of a speech is not linear but circular. Speeches should not take you on a straight line from A to Z. Speeches should take you in a circle from A to Z. Speeches start at the top of the circle with the introduction, work their way all around the circle, and end up back at the top with the conclusion. All the parts fit together and flow together in this circle, and the conclusion takes you right back to the introduction—with an enhanced understanding of the topic.





prepare the audience for the end of the speech

A speech does not just stop—or, to be more precise, a speech should not just stop. A speech, effectively structured and delivered, should move smoothly from point to point and then to the conclusion. One of the most important functions of the conclusion is to prepare the audience for the end of the speech.

Throughout the speech, you have been providing the audience with verbal and nonverbal cues to where you are going in the speech. As you move to the conclusion, you need to continue to provide these cues. You can use language cues ("now that we have seen that we can solve this problem effectively, we can review the entire situation"), movement cues (physically moving back to the center of the room where you began the speech), and paralinguistic cues (slow the rate of the speech, use more pauses) to help prepare your audience for the end of the speech.

When you prepare the audience for the end of the speech, you let them know that they need to be ready for any final comments or appeals from you, and that they should be prepared to acknowledge you as a speaker.

present any final appeals

Depending on the type of speech you are presenting, you will be asking the audience for something. You may be asking them to act in a certain way, or to change their attitude toward a certain person or topic. You may be asking them to simply understand what you have had to say in your presentation. Regardless, one of the tasks of the conclusion is to leave the audience motivated positively toward you and the topic you have been presenting.

Psychologists and sociologists (as well as communication scholars) know that there is both a primacy andrecency effect in presenting information (Garlick, 1993). Essentially, people tend to better remember information presented first or last—they remember what they hear at the beginning of the speech or at the end. In presenting your appeals to the audience, you can take advantage of the recency effect to increase the likelihood of your audience acting on your appeals.

Former President Lyndon Johnson (1964), in a speech announcing a major policy initiative known as the Great Society, concluded his speech with a series of challenges and appeals to his audience.



For better or for worse, your generation has been appointed by history to deal with those problems and to lead America toward a new age. You have the chance never before afforded to any people in any age. You can help build a society where the demands of moralit, and the needs of the spirit, can be realized in the life of the Nation.

So, will you join in the battle to give every citizen the full equality which God enjoins and the law requires, whatever his belief, or race, or the color of his skin?

Will you join in the battle to give every citizen an escape from the crushing weight of poverty?

Will you join in the battle to make it possible for all nations to live in enduring peace -- as neighbors and not as mortal enemies?

Will you join in the battle to build the Great Society, to prove that our material progress is only the foundation on which we will build a richer life of mind and spirit?

There are those timid souls that say this battle cannot be won; that we are condemned to a soulless wealth. I do not agree. We have the power to shape the civilization that we want. But we need your will and your labor and your hearts, if we are to build that kind of society.

The appeals were significant in that the speech was delivered as a commencement address at the University of Michigan, at a time in American society when college and university students were protesting many government actions.

> When Demosthenes was asked what were the three most important aspects of oratory, he answered, Action, Action, Action. ~ Plutarch

summarize and close

A conclusion is structural in function. Just as the introduction must include a statement of the purpose of the speech, as well as a preview of the main ideas of the speech, the conclusion must include a restatement of the thesis and a review of the main ideas of the speech. The review and restatement are mirror images of the preview statement in the introduction. Structurally, the restatement and review bring the speech back to the top of the circle and remind the audience where we started. Functionally, they help cue the audience that the end of the speech is coming up.

Let's go back to the thesis and preview example on 9.3: Attention-Getting Strategies. The example was from a speech on ethanol, and the sample thesis was "So right now let's see how dependence on fossil fuels costs you money and how use of ethanol as a supplement will save you money and save the world from energy obsolescence."

In the conclusion of this speech, one effective method to summarize and wrap-up is to simply restate the thesis and preview—but in the past tense, since we have now heard the speech.

Today we have seen how dependence on fossil fuels costs you money and how use of ethanol as a supplement will save you money and save the world from energy obsolescence. We learned first why we as a society are so dependent upon fossil fuels in the first place, and then secondly we found out what causes this dependence, and third, we saw how ethanol as a fuel supplement will help end this dependence, and finally we discovered how simple it is to implement this solution and make the world a better place for all of us.

By restating the thesis and reviewing the main ideas, you once again take advantage of both the primacy and recency effect, and you create a complete and coherent structure to your speech.



end with a clincher

With conclusions, however, there are some additional forms you may wish to use, and there are some variations and adaptations of the introductions that you will want to use as you prepare your conclusions.

Earlier in this section when we discussed introductions, it was argued that stories are quite possibly the most effective form of introduction: Stories appear to be almost “hard-wired” into our individual and cultural make-up; and stories have a built-in structure. Stories, then, also make excellent conclusions, and can be used as conclusions in at least two ways. First, you can complete the story that you started in the introduction. Remember: You stopped right before the climax or denouement, and now, you can finish the story. Alternatively, you can retell the story, and this time the story will reflect what the audience has learned from your speech. Either method provides coherence and closure to the story and the speech.

Humor also remains an effective type of conclusion, but the same dangers with the use of humor discussed in the section on introductions applies to the conclusion. Still, effective use of humor leaves the audience in a receptive frame of mind, and, so long as the humor is relevant to the speech, provides a positive reminder to the audience of the main purpose of the speech.

Because of the functions of conclusions, there are two additional types of conclusions you may wish to consider: Appeals and Challenges.

> I appeal to you, my friends, as mothers: are you willing to enslave your children? You stare back with horror and indignation at such questions. But why, if slavery is not wrong to those upon whom it is imposed? ~ Angelina Grimke

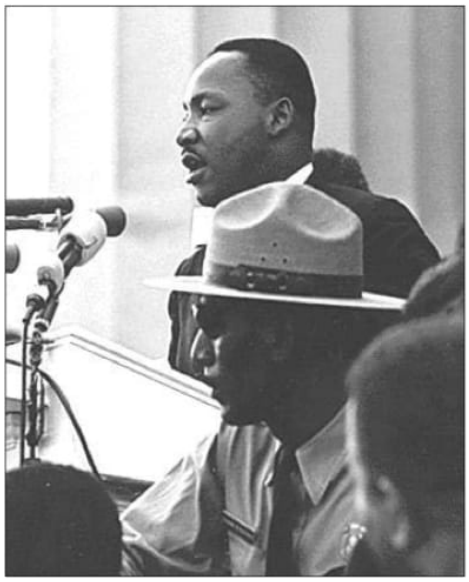
appeals and challenges

Since the conclusion comes at the end of the speech, it is appropriate to leave the audience with an appeal or a challenge (or a combination of the two). Similar in nature, appeals and challenges primarily divide by tone. Appeals are generally phrased more as requests, while challenges can take on a more forceful tone, almost ordering or daring audiences to engage in thought or action.

One of the most historically memorable and effective conclusions that utilized appeal and challenge was Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s I Have a Dream speech (1963).

> *And so let freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire. Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York. Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania. Let freedom ring from the snow-capped Rockies of Colorado. Let freedom ring from the curvaceous slopes of California. But not only that: Let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia. Let freedom ring from Lookout Mountain of Tennessee. Let freedom ring from every hill and molehill of Mississippi. From every mountainside, let freedom ring. And when this happens, when we allow freedom to ring, when we let it ring from*

every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual: Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!



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8.6: Composing the Conclusion

Just as with introductions, there are two important points to remember from the start. First, regardless of the form of conclusion, all summary remarks must meet certain required functions. Second, most conclusions will be a combination of two or more forms. There is a third point to remember about conclusions as well: Conclusions need to provide a match to the introduction, so that there is symmetry and completeness to the speech structure. Because of this, very often, the conclusion will be of the same form as the introduction. At the very least, the conclusion must refer to the introduction so there is a sense of completeness. Naturally enough, the forms of conclusions you can use and develop are similar to the forms of introductions you can use and develop.

> Eloquent speech is not from lip to ear, but rather from heart to heart. ~ William Jennings Bryan

prepare the conclusion

The conclusion is the last part of the speech to prepare.

What is common writing practice for the introduction is also true of the conclusion. As previously discussed, introductions and conclusions are similar in nature, they provide mirror images of one another other, and they are often of the same type. So you complete the introduction and conclusion at the same time. You do so to make sure that both elements work together.

As you prepare the conclusion, make sure as well that there are no false conclusions. You need to prepare the audience for the end of the speech—but you can only prepare them one time, and there can be only one end to the speech. By the same token, you need to make sure that the conclusion is not so abrupt or sudden that no one in the audience is aware you have completed your speech. Keep in mind as well that conclusions should comprise no more than 10% of the total speaking time.

Just as with the introduction, write out the conclusion word for word. This is your last chance to impress your audience and to make sure that they understand what you have said. Do not leave the conclusion to chance: write it out.

> Success depends upon previous preparation, and without such preparation there is sure to be failure. ~ Confucius

do not Include any new information

While it is important to present your appeal and any call to action in the conclusion, it is also important to NOT present new information in your conclusion. Remember: one of the functions of the conclusion is to prepare the audience for the end of the speech. If all of the sudden you present a new argument, new information, or a new point, you will confuse your audience.

If you present new information in the conclusion, you will also lose the ability to integrate this information with the rest of the speech. Remember that all elements of the speech need to flow together. New ideas at the very end of the speech will not enhance the flow of the speech. Additionally, because you are just now bringing in this information at the end of the speech, you will have no or very little time to develop these ideas, or to provide supporting information and documentation for these ideas.



follow the structure

The approach of using the built-in structure of the specific introduction/conclusion technique is as equally effective with quotations, questions and startling statistics as it is with stories.

You can use the same quotation at the end as at the beginning, but because of what we have learned in the speech, the quotation has a new and more developed meaning. You can also use a new quotation that draws a comparison and contrast to the beginning quotation, and also highlights what we have learned in the speech.

You can use the same question at the conclusion as you did at the beginning, and regardless of whether you ask for a response or pose it as a rhetorical question (and allow the audience to consider the answer), the answer will be different because of your speech. The audience will be able to see what you have accomplished in the speech. You can also pose a new question, one that again points out what the audience has learned from your speech.

Startling statistics, as quotations and questions, now take on new meaning because of all that you have told the audience in your speech. Reminding the audience of startling statistics should provide them with a key reminder of the main point of your speech.

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8.7: Conclusion

This chapter first shows how to structure and develop introductions and conclusions. Second, it argues that introductions function to gain audience attention and goodwill, and that introductions help structure the speech with a thesis statement and preview. Third, the chapter explains that conclusions help audiences remember the key ideas of a speech. Finally, the chapter reveals that there are a variety of different techniques for introductions and conclusions, and that many of the techniques for introductions apply to conclusions as well.

Introductions set the stage for the speech that is to come; conclusions make sure that the audience goes away changed in a positive manner. Short in time, they require careful thought and precise language to be effective. Done well, introductions prepare an audience to learn, and conclusions help to insure that an audience has understood the purpose of the speech.

> When you can do the common things of life in an uncommon way, you will command the attention of the world. ~ George Washington Carver

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9: SUPPORTING YOUR IDEAS

9.1: Introduction

9.2: Personal and Professional Knowledge

9.3: Library Resources

9.4: Internet Resources

9.5: Citing Sources and Avoiding Plagiarism

9.6: Conclusion

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9.1: Introduction

Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Combine multiple forms of evidence to support your ideas.
2. Differentiate between the three types of testimony, and know when to use each one.
3. Navigate the library holdings and distinguish between the types of information found in each section.
4. Evaluate source credibility and appropriateness for your speech.
5. Explain plagiarism and implement strategies to avoid it.
6. Apply chapter concepts in review questions and activities.

In 2010 celebrity chef Jamie Oliver won the Technology Entertainment Design (TED) Prize for his "One Wish to Change the World." In addition to a monetary award, he was given 18 minutes at the prestigious TED Conference in Long Beach, CA to discuss his wish: "Teach every child about food" (Oliver, 2010). This chef from Essex, England, had only a short window of time to convince an American audience to change their most basic eating habits. To get them to listen he had to catch their attention and demonstrate his credibility. He managed to do both using compelling research. He began by saying, "Sadly, in the next 18 minutes . . . four Americans that are alive will be dead from the food that they eat" (Oliver, 2010). He magnified the problem with a chart showing that many more Americans die from diet related diseases each year than die from other diseases, or even from accidents and murder. Along with the statistics, he offered testimony from people living in the "most unhealthy state in America" (Oliver, 2010). By weaving together multiple forms of research over the course of his brief talk, Oliver crafted a compelling case for a massive shift in the way that Americans teach their children about food.

Like Oliver, in order to give an effective speech, you will need to offer support for the ideas you present. Finding support necessitates research. Librarians have found that professors and students tend to have very different ideas regarding what it means to conduct research (Sjoberg & Ahlfeldt, 2010). Professors, who regularly conduct conduct scholarly research as part of their occupation, tend to envision a process filled with late nights in the stacks of a library (Leckie, 1996). Students, who regularly conduct research on where to eat or what to do as part of their weekend activities, tend to envision a less formal process that involves consulting the most popular web search results. The reality is that in order to properly support your ideas and craft a compelling speech, you will need a little of each approach, possibly combined with additional investigative tools with which you may be less-familiar. The wide variety of resources available for conducting research can be overwhelming. However, if you have a clear topic, recognize the purpose of your speech, and understand the audience you will be speaking to, you can limit the number of sources you will need to consult by focusing on the most relevant information.

> I take what I see work. I'm a strict believer in the scientific principle of believing nothing, only taking the best evidence available at the present time, interpreting it as best you can, and leaving your mind open to the fact that new evidence will appear tomorrow. ~ Adam Osborne

Once you know the topic of the speech, you can create the specific purpose statement. This is a one sentence summary of the goal of your speech, that may begin with the phrase, "At the end of my speech, the audience will be able to..". This statement guides your research as you piece together the supporting evidence to fill out the remainder of your speech. As you work through the types of support in this chapter, continually ask yourself, "Does this evidence support the goal of my speech?" If the source offers information that contradicts your specific purpose statement, hold on to it so that you can address the contradiction with evidence for your own idea. If it does appear to support your specific purpose statement, the next question you will ask is "Is this evidence appropriate for my audience?" Different types of appeals and evidence are better for different audiences. The best speeches will combine multiple forms of evidence to make the most convincing case possible. This chapter will help you research your speech by combining personal and professional knowledge, library resources, and Internet searches. It will help you to evaluate the sources you find and cite them to avoid plagiarism.



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9.2: Personal and Professional Knowledge

Professional public speakers are generally called upon to address a topic on which they are considered an expert. You may not feel like an expert in the area of your speech at this time, but you should consider whether you have any preexisting knowledge of the topic that might assist in crafting your speech. Do not be afraid to draw on your own experience to enhance the message.

> Do you know the difference between education and experience? Education is when you read the fine print; experience is what you get when you don't. ~ Pete Seeger

personal testimony

Walter Fisher argues that humans are natural storytellers. Through stories people make sense of their experiences, and they invite others to understand their lived reality as part of a community (Fisher, 1984). One compelling story that you can offer is your personal testimony. Although you are not a recognized authority on the topic, you can invite the audience to understand your firsthand experience. Offering your testimony within a speech provides an example of your point, and it enhances your credibility by demonstrating that you have experience regarding the topic. Additionally, personal testimony can enhance your speech by conveying your insight and emotion regarding the topic, making your speech more memorable (Beebe & Beebe, 2003; Parse, 2008). For example, if you are giving a speech on the importance of hunting to the local culture, you might explain how the last buck you shot fed your family for an entire season.

Since personal testimony refers to your experience, it is easy to assume that you can offer it with little preparation. However, psychologists have found that as people tell their stories they relive the experience (Gladding & Drake Wallace, 2010). As you relive the experience, your tendency will be to enrich the story with detail and emotion, which is part of what makes it memorable, but this practice may also make the story too long and distract from your point. If you plan to use personal testimony in your speech, practice the story to make sure that it makes the appropriate point in the time you have.

If you do not have personal experience with the topic, you may seek out other forms of lay testimony to support your point. Lay testimony is any testimony based on witnesses' opinions or perceptions in a given case ("Federal Rules," 2012). For example, if you are giving a speech about Occupy Wall Street, but you have not experienced one of their protests, you may choose to include statements from a protestor or someone who identifies with the goals of the movement.



interviews

Lay testimony can offer insight into the past and into areas where individual sentiments are relevant, but if you are called

upon to make predictions regarding the future or speak to an issue where you have little relevant experience, expert testimony may provide more convincing support (Beebe & Beebe, 2003). Expert testimony comes from a recognized authority who has conducted extensive research on an issue. Experts regularly publish their research findings in books and journals, which we will discuss later in this chapter, but you may need more information from the expert in order to substantiate your point. For example, if you were giving a speech about how to prepare for a natural disaster, you might interview someone from the Red Cross. They could tell you what supplies might be necessary for the specific types of disasters that are likely in your region. Interviews give people the chance to expand on their published research and offer their informed perspective on the specific point you are trying to make.

> My basic approach to interviewing is to ask the basic questions that might even sound naive, or not intellectual. Sometimes when you ask the simple questions like “Who are you?” or “What do you do?” you learn the most. ~ Brian Lamb

If you are seeking an interview with an expert, it is best to arrange a time and place that works for them. Begin the process with a respectful phone call or email explaining who you are and why you are contacting them. Be forthcoming regarding the information you are seeking and the timeline in which you are working. Also be flexible about the format for your interview. If you can meet in person, that is often ideal because it gives you the chance to get to know the person and to ask follow up questions if necessary. A good alternative to an in person interview is a video call using a service such as Skype. These services are often free to both callers and allow you to see and hear the person that you are interviewing. If neither of these options will work, a phone call or email will do. Keep in mind that while an email may seem convenient to you, it will likely require much more time from the expert as they have to type every answer, and they may not be as forthcoming with information in that format.

Before the interview, write down your questions. When you talk to someone, it is easy to get caught up in what they are saying and forget to focus on the information you need. Once you begin the interview work to establish rapport with the person you are interviewing. You can foster rapport by demonstrating that you respect their viewpoint, by taking turns in your interactions, by allowing them to finish their thought without interrupting, and by giving them the freedom to use their preferred forms of expression (Lindolf & Taylor, 2002). As you ask each question, take note of their response and ask for clarification or to follow up on information you did not anticipate. If you plan to record the interview, ask for permission in advance. Even if you are given permission to record, take paper and a writing utensil along to make back-up notes in case your recording device fails. When the interview is complete, thank the person and check to see whether they would welcome further contact to follow up if necessary.



After the interview, review your notes for insight that substantiates your specific purpose statement. Look for quotes that bring together the person’s expertise with their reflections on the topic you are addressing. It is likely that you will gain more knowledge from the interview than you can possibly include in a short speech. Work to synthesize the main points from the interview into a coherent statement supporting your topic. Remember to be careful about properly quoting exact phrases that the person used. Even if you paraphrase, properly cite the interview and credit the expert for all of the ideas they shared with you.

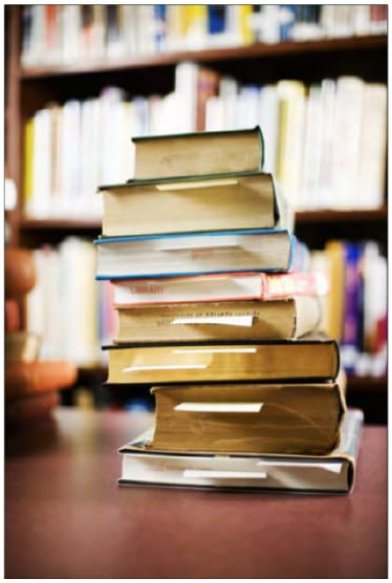
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9.3: Library Resources

The most well established way of finding research to support your ideas is to use the library. However, many students see the "library and its resources as imposing and intimidating, and are anxious about how they will manage in such an environment" (Leckie, 1996, p. 204). Don't let any twinge of anxiety keep you from exploring all that the library has to offer!

When conducting research, one of your best resources is the librarian. It is their job to know all about the resources available to you, and to help you succeed in locating the material that is most relevant to your assignment. Additionally, many libraries have librarians who specialize in particular areas of research and they will be able to help you find the best resources for your specific speech topic. Ideally, you should seek some information on your topic alone before asking for their assistance. Doing some initial research independently demonstrates to the librarian that you have taken ownership of the assignment and recognize that the research is ultimately your responsibility, not theirs. They will be better equipped to help you find new information if they know where you have already looked and what you have found. Most libraries contain at least three primary resources for information: books, periodicals, and full text databases.



books

Books are an excellent place to gain general knowledge. They contain comprehensive investigations of a subject in which authors can convey substantial amounts of information because they are not constrained by a strict page count. Some books are written by a single author while other books bring several scholars together in an edited collection. In both cases, you are likely to get a rich investigation of a single topic. For example, if you were giving a speech about stereotypes of black women in America, you might check out Melissa Harris-Perry's (2011) book Sister Citizen, because she brings together literature, theory, and political science, to offer a detailed discussion of the development of four prominent stereotypes. In the book she has enough space to offer compelling images, narratives, and social scientific evidence for the impact those stereotypes have on contemporary society.

> A library is not a luxury, but one of the necessities of life. ~ Henry Ward Beecher

Most libraries make finding books easy by indexing them in an online catalog. You should be able to go to the library's website and simply search for your topic. The index will provide the titles, authors, and other publication information for each book. It will also provide a call number. The call number is like an address for the book that indicates where it can be found on the stacks in the library. Before going to the stacks, take note of the title, author, and call number. The call number is the most important element, and the title and author will serve as backup for your search if you find that the books are out of order. If you find a book that is helpful, be sure to check the shelf nearby to see if there are other promising titles on that topic. If you cannot find the book that you are looking for, consider asking the librarian to help you borrow it from another library using a process called interlibrary loan.

The length of a book can make it seem overwhelming to someone researching a brief speech. In order to streamline your research, determine what you are looking for in advance. Are you seeking general background knowledge or support for a specific idea? Use the table of contents, headings, and index to guide you to the portion of the book that is likely to have what you are looking for. You do not need to read, or even skim, the entirety of every book. It is appropriate to skim for key words and phrases that pertain to your topic. Just be sure that once you find what you are looking for, you read enough of the section around it to understand the context of the statement and ensure that the book is making the point you think it is. Take note of the point that the book is making. Careful notes will help you remember the information that you gained from each source when you get home.

In addition to the traditional stacks of books present in your library, you will also find a reference section. This section contains books that do not delve deep into any subject, but provide basic summary knowledge on a variety of topics. The reference section contains books like dictionaries, which help define unfamiliar terms; encyclopedias, which provide overviews of various subjects; abstracts, which summarize books and articles; and biographical references, which describe people and their accomplishments. Since these resources do not require extensive time to process, and they are likely to be used briefly but regularly by many visitors, the library generally will not allow you to check out reference material. Take great care in drafting notes on the information that you find, and writing down the page numbers and authors according to the style preferred in your field of study. For more information on what you will need to record see the “style guides” section of this chapter.



periodicals

Books are comprehensive, but they can take years to get published. This means that the material in books is often at least a year old by the time of its publication date. If your speech depends on more recent information, you should turn to periodicals. Periodicals include magazines. newspapers, journals. and other publications printed at predictable intervals. These publications may appear weekly. monthly, or quarterly to update the research in a given field. Each periodical will offer a variety of articles related to a specific subject area.

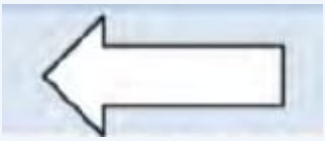
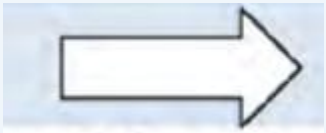
When researching. it is important to understand the difference between general interest periodicals and scholarly research journals. General interest periodicals include magazines and newspapers which provide a wide array of knowledge and keep readers up to date on the news within a larger cultural context. These publications are targeted toward the general public and they often use pictures and advertising to attract attention. Examples of respected general interest publications include: The Atlantic, Women's Health, The New York Times, and National Geographic (American Society of Magazine Editors, 2011). These publications are intended for profit. The information in them is edited to make sure it will appeal to the audience, is well written, and consistent with the commercial goals of the publication. General interest periodicals are good for context and current events information. If you are giving a speech about the importance of military intervention in Syria, you could use a general interest periodical like the New York Times to discover he most recent information on the conflict.



A newspaper is a circulating library with high blood pressure. ~Arthur Baer

If you are looking for more rigorous research. such as an international relations expert detailing what forms of aid are best for nations experiencing uprisings, you will need a scholarly research journal. A scholarly research journal is not for profit. It is designed to publicize the best research in a particular area. These publications are targeted toward scholars who specialize in a given subject or type of research. Examples of respected scholarly journals include: Journal of the American Medical Association, Harvard Lmy Review, and Quarterly Journal of Speech. These journals engage in a process of peer review in which scholars send their articles to the editor and the editor has other experts in the field examine the article to determine the quality of its research. writing, and fit with the scholarly goal of the publication.

Table 9.3.1 Follow the Citation Trail

If you are having trouble locating information on your topic, all you need is one relevant scholarly source and then you can follow the clues to locate more information by searching backward and forward.	
	
To search backward, skim the source's bibliography for earlier publications on your topic.	Now To search forward, use Google Scholar's "cited by" function to find more recent publications on your topic.

full-text databases

Rather than searching for a print copy of the latest periodical, many people now find articles on the computer using specialized electronic databases that contain the full text of periodicals. Most school libraries subscribe to a variety of databases which compile articles from journals within a particular specialization, industry, or field. Libraries tend to organize links to these databases on their website in two ways: (1) by the area of specialization, or (2) by the name of the database. You can use the list of specializations to identify databases that will pertain to your topic. For example, if you are interested in research on The Simpsons, you might go to your library's subject list, click on "Communication," and choose a database such as Communication and Mass Media Complete. Some topics will be found in databases with less obvious titles. For example, the abstractly named Lexis-Nexis database provides access to newspaper articles, legal research, and government documents. If your initial search of databases in the list of specializations is not fruitful, ask your professor or librarian for recommendations concerning the most appropriate database for your topic. Full-text databases allow you access to the citations, abstracts, and articles in the journals that they index. However, they sometimes limit access to the full text of articles that were published within a certain date range. If you find a title that looks promising, but is not available in the database you are searching, try the search in another database. Databases give you the opportunity to search for articles matching your desired time period. author. publication, or key words. Some databases, such as EBSCO, allow you to specify whether you are looking for general interest or scholarly publications.

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9.4: Internet Resources

search engines

A search engine can be your most important resource when attempting to locate information on the Internet. Search engines allow you to type in the topic you are interested in and narrow the possible results. Some of the most popular search engines include Google, bing, Yahoo!, and Ask (eBizMBA, 2012). These sites provide a box for you to type a topic, phrase, or question, and they use software to scan their index of existing Internet content to find the sites most relevant to your search.



Each search engine uses different algorithms and techniques to locate and rank information, which may mean that the same search will yield different results depending on the search engine. Based on the algorithms it is using, the search engine will sort the results with those it determines to be most relevant appearing first. Since each site is different, you should use the one that seems most intuitive to you. However, since their ranking systems will also be different, you cannot assume that the first few sites listed in your chosen search engine are the most relevant. Always scan the first few pages of search results to find the best resource for your topic. Skimming the content of the pages returned in your search will also give you an idea of whether you have chosen the most appropriate search terms. If your search has returned results that are not relevant to your speech, you may need to adjust your search terms and try a new search.

> We want Google to be the third half of your brain. ~ Sergey Brin

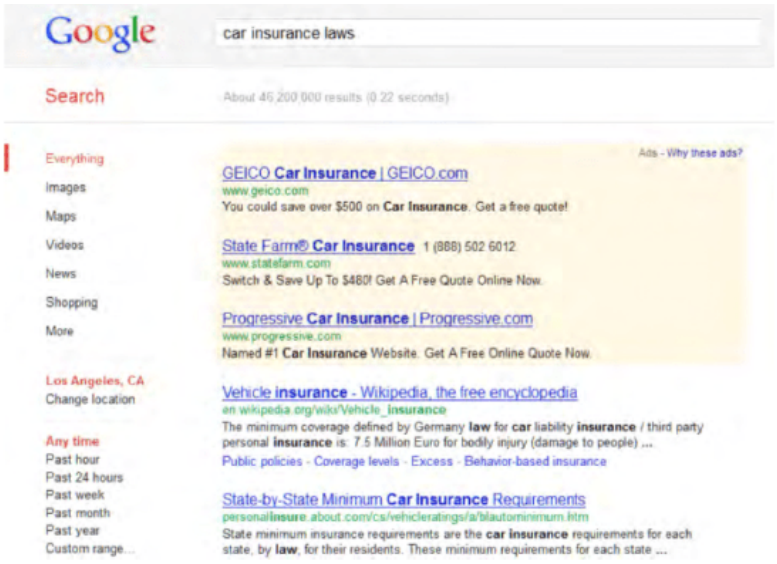


Figure 9.4.1 Sponsored Websites

Pay close attention to the first few sites listed in search results. Some databases allow “sponsored links” to appear before the rest of the results. If you are giving a speech about the dangers of rental cars, and you search rental car in Google, links to

companies like Hotwire.com, Orbitz.com, or National Rental Car are likely to appear first in your results. These sites may or may not be relevant to your search, but they have also paid for the top spot on the list and therefore may not be the most relevant. When search engines display sponsored sites first, they typically distinguish these from the others by outlining or highlighting them in a different color. For example, while Google lists advertisements related to your search on the right-hand side of the screen, they sometimes also put a limited number of sponsored links at the top of your search results list. The only distinction between these sponsored links and the rest of the list is a subtly shaded box with a small label in the upper right indicating they are "Ads" (see Figure 9.4.1).

defining search terms

In the early stages of research it may be helpful to simply search by topic. For example, if you are interested in giving a speech about revolutions in the Middle East, you might type that topic into the database and scan the sites that come up. As you are scanning, watch for other useful terms that arise in relation to the topic and jot them down for possible use in later searches. Since people may write about the topic in different terms than you tend to think about it, paying close attention to their language will help you refine your search. Another way to approach this is to consider synonyms for your search terms before you even begin.

Once you have a concrete topic and have begun to outline the arguments you want to make, you are likely to need more specific terms to find what you are looking for. In order to help with the search, you may use Boolean operators, words and symbols that illustrate the relationship between your search terms and help the search engine expand or limit your results (see Table 7.2 on the next page for examples). Although search engines regularly adjust their Boolean rules to avoid people rigging the site to show their own pages first, a few basic terms tend to be used by most search engines (BBC, 2012).

Table 9.4.1 Boolean Operators

OR	The word "OR" is one way to expand your search by looking for a variety of terms that may help you support your topic. For example, in a speech about higher education, you might be interested in sources discussing either colleges or universities. In this case using the term "OR" helps expand your search to include both terms, even when they appear separately.
AND/ +	Using the word "AND" or the "+" symbol between terms limits your search by indicating to the search engine that you are interested in the relationship between the terms and want to see pages which offer both terms together. If you are giving a speech about Hillary Rodham Clinton's work in the Senate, you might search Hillary Rodham Clinton AND Senate. This search would help you find information pertaining to her senate career rather than sites that focus on her as First Lady or Secretary of State.
NOT/-	Using the word "NOT" or the "-" symbol can also limit your search by indicating that you are not interested in a term that may often appear with your desired term. For example, if you are interested in hyenas, but want to limit out sites focused on their interactions with lions, you might search hyena –lion to eliminate all of the lion pages from your search.
""	Quotation marks around a group of words limit the search by indicating you are looking for a specific phrase. For example, if you are looking for evidence that human behavior contributes to global warming, you might search "humans contribute to global warming," which would limit the search far beyond the simple human + global warming by specifying the point you seek to make.

When you have a well-defined area of research, it is best to start as specific as possible and then broaden your search as needed. If there is something on exactly what you want to say, you don't want to miss it wading through a sea of articles on your general topic area. To make the best use of your search engine take some time to read the help section on the site and learn how their Boolean operators work. The help section will offer additional tips to assist you in navigating the nuances of that site and executing the best possible search.

Google

You may be at least somewhat familiar with Google, the name that has become synonymous with "internet search," and called "the most used and most popular search engine" (Tajane, 2011). You may already be adept at searching Google for a wide variety of information, but you may be less familiar with some of its specialized search engines. Three of these search engines can be particularly helpful to someone seeking to support their ideas in a speech: Google Scholar, Google Books, and Google Images.

> Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose. ~ Zora Neale Hurston

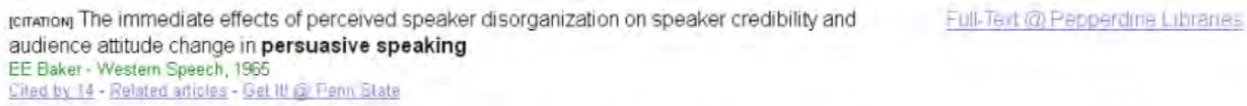


Figure 9.4.2 A Search Result with a Library Link

Google Scholar

The search engines listed earlier in this chapter will help you explore a diversity of sites to find the information you are looking for. However, certain topics and certain types of speeches call for more rigorous research. This research is typically best found in the library, but Google has an added feature that makes finding scholarly sources easier. On Google Scholar you can find research that has been published in scholarly journal articles, books, theses, conference proceedings, and court opinions.

Google Scholar is not only helpful for focusing on academic research; it has a host of features that will help to refine your search to the most helpful articles. You can search generally in *Google Scholar* and find citations of useful articles that will help support your ideas, but you may not always find the full text of the article. You can ask Google Scholar to help you find the full text articles available in your library's databases by telling it which library you want to search. To do this, click the "scholar preferences" link next to the search button on scholar.google.com. Then scroll down to the section titled "library links," and type the name of your school or library, then click "find library." When the search is complete, check the box next to the name of your library so that Google knows to include it in the search. Once you have included your library, the search results you get will have links that lead you to the articles available in your library's databases (see Figure 9.4.2). Clicking the links will lead you to your library databases and prompt you to log into the system as you would if you were searching on the library site itself.

> I find I use the Internet more and more. It's just an invaluable tool. I do most of my research on the Net now... ~ Nora Roberts

Even when you are linked to your library's databases, there may be articles in your search results that you do not have electronic access to. In that case, search your library catalog for the title of the journal in which your desired article appears to see if they carry the journal in hard copy form. If you still cannot find it, copy the citation information and use your interlibrary loan system to request a copy of the article from another library.

In addition to enhancing your database searches, Google Scholar can also help you broaden your search in two strategic ways. First, underneath the citation for each search result, you will see a link to "related articles." If you found a particular article helpful, clicking "related articles" is one way to help you find resources that are similar. Second, as you know, researchers often look through the bibliography of a helpful source to find the articles that author used. However, when you are dealing with an older article, searching backwards in the bibliography may lead you to more outdated research. To search for more recent research, look again under the search result for the link called "cited by." Clicking the "cited by" link will give you all of the articles that have been published since, and have referred to, the article that you found. For example, if you are giving a speech on male body image you might find Paul Rozin and April Fallon's 1988 article in the Journal of Abnormal Psychology comparing opposite sex perceptions of weight helpful. However, it would be good to have more recent research. Clicking the "related articles" and "cited by" links would lead you to similar research published within the past few years.

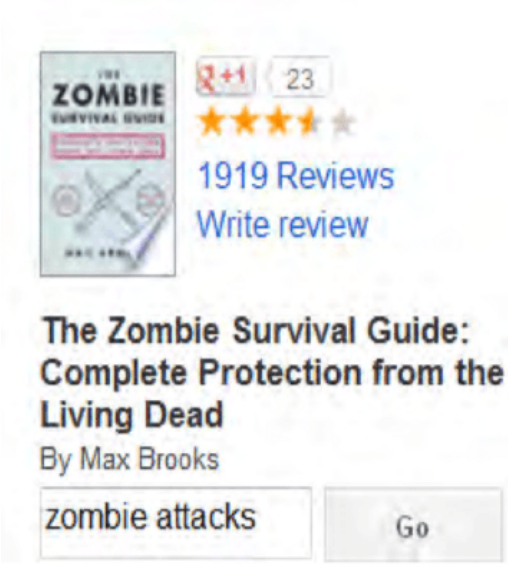


Figure 9.4.3 Search Inside the Book

Google Books

Just as *Google Scholar* can be used to enhance your research in scholarly periodicals, *Google Books* can be used to make your search for, and within, books more efficient. Some library catalogs offer you the ability to search for all books on a topic, whether that library has the book or not. Other libraries confine you to searching their holdings. One way to enhance your research is to search for books on *Google Books* and then use your library site to see if they currently have the book, or if you will need to order it through interlibrary loan. The other way that you can use *Google Books* is to make your skimming more effective. Earlier in this chapter you learned that you should strategically skim books for the information that you need. You can do that with *Google Books* by looking up the book, and then using the search bar on the left side of the screen (see Figure 9.4.4) to search for key words within the book. This search engine can help you identify the pages in a book where your terms appear and, with many books, give you a sample of that page to allow you to see whether the terms appear in the context you are searching for. Keep in mind that *Google Books* is a search engine; it is not a replacement for checking out the book in the library or buying your own copy. *Google Books* does not print books in their entirety, and often will omit pages surrounding a search result, so relying on the site to allow you to read enough of the book to make your argument is risky at best. Instead, use this site to help you determine which books to obtain, and which parts of those books will be most relevant to your research.

Google Images

Google Images may be useful as you seek visual aids to illustrate your point. You can search *Google Images* for photographs, charts, illustrations, clip art and more. For example, if you are giving a speech on the Nineteenth Amendment, you could add interest by offering a picture of the Silent Sentinel's picketing the White House. Alternatively, if you wanted to demonstrate the statistical probability of electing a woman to Congress, you could use *Google Images* to locate a chart displaying that information.



Since search engines match the terms you put in, it is possible that your topic could yield images containing adult content. To prevent receiving adult content, you can use the “safe search” settings (located in the option wheel in the far upper right hand corner of the menu bar) to limit your exposure to explicit images. The setting has three options:

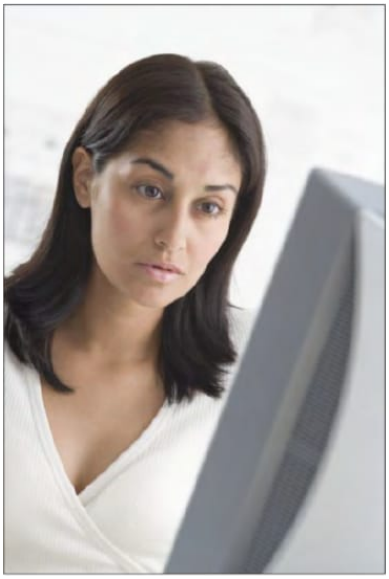
1. Strict filtering: filters sexually explicit video and images from Google Search result pages, as well as results that might link to explicit content.
2. Moderate filtering: excludes sexually explicit video and images from Google Search result pages, but does not filter results that might link to explicit content. This is the default SafeSearch setting.
3. No filtering: as you've probably figured out, turns off SafeSearch filtering completely (Google, 2012).

Remember that, as with other outside sources, you will need to offer proper source citations for every image that you use. Additionally, if you plan to post your speech to the internet or publish it more widely than your class, consider using only images that appear in the public domain so that you do not risk infringing on an artist’s copyright privileges.

> It is not ignorance but knowledge which is the mother of wonder. ~ Joseph Wood Krutch

websites

When you use a more general search engine, such as *Google* or *bing*, you are looking for websites. Websites may be maintained by individuals, organizations, companies, or governments. These sites generally consist of a homepage, that gives an overview of the site and its purpose. From the homepage there are links to various types of information on the original site and elsewhere on the Internet. These sets of links arrange information “in an unconstrained web- like way” (Berners-Lee, 2000, p.3), which opens up the possibility of making new connections between ideas and research. It also opens up the possibility of getting lost among all of the available sources. To keep your research on track, be sure to continue asking yourself if the sources you have found support your specific purpose statement.



Most websites are created to promote the interests of their owner, so it is very important that you check to see whose website you are looking at. Generally the author or owner of the site is named near the top of the homepage, or in the copyright notice at the bottom. Knowing who the site belongs to will help you determine the quality of the information it offers. If you find the site through a search engine and are not directed to its homepage, look for a link called “home” or “about” to navigate to the page containing more information about the site itself. In addition to knowing the owner, it is important to look for the author of the material you are using. For example, an article on a reputable news site like CNN.com may come from a respected journalist, or it may be the opinion of a blogger whose post is not necessarily vetted by the company itself. Use the section of the chapter on evaluating information to determine whether the site you have found is a credible source.

When you find websites that are both useful and credible, be sure to bookmark them in your Web browser so that you can refer to them again later. Your browser may call these bookmarks “favorites” instead. To bookmark a site, you can click on the bookmarking link in your browser or, if your browser uses tabs, you can drag the tab into a toolbar near the top of the window. If you are struggling with the bookmarking process, try the command CTRL+D on your keyboard or consult the help link for your Web browser.

> Don't leave inferences to be drawn when evidence can be presented. ~ Richard Wright

government documents

Governments regularly publish large quantities of information regarding their citizens, such as census data, health reports, and crime statistics. They also compile transcripts of legislative proceedings, hearings, and speeches. Most college and university libraries maintain substantial collections of government documents. Additionally, these documents are increasingly available online. Government documents can be helpful for finding up-to-date statistics on an issue that affects the larger population. They can also be helpful in identifying strong viewpoints concerning government policies. For example, looking at the Congressional testimony regarding nuclear safety after an earthquake destroyed the Fukushima nuclear power plant in Japan in 2011 could help you make a compelling case for safety upgrades at U.S. nuclear power facilities.

> Now, whenever you read any historical document, you always evaluate it in light of the historical context. ~ Josh McDowell

One of the most helpful resources for searching government documents is www.fedworld.gov. This site allows you to search Supreme Court decisions, government scientific reports, research and development reports, and other databases filled with cutting edge research. It also lists all major government agencies and their websites. Another excellent way to locate government documents is to use the Monthly Catalog of U.S. Government Publications. This index is issued every month and lists all of the documents published by the federal government, except those that are restricted or confidential. You can use the index to locate documents from Congress, the courts, or even the president. The index arranges reports alphabetically by the name of the issuing agency. The easiest way to search will be on the Government Printing Office website at catalog.gpo.gov. If you would prefer to work with hard copies of the reports, head to your library and search the subject index to find subjects related to your speech

topic. Each subject will have a list of documents and their entry number. Use the entry numbers to find the title, agency, and call number of each document listed in the front of the index (Zarefsky, 2005).



evaluating information

The large amount of information available in your library and on the Internet can seem overwhelming. Narrow your support by evaluating the quality and credibility of each source. To determine the quality of a source, look to see whether the information provided seems comprehensive. To determine whether or not the information is comprehensive, check to see that it thoroughly covers the issue, considers competing perspectives, and cites the sources where supporting material came from.

> *The popular online encyclopedia, Wikipedia, is a great resource for general information. It is a good place to start in order to determine search terms and potentially relevant strains of thought on a given topic. However, it is not the most credible source to cite in your speech. Since anyone can update the site at any time, information may be entirely inaccurate. When using Wikipedia, look for source citations and follow the links to original source material.*

First, check to see that your source not only discusses issues that pertain to your topic, but thoroughly explains the reasoning behind the claims it offers. Often you will already be familiar with the topic, but you will require the addition of strong reasoning to properly support your ideas. If your source cannot provide strong reasoning, it is not the best quality source. Second, determine whether the source considers competing perspectives. Debate strategists know that evidence can be found for multiple perspectives on any issue. If your source does not also recognize and consider opposing arguments, it is not the best quality source. Third, check to see that your source offers supporting data and citations for its arguments. If the source lacks relevant data to support its claims, does not include other citations, or if it includes non-credible citations, it is not the best quality source. It is fine to use a source that is weak in one of these areas if you still find it compelling, but know that you may need to back it up with additional credible information. If the source is weak in multiple areas, do your best to avoid using it so that it does not weaken your speech.



In addition to the quality, you should examine **source credibility**. When evaluating credibility, focus on the sources' qualifications, the **parity** of their message with similar sources, and their biases. One of the most important elements of credibility is qualification. Sometimes qualifications will be linked to a person's profession. For example, if you are talking about earthquakes, you might want the expertise of a seismologist who studies earthquake waves and their effects. However, professional expertise is not the only type of credibility. If you want to discuss the feeling of experiencing a major earthquake, testimony from a survivor may be more credible than testimony from a scientist who studied the event but did not experience it. When examining credibility, check to see that the person has the training or experience appropriate to the type of information they offer. Next, check to see whether the information in your chosen source aligns with information in other sources on the issue. If your source is the only one that offers a particular perspective, and no other source corroborates that perspective, it is less likely to be credible. Additionally, check for bias. All sources have bias, meaning they all come from a particular perspective. You must check to see whether the perspective of the source matches your own, and whether their perspective overwhelms their ability to offer reliable information on an issue. Also check to see whether the source is affiliated with organizations that are known to hold a particularly strong opinion concerning the issue they are speaking to. In your speech, make reference to the quality and credibility of your sources. Identifying the qualifications for a source, or explaining that their ideas have been used by many other credible sources, will enhance the strength of your speech. For example, if you are giving a speech about the benefits of sleep, citing a renowned sleep expert will strengthen your argument. If you can then explain that this person's work has been repeatedly tested and affirmed by later studies, your argument will appear even stronger. On the other hand, if you simply offer the name of your source without any explanation of who that person is, or why they ought to be believed, your argument is suspect. To offer this kind of information without disrupting the flow of your speech, you might say something like:

> *Mary Carskadon, Director of the Chronobiology/Sleep Research Laboratory at Bradley Hospital in Rhode Island, and Professor at the Brown University School of Medicine, explains that there are several advantages to increased amounts of sleep. . . Her work is supported by other researchers, like Dr. Kyla Wahlstrom at the University of Minnesota whose study demonstrated that delaying school start times increased student sleep and their a performance (National is Sleep Foundation, 2011).*



This sample citation bolsters credibility by offering qualifications, and identifies multiple experts who agree on this issue. You may be tempted to stop once you have found one source that supports your idea, but continuing to research and comparing the information in each source will help you better support your ideas. It will F also prevent you from overlooking contradictory evidence that you need to 9 be able to address.

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9.5: Citing Sources and Avoiding Plagiarism

style guides

Once you have gathered the appropriate sources to support your ideas, you will need to integrate citations for those sources into your speech using a style guide such as those published by the Modern Language Association (MLA), American Psychological Association (APA), or The Chicago Manual of Style (CMS). These style guides help you determine the format of your citations, both within the speech and in the bibliography. Your professor will likely assign a particular style guide for you to use. However, if you are not told to use a particular style, choose the one most appropriate to your area of study. MLA style is typically used by people in the humanities, APA is typically used by social scientists, and CMS can be used in either type of writing, but is most popular with historians (Miller-Cochran & Rodrigo, 2011). These style guides will help you record the places where you found support for your argument so that you can avoid plagiarism.

> Facts are stubborn things; and whatever may be our wishes, our inclinations, or the dictates of our passions, they cannot alter the state of facts and evidence. ~ John Adams

plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of presenting someone else's work or ideas as your own. Sometimes this is intentional, meaning people choose to copy from another source and make their audience think that the idea was original. Students in speech classes sometimes buy speeches from the internet, or repeat a speech written by a friend who took the class in a previous semester. These actions are cheating because the students did not do the work themselves, yet they took credit for it. Most instances of blatant cheating, such as these, are quickly caught by instructors who maintain files of work turned in previously, or who are adept at searching the Internet for content that does not appear original to the student. Consequences for this type of plagiarism are severe, and may range from failure of the course to expulsion from the school.

More often, plagiarism occurs by mistake when people are not aware of how to properly summarize and cite the sources from which they took information. This happens when someone incorporates words or ideas from a source and fails to properly cite the source. Even if you have handed your professor a written outline of the speech with source citations, you must also offer oral attribution for ideas that are not your own (see Table 7.3 for examples of ways to cite sources while you are speaking).

Omitting the oral attribution from the speech leads the audience, who is not holding a written version, to believe that the words are your own. Be sure to offer citations and oral attributions for all material that you have taken from someone else, including paraphrases or summaries of their ideas. When in doubt, remember to “always provide oral citations for direct quotations, paraphrased material, or especially striking language, letting listeners know who said the words, where, and when” (Osborn & Osborn, 2007, p.23). Whether plagiarism is intentional or not, it is unethical and someone committing plagiarism will often be sanctioned based on their institution’s code of conduct.



Table 9.5.1 Verbal Source Citations

Proper Written Source Citation	Proper Oral Attribution
“Your time is limited, so don’t waste it living someone else’s life” (Jobs, 2005).	In his 2005 commencement address at Stanford University Steve Jobs said,“Your time is limited, so don’t waste it living someone else’s life.”
“Eat food. Not too much. Mostly plants”(Pollan, 2009, p.1).	Michael Pollan offers three basics guidelines for healthy eating in his book, In Defense of Food. He advisesreaders to, “Eat food. Not too much. Mostly plants.”
“The Assad regime’s escalating violence in Syria is an affront to the international community, a threat to regional security, and a grave violation of human rights. . . . this group should take concrete action along three lines: provide emergency humanitarian relief, ratchet up pressure on the regime, andprepare for a democratic transition”(Clinton, 2012).	In her February 24 speech to the Friends of Syria People meeting, U.S. Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, warned that Assad was increasing violence against the Syrian people and violating human rights. She called for international action to help the Syrian people through humanitarian assistance, political pressure, and support for a future democratic government.
“Maybe you could be a mayor or aSenator or a Supreme Court Justice, but you might not know that until you join student government or the debateteam” (Obama, 2009).	In his 2009 “Back to School” speech President Obama encouraged students to participate in school activities like student government and debate in order to try out the skills necessary for a leadership position in the government.

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9.6: Conclusion

Remember that in order to convince an audience and appear credible, you will need to offer support for each of your ideas. Gathering testimony from experienced and expert individuals will lend excitement and credibility to your speech. Combining testimony with resources from the library, such as books, periodicals, and reference material, will help you back up your ideas. Examining credible Internet resources can also enhance your speech by yielding the most up-to-date evidence for the points you hope to make. With so much information available it is possible to support almost any idea. However, you will need to take care to ensure that you

offer the highest quality and most credible support. Do this by gathering a variety of sources and comparing the information to make sure the support is consistent across sources, and that you have accounted for any possible contradictory information. As you integrate the sources into your speech, remember to ask: “Does this evidence support my specific purpose statement?” and “Is this evidence appropriate for my audience?” Also, don’t forget to offer written and oral attribution for each idea. Using the various resources available you will likely find more evidence than you can possibly incorporate into one speech. These questions will assist you as you refine your support and craft the most compelling speech possible.

> Accuracy is the twin brother of honesty; inaccuracy, of dishonesty. ~ Nathaniel Hawthorne

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10: INFORMATIVE SPEAKING

10.1: Introduction
10.2: Functions of Informative Speeches
10.3: Role of Speaker
10.4: Types of Informative Speeches
10.5: Developing Informative Speeches
10.6: Conclusion

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10.1: Introduction

Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Explain why informative speeches are important
2. Recognize the functions of informative speeches
3. Identify the main responsibilities of the informative speaker
4. List and describe the four types of informative speeches
5. Discuss techniques to make informative speeches interesting, coherent, and memorable
6. Apply chapter concepts in review questions and activities

Every day you give others information in an informal way, whether you realize it or not. You give your grandparents driving directions to your college campus. You tell your professor about a breaking news story. You teach a friend how to ride a motorcycle. You explain to your significant other your spiritual philosophy. You show a co-worker how to operate the cash register. You help your younger brother build his first Facebook page. Or you share your summer travel experience with your roommate. Without a doubt, information plays a vital role in our everyday lives. In the dictionary, the term "inform" has several meanings, including to impart knowledge; to animate or inspire; to give information or enlightenment; to furnish evidence; to make aware of something; to communicate something of interest or special importance; to give directions; and to provide intelligence, news, facts or data. When you deliver an **informative speech**, your primary purpose is to give your audience information that they did not already know, or to teach them more about a topic with which they are already familiar.

Your ability to give informative speeches is one of the most important skills you will ever master, and it will be used both during the course of your career, and in your personal life. A pharmaceutical sales representative who can't describe the products' chemical composition, uses and side effects, will have trouble making a sale. A high school math teacher who can't explain algebra in simple terms will have students who will not learn. A manager who can't teach workers how to assemble microchips will have a department with low productivity and quality. And a little league coach who is unable to instruct players on batting and catching techniques will have a disadvantaged team. It is easy to imagine how difficult it would be to go about the business of our daily lives without the ability to give and receive information. Speeches to inform are the most common types of speeches (Gladis, 1999), so speech writers should give priority to learning how to construct them.

> Not only is there an art in knowing a thing, but also a certain art in teaching it. ~ *Cicero*
>
> A *speaker hasn't taught until the audience has learned.*

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10.2: Functions of Informative Speeches

People encounter a number of formal and informal informative presentations throughout their day, and these presentations have several consequences. First, informative presentations *provide people with knowledge*. When others share facts or circumstances associated with some topic, our comprehension, awareness or familiarity is increased. The speaker imparts information, and this information is turned into knowledge. A music teacher describes the difference between a note and chord as an introduction to music. When issuing a warning to a teenager, a police officer explains the nature of the moving violation. A travel agent clarifies for customers the policies for airline ticket refunds. Participants at a cultural fair are enlightened by a shaman explaining her spiritual practices. Knowledge helps us to understand the world around us, enables us to make connections, and helps us to predict the future.

> All men by nature desire knowledge. ~ Aristotle

Second, informative presentations *shape our perceptions*. These presentations can affect how people see a subject by bringing it to light, or may influence what is seen as important by virtue of directing attention to the subject (Osborn & Osborn, 1991). Information helps us to interpret our experiences, it shapes our values and beliefs, it may alter our self-concept, and it gives meaning to situations. Imagine you meet your new boss, and she is very curt and pre-occupied during the first staff meeting. You may at first perceive her as being rude, unless later you find out that just before your meeting with her she learned that her father had been hospitalized with a stroke. Learning this new information allowed you to see the situation from a different perspective. In the same way, informative presentations enable us to get a sense of "the big picture" and improve our ability to think and evaluate.



Some informative presentations may be aimed at helping listeners understand the number, variety, and quality of alternatives available to them (Hogan et al., 2010). Consequently, informative presentations also serve to *articulate alternatives*. A car sales associate might explain to you the features of one car in comparison to another car in order to help you differentiate between the models. A doctor might explain to your grandmother her treatment options for arthritis. A fitness trainer may demonstrate to you several types of exercises to help you strengthen your abdominal muscles and reduce your waistline. If you go to a temporary employment agency, a staff member may provide you will a range of job options that fit your qualifications. Successful informative presentations provide information which improves listeners' ability to make wise decisions, because they understand all of their options (Jaffe, 1998).

Finally, informative presentations *enhance our ability to survive and evolve*. Our existence and safety depend upon the successful communication of facts and knowledge. An informative speech "helps keep countries developing, communicates valuable and useful information in thousands of areas, and continues to change, improve or upgrade the lives of audiences" (Wilbur, 2000, p. 99). For thousands of years, cultural and technical knowledge was passed from generation to generation orally. Even today with the presence of the internet, you are still likely to get a good amount of information verbally. We have all seen "how to" YouTube

videos, and although these have a significant visual components, the “experts” still have to give a verbal explanation. Through meetings, presentations and face-to- face interactions, we gain information about how to perform and improve in our jobs. To keep our children safe, we don’t give them an instruction manual, we sit down with them and explain things. All of the knowledge we accumulate while we live will be passed down to (hopefully) improve on the lives of those who come after us. Much of this information will be passed down in the form of a presentation.

> Human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe. ~ H. G. Wells

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10.3: Role of Speaker

Now that you understand the importance of informing others, this next section will show you the speakers' responsibilities for preparing and presenting informative speeches.

informative speakers are objective

Most public speaking texts discuss three **general purposes** for speeches: to inform, to persuade, and to entertain. Although these general purposes are theoretically distinct, in practice, they tend to overlap. Even in situations when the occasion calls for an informative speech (one which enhances understanding), often persuasive and entertaining elements are present. First, all informative speeches have a persuasive component by virtue of the fact that the speaker tries to convince the audience that the facts presented are accurate (Harlan, 1993). Second, a well-written speech can make even the most dry, technical information entertaining through engaging illustrations, colorful language, unusual facts, and powerful visuals.

In spite of this caveat, when planning your informative speech your primary *intent* will be to increase listeners' knowledge in an impartial way. For instance, in a speech about urban legends (Craughwell, 2000), your specific purpose statement may be: "*At the end of my speech, my audience will understand what an urban legend is, how urban legends are spread, and common variations of urban legends*." The topic you choose is not as important as your approach to the material in determining whether your speech is informative or persuasive (Peterson, Stephan, & White, 1992). Can you imagine how speeches on witchcraft, stem cell research, the federal deficit, or hybrid cars could be written either to inform or persuade? Informative speeches need to be as objective, fair, and unbiased as possible. You are not asking your audience to take action or convincing them to change their mind. You are teaching them something and allowing them to decide for themselves what to do with the information. When writing your speech, present all sides of the story and try to remove all unrelated facts, personal opinions, and emotions (Westerfield, 2002).

informative speakers are credible

An objective approach also enhances a speaker's **credibility**. Credibility, or ethos, refers to an audience's perception that the speaker is well prepared and qualified to speak on a topic (Fraleigh & Tuman, 2011).

Table 10.3.1 Boost Your Credibility

Establish Expertise By:	◈ Citing reputable sources ◈ Making sure your facts are accurate ◈ Covering your points in enough detail to demonstrate your knowledge ◈ Revealing your personal expertise with the topic
Help the Audience Identify with You By:	◈ Wearing appropriate and attractive clothing ◈ Mentioning what you have in common ◈ Being friendly and enthusiastic ◈ Relating to listeners' situations, feelings, and motives

Table 10.3.1 Boost Your Credibility	
Show You are Telling the Truth By:	◈ Presenting both sides of an issue ◈ Sharing what motivated you to select your topic ◈ Having open, natural nonverbals that correspond to what you say ◈ Approaching the speech with ethics and positive intentions for your audience

Peterson, Stephan, and White (1992) explain that there are two kinds of credibility; the reputation that precedes you before you give your speech (antecedent credibility) and the credibility you develop during the course of your speech (consequent credibility). In many cases, the audience has no prior knowledge of the speaker, so they make judgments about the quality of the evidence and arguments in the speech. In addition, they look at and listen to the speaker to determine if s/he is a reliable source of information.

Audience members have no motivation to listen to a speaker they perceive as lacking authority or credibility --- except maybe to mock the speaker. To avoid this pitfall, there are at least three ways to boost your credibility as a speaker; by establishing your expertise, helping your audience identify with you, and showing you are telling the truth (see examples in Table 16.1). It seems to be common sense that we do not listen to speakers who do not know what they are talking about, who cannot relate to us, or who give the impression of being dishonest. However, in planning informative speeches, we can get so wrapped up in the topic that is easy to forget about the elements of credibility. Just remember that in order to teach, we first have to show that we are worthy of our audience's attention.

> In the end, you make your reputation and you have your success based upon credibility and being able to provide people who are really hungry for information what they want. ~ Brit Hume

informative speakers are know ledgeable

Good informative speeches contain a number of different source citations throughout the speech. To show that the information you present is accurate and complete, these sources should be up-to-date, reliable, unbiased, and directly relevant to your topic. Even if you plan to give a speech about an activity you have done all of your life, you will still need to seek out additional sources for your speech. By all means, you should cite and use your own experiences with the topic, but if you want to appear objective, you will need to show that your ideas and experiences correspond with others'. Using a variety of sound reference materials helps you appear well- informed and more trustworthy.

In our information age, people are fortunate to have unlimited and free access to information on virtually any topic they can imagine via the internet. Unfortunately, in addition to the credible information, the internet contains an abundance of garbage. Good speech writers know that it is important to avoid weak or questionable sources (e.g. Wikipedia, Britannica.com or Ask.com) when constructing their speeches. Start by asking what you know, find out what the experts know, and then move to find out what information other sources can provide (Gladis, 1999). You can search your library catalogue or*Amazon.com* to locate books (which provide details and depth), and then check out or order these books via interlibrary loan (often free) if they are not available in your library. Explain not only *how* something is done, but also *why* it is done for a great speech (MacInnis, 2006). This variety gives a speech depth and a level of interest that cannot be achieved merely by doing a Google search and using the first five websites that pop up. For additional ideas on locating sources, "*Sources of interesting information*" is provided at the end of this chapter.

> The cure for boredom is curiosity. There is no cure for curiosity. ~ Dorothy Parker

informative speakers make the topic relevant

When you are selecting your topic and thinking about what you want to accomplish in your informative speech, two factors should drive your decision. Foremost, you want to select a topic that holds a high degree of interest for you (i.e. the topic is meaningful to you). Students who feel at a loss for topic ideas should turn their attention to their own lives and activities. If you like to play video games, you might give a speech about how they are made. If you have a passion for ska reggae music, you might bring in

MP3 cuts to help define the boundaries of this music

genre. If you have to work three jobs to help pay for school, you could give a speech on effective time management. Genuine curiosity will make the research and preparation process easier. Further, when you have enthusiasm for a topic, it shows when you speak. On the other hand, if you do not really care about your topic, your audience is not likely to care either.

In addition to having relevance for you, it is crucial that you tie your topic directly to your listeners. Early in the speech, give listeners at least one reason why they should care about your topic and the ways in which the information will be beneficial or entertaining (Morreale & Bovee, 1998). Establishing a motive for your audience to listen to you is commonly referred to by the acronym **WIIFM** – "What's in it for me?" This is what the audience consciously or unconsciously asks when you start speaking (Urech, 1998). To establish WIIFM, you clearly link the topic to the listeners' values, attitudes, beliefs and lifestyle. Consider not only what the audience *wants* to hear, but also what they *need* to hear (Gladis, 1999; Maxey & O'Connor, 2006). Take the topic of retirement planning as an example. Younger listeners may not perceive this as relevant to their lives when they are not yet making a steady salary. But, if you can demonstrate how investing even a small amount every month can grow to a considerable nest egg by retirement age, and that getting into the habit of saving early can lower the number of years they have to work, the topic becomes more interesting for them.



Making the topic relevant for your audience can also mean that you show them how to apply the information immediately. In a speech on relaxation techniques, a speaker can lead the audience through a simple stress reduction exercise they can use at home. For a speech on handwriting analysis, listeners can be given paper, asked to write a sample sentence and shown how to interpret some points on the sample. If the audience members have laptops, a speaker can show them how to improve one of their digital photos. If listeners can use the information they learn quickly, they tend to remember it longer, and they are more likely to try the action again later (Nelson, et al., 2010).

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10.4: Types of Informative Speeches

In the last section we examined how informative speakers need to be objective, credible, knowledgeable, and how they need to make the topic relevant to their audience. This section discusses the four primary types of informative speeches. These include definitional speeches, descriptive speeches, explanatory speeches, and demonstration speeches.

Definitional Speeches

In definitional speeches the speaker attempts to set forth the meaning of concepts, theories, philosophies, or issues that may be unfamiliar to the audience. In these types of speeches, speakers may begin by giving the historical derivation, classification, or synonyms of terms or the background of the subject. In a speech on "How to identify a sociopath," the speaker may answer these questions: Where did the word 'sociopath' come from? What is a sociopath? How many sociopaths are there in the population? What are the symptoms? Carefully define your terminology to give shape to things the audience cannot directly sense. Describing the essential attributes of one concept compared to another (as through use of analogies) can increase understanding as well. For a speech on "Elderly Abuse," the speaker may compare this type of abuse to child or spousal abuse for contrast.

Regardless of the listeners' level of knowledge about the subject, it is very important in these types of speeches to show the relevance of the topic to their lives. Often the topics discussed in definitional speeches are abstract --- distanced from reality. So provide explicit, real-life examples and applications of the subject matter. If you were going to give a speech about civil rights, you would need to go beyond commonly held meanings and show the topic in a new light. In this type of speech, the speaker points out the unique and distinguishing properties or boundaries of a concept *in a particular context* (Rinehart, 2002). The meaning of "civil rights" has changed significantly over time. What does it mean today compared to the 1960s? How will knowing this distinction help audience members? What are some specific incidents involving civil rights issues in current news? What changes in civil rights legislation might listeners see in their lifetimes?

The purpose of **descriptive speeches** is to provide a detailed, vivid, word picture of a person, animal, place, or object. Audiences should carry away in their minds a clear vision of the subject (Osborn & Osborn, 1991). Consider this description of the Taj Mahal in Agra, India by Steve Cassidy (edited for length).

> *To gaze in wonder at that magnificent dome and elegant gardens will be a moment that you remember for the rest of your life. The Taj Mahal just takes your breath away. What is immediately striking is its graceful symmetry - geometric lines run through formal gardens ending in a white marble platform. Atop this platform is great white bulbous dome complemented by four towering minarets in each corner. The whole image shimmers in a reflecting pool flanked by beautiful gardens - the effect is magical. The first stretch by the reflecting pool is where most people pose for their photos. But we were impressed by the fresh, green gardens. As you approach through the gardens two mosques come into view flanking the Taj - both exquisitely carved and built of red sandstone.*

Sample Definitional Speech Outline	
Title: *"Life is suffering," and Other Buddhist Teachings* (Thompson, 1999)	
Specific Purpose: At the end of my speech, my audience will understand the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path in Buddhism	
Central Idea: Regardless of your religious beliefs, Buddhist philosophy teaches a number of useful lessons you can apply to your own life.	
I.	Four Noble Truths A. All life involves *dukkha* (suffering) B. Suffering is caused by *tanha* (longing for things to be other than they are) C. If this longing stops (*nirodha*), suffering will cease D. The way to eliminate longing is to follow the Eightfold Path

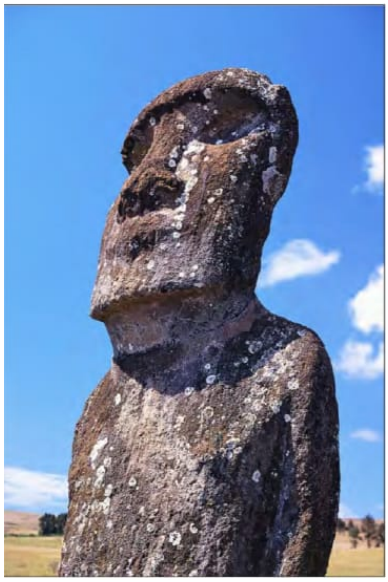
Sample Definitional Speech Outline	
II.	The Noble Eightfold Path (the Middle Way) A. Right view B. Right intention C. Right speech D. Right action E. Right livelihood F. Right effort G. Right mindfulness H. Right contemplation

In the descriptive speech, determine the characteristics, features, functions, or fine points of the topic. What makes the person unique? How did the person make you feel? What adjectives apply to the subject? What kind of material is the object made from? What shape is it? What color is it? What does it smell like? Is it part of a larger system? Can it be seen by the naked eye? What is its geography or location in space? How has it changed or evolved over time? How does it compare to a similar object? When preparing for the speech, try to think of ways to appeal to as many of the senses as possible. As an example, in a speech about different types of curried dishes, you could probably verbally describe the difference between yellow, red, and green curry, but the speech will have more impact if the audience can see, smell, and taste samples.

Sample Descriptive Speech Outline	
Title: *Easter Island: The Navel of the World* (Fischer, 2006)	
Specific Purpose: At the end of my speech, my audience will be able to visualize some of the main attractions on Easter Island.	
Central Idea: Easter Island hosts a number of ancient, mysterious, and beautiful attractions that make it an ideal vacation destination.	
I.	Stone Giants – “Moai” A. Average 13 feet high; 14 tons B. Play sacred role for Rapa Nui (native inhabitants) C. Central Ahu ceremonial sites
II.	Coastline activities A. Beaches B. Snorkeling & Scuba C. Surfing

Sample Descriptive Speech Outline	
III.	Rano Kau Chilean National Park A. Giant crater B. Sheer cliffs to ocean C. Sea birds

Be able to describe anything visual, such as a street scene, in words that convey your meaning. ~ Marilyn vos Savant



Explanatory Speeches

An **explanatory speech** (also known as a briefing) is similar to the descriptive speech in that they both share the function of clarifying the topic. But explanatory speeches focus on reports of current and historical events, customs, transformations, inventions, policies, outcomes, and options. Whereas descriptive speeches attempt to paint a picture with words so that audiences can vicariously experience it, explanatory speeches focus on the *how* or *why* of a subject and its consequences. Thus, a speaker might give a *descriptive* speech on the daily life of Marie Antoinette, or an *explanatory* speech on how she came to her death. Recall that definitional speeches focus on delineating concepts or issues. In this case, a speaker might give a *defintional* speech about the Emergency Economic Stabiliztion Act of 2008, or an *explanatory* speech on why the financial bailout was necessary for U.S. financial stability.

If a manager wanted to inform employees about a new workplace internet use policy, s/he might cover questions like: Why was a policy implemented? How will it help? What happens if people do not follow established policies? Explanatory speeches are less concerned with appealing to the senses than connecting the topic to a series of related other subjects to enhance a deep understanding (McKerrow, Gronbeck, Ehninger, & Monroe, 2000). For example, to explain the custom of the Thai *wai* greeting (hands pressed together as in prayer), you also need to explain how it originated to show one had no weapons, and the ways it is tied to religion, gender, age, and status.

Sample Explanatory Speech Outline
Title: *Giant Waves, Death, and Devastation: The 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami* (National Geographic, 2006)
Specific Purpose: At the end of my speech, my audience will be aware of the nature of the 2004 Tsunami and the destruction it caused.

Sample Explanatory Speech Outline	
Central Idea: The 2004 Asian Tsunami was one of the worst natural disasters in human history in terms of magnitude, loss of human life, and enduring impact.	
I.	Geological event A. Earthquake epicenter and magnitude B. Tsunami forms (waves reach up to 100 feet) C. Tsunami strikes land of various countries with no warning
II.	Human casualties reach almost 230,000 – top 10 of all natural disasters A. The countries and people involved B. Loss of food, water, hospitals, housing, electricity, and plumbing C. Threat of disease
III.	Ongoing effects A. Environmental destruction B. Economic devastation C. Psychological trauma

I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand. ~ Confucious

demonstration speeches

The most practical of all informative speeches, a demonstration speech shows listeners how some process is accomplished or how to perform it themselves. The focus is on a chronological explanation of some process (how potato chips are made), procedure (how to fight fires on a submarine), application (how to use the calendar function in Outlook), or course of action (how court cases proceed to Supreme Court status). Speakers might focus on processes that have a series of steps with a specific beginning and end (how to sell a home by yourself) or the process may be continuous (how to maintain the hard drive on your computer to prevent crashes). Demonstration speeches can be challenging to write due to the fact that the process may involve several objects, a set of tools, materials, or a number of related relationships or events (Rinehart, 2002). Nevertheless, these types of speeches provide the greatest opportunity for audience members to get involved or apply the information later.

When preparing this speech, remember first to keep the safety of the audience in mind. One speaker severely burned his professor when he accidently spilled hot oil from a wok on her. Another student nearly took the heads off listeners when he was demonstrating how to swing a baseball bat. Keep in mind also that you may need to bring in examples or pictures of completed steps in order to make efficient use of your time. Just think of the way that cooking demonstrations are done on TV --- the ingredients are pre-measured, the food is pre-mixed, and the mixture magically goes from uncooked to cooked in a matter of seconds. Finally, if you are having your audience participate during your presentation (making an origami sculpture), know what their knowledge level is so that you don't make them feel unintelligent if they are not successful. Practice your speech with friends who know nothing about the topic to gauge if listeners can do what you are asking them to do in the time allotted.

Sample Demonstration Speech Outline
Title: *How to Survive if You Get Stranded in the Wilderness* (U.S. Department of Defense, 2006).

Sample Demonstration Speech Outline	
Specific Purpose: At the end of my speech my audience will understand what to do if they unexpectedly become stranded in the wilderness.	
Central Idea: You can greatly improve your ability to stay alive and safe in the wilderness by learning a few simple survival techniques.	
I.	Size up the situation A. Size up the surroundings B. Size up your physical and mental states C. Size up your equipment (handout “What to Include in a Survival Kit”)
II.	Survival Basics A. Obtaining water B. Acquiring food C. Building a fire D. Locating shelter
III.	Finding help A. Call or signal rescue personnel B. Wilderness navigation C. Leaving “bread crumb” trail

Any subject can be made interesting, and therefore any subject can be made boring. ~ Hilaire Belloc

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10.5: Developing Informative Speeches

The first sections of this chapter explained the importance of informative speaking, the functions of informative speeches, the role of the informative speaker, and the four major types of informative speeches. This final section of the chapter discusses three goals in developing informative speeches and advice for increasing the effectiveness of your speech. These three goals include 1) arousing the interest of your audience, 2) presenting information in a way that can be understood, and 3) helping the audience remember what you have said (Fujishin, 2000).

generate and maintain interest

Use Attention-Getting Elements

Before you capture the interest of an audience, you have to get their attention. As you know, attention getters are used in the introduction of a speech, but **attention getters** can also be used throughout your speech to maintain an audience's attention. There are a number of techniques you can use that will naturally draw listeners' attention (German, et al., 2010).

Intensity refers to something that has a high or extreme degree of emotion, color, volume, strength or other defining characteristic. In a speech about sharks' senses, showing how sharks smell 10,000 times better than humans would be an example of the intensity principle.



Novelty involves those things that are new or unusual. Discussing the recent invention of the flesh-eating mushroom death suit developed by Jae Rhim Lee would be novel. This suit is designed to help bodies decompose naturally above ground to avoid the use of dangerous embalming chemicals.

Contrast can also be used to draw attention through comparison to something that is different or opposite. This works best when the differences are significant. If you were showing the audience how to make hot sauce, and you showed a bar graph comparing the scoville units (level of hotness) of different chili peppers, this would be contrast. Jalapenos rate at 2500 – 8000 scoville units, habaneros rate at 100,000 – 350,000, and the naga jolokia rates at 855,000 – 1,041,241.



Audiences will also attend to movement or **Activity**. To employ this technique, the speaker can either use action words, well-chosen movements, an increased rate of speech, or s/he can show action with video. A speech describing or showing extreme sports with high levels of risk, a fast pace, or amazing stunts could be used to illustrate activity.

Finally, **Humor** can be used to draw attention to a subject or point, but be sure that it is relevant and in good taste. In a speech about the devotion of Trekkies (Star Trek fans), you could share the example of Tony Alleyne who designed and outfitted his flat in England as a replica of the deck of the Voyager. You could also direct the audience's attention to couples who have wedding ceremonies spoken in Klingon.



The wisest mind has something yet to learn. ~ George Santayna

Tell a Story

Story telling is not only the basis for most of our entertainment; it is also one of the best ways to teach an audience (Carlson, 2005). Also known as narratives, stories typically have a beginning in which the characters and setting are introduced, a rise in action, some complication or problem, and a resolution. Stories with compelling characters can be used in a creative way to weave facts otherwise dry and technical facts together (Walters, 1995), as in a speech about preparing a space shuttle for take-off from a mouse's perspective. Jaffe (1998) differentiates between three types of narratives that can be used in informative speeches. The

first type of story is a natural reality in which natural or scientific facts are brought together in chronological accounts, as in the formation of the Grand Canyon. The second narrative involves social realities which detail historic events, and the development of cultures and institutions. The last kind of story, the ultimate reality, is focused on profound philosophical and spiritual questions like “Where do we come from?” and “What happens to us when we die?”

Nursery rhymes and song lyrics familiar to the audience can also be used in an interactive way to get listeners interested in the topic (Maxey & O'Connor, 2006). In a speech about the global population explosion, you could ask audience to finish the phrase “There was an old woman who lived in a shoe…” Common commercials, lyrics to Beatles songs, holiday songs, and children’s games are universal.

Commercial jingles and song lyrics also work to get the audience involved. You could start a speech on boating safety with these lyrics: Just sit right back / And you'll hear a tale / A tale of a fateful trip / That started from this tropic port / Aboard this tiny ship (from*Gilligan’s Island*). Depending on the make-up of your audience, you might use lyrics from Johnny Cash, Billy Holiday, The Doors, The Beatles, Jay- Z, The Judds or the Arctic Monkeys. Just remember you probably can’t read all of the lyrics, you need to make sure the lyrics are directly linked to your topic, and you should be sure to cite the artist and song title.



Just for fun, can you name the artist who sang the lyrics below? Can you think of a speech topic that would correspond to the lyrics? (Answer at the end of the chapter)

Mystery Artist

Money, get away.
Get a good job with good pay and you're okay.
Money, it's a gas.
Grab that cash with both hands and make a stash.
New car, caviar, four star daydream,
Think I'll buy me a football team.

Be Creative

Speakers who are different are memorable (Maxey & O'Connor, 2006). To give your speech impact, be imaginative and dare to push the envelope of conformity. When you have spent time researching a topic, you may be able to envision ways to incorporate surprising facts, props or visuals that make your presentation different from others, and therefore more memorable. You could dress like a Shakespearian actor for a speech about the famous playwright. You could have the audience move their chairs and take part in a yoga demonstration. Or you might use your own audience plants to help with a speech entitled “Behind the Scenes of TV Talk Shows.” When one student got up to speak, he drew a row of houses on the blackboard and then began to drink a glass of water and speak about the life giving properties of water. After making a few comments, he threw the glass of water on the blackboard --- erasing most of the houses. Then he began his speech on the devastating effects of a flood (be sure to get

your professor's permission before you do something like this!). Another student giving a speech about "Clowning" had two actual clowns wait in the hall until she was ready to bring them in and show off their make-up and costumes. The speaker was wise to have her cohorts in the room just long enough to make the point (but not the entire time which would distract from the speaker), and the audience was attentive and grateful for the variety. Hanks and Parry (1991) explain that anyone can be creative, if s/he wants to be and is willing to make the effort.

Table 10.5.1 Tips for Jump Starting Your Creativity
From *Everyday Creativity* by Carlin Flora (2009)

- Take a different way to work
- Collaborate with others with complementary skills
- Seek inspiration in beautiful surroundings
- Start working on the problem right away
- Work in a blue room (it boosts creativity)
- Get a hobby or play music
- Think about your problem right before falling asleep

For some tips on how to foster your creativity, see Table 10.5.1. However, you need to remember that creativity is just a tool to help you teach your audience. Do not overlook the requirements of the occasion, the content of your research, or the needs of your audience in your zeal to be creative.

> The worst enemy to creativity is *self-doubt*. ~ *Sylvia Plath*

Stimulate Audience Intellect

Most people have a genuine desire to understand the world around them, to seek out the truth, and learn how to solve problems. The role of the informative speaker is to satisfy this desire to learn and know. To illustrate our quest for knowledge, consider the success of the Discovery Channel, the Learning Channel, the History Channel, the Food Network and other educational broadcasts. So how do we appeal to the minds of listeners? Think about all of the information we encounter every day but do not have time to pursue. Think about subjects that *you* would like to know more about. Ask what information would be universally interesting and useful for listeners. Many people fly on airplanes, but do they know how to survive a plane crash? People also share many ordinary illnesses, so what are some common home remedies? All of the people on earth originated someplace, so who were our ancient ancestors?

In addition to finding topics that relate to listeners, the information we supply should be up to date. For instance, Egypt recently had a revolution, and if you are giving a speech on travelling to the Pyramids, you should be aware of this. When you are talking about a topic that your audience is familiar with, you should share little known facts or paint the subject in a new light. In a speech about a famous person, you might depict what they are like behind the scenes, or what they were like growing up. In a speech about a new technology, you might also talk about the inventors. In a speech about a famous city, you could discuss the more infamous landmarks and attractions.



create coherence

Organize Logically

Several types of organizational patterns are discussed in the S*electing and Arranging Main Points* chapter. Using these as a starting point, you should make sure the overall logic of the speech is well thought out. If you were giving speech best suited to chronological order, but presented the steps out of order, it would be very difficult to follow. Those of you who have seen the movie *Memento* (which presented the sequence of events backwards), may have noticed how difficult it was to explain the plot to others. In a logical speech, the points you are trying to draw are obvious, the supporting materials are coherent and correspond exactly to the thesis, and the main points are mutually exclusive and flow naturally from start to finish.

Clarity of thought is critical in presenting information. As Peggy Noonan (1998, p. 64) argues:

The most moving thing in a speech is always the logic. It's never the flowery words and flourishes, it's not sentimental exhortations, it's never the faux poetry we're all subjected to these days. It's the logic; it's the thinking behind your case. A good case well argued and well said is inherently moving. It shows respect for the brains of the listeners. There is an implicit compliment in it. It shows that you are a serious person and that you are talking to other serious persons.

When planning your speech, ask questions like: What information needs to come first? What organizational pattern best suits the topic? What information must be shared or omitted to aid in audience understanding? What points or sub-points should be grouped together to aid listeners' understanding?



Table 10.5.2 Simplify Your Language

Low Impact	High Impact
Under the present circumstances	Currently
At the present time	Now
Are in agreement with	Agree
Due to the fact that	Because
Is fully operational	Works
In close proximity to	Near
Of sufficient magnitude	Big enough
In close proximity to	Near
Of sufficient magnitude	Big enough
In the event of	If
Each and every one	Each
In the course of	During
Never before or since	Never
Deciduous trees (jargon)	Trees that lose their leaves
Somnolent (jargon)	Drowsy
Awesome (slang)	Impressive
Put the bit on (slang)	Borrow
No brainer (cliché)	Easy decision
An arm and a leg	Expensive
Vertically challenged (euphemism)	Short
Gone to the great beyond (euphemism)	Dead

Use Simple Language

One common mistake that speech writers make when they are writing their speech is to use the same language that they would use in a written document. Experienced speech writers know that simple language and ideas are easier to understand than complex ones. “Clear speaking is not an alternative to intelligent discourse, but rather an enabler of intelligent discourse” (Carlson, 2005, p. 79). Did you know that Lincoln’s Gettysburg address contains only 271 words, and

251 of these words only have one or two syllables (Hughes & Phillips, 2000)? Another benefit of using simple language is that you are less likely to trip over or mispronounce simple words. Instead of “protracted,” say “drawn out.” Instead of “conundrum,” say “puzzle.” And instead of “loquacious,” say “talkative. As you are writing your speech you also want to avoid technical jargon, slang, clichés, and euphemisms. This type of language is difficult to understand and tends to be low impact. Compare the *Low Impact* language column with the *High Impact* column in Table 16.3 above to see examples of ways to make your language more powerful.

Avoid Information Overload

No one is given an unlimited amount of time to speak. You can’t cover everything that there is to know about your topic. And even if you could speak forever about everything there was to know about a subject, your listeners would never be able to take it all in. **Information overload** occurs when a person feels that they are faced with an overwhelming amount of information, with the effect that they

are unable to process it all or unable to make decision. So whether you have five minutes to give a presentation or three eight hour days, you will need to narrow and focus your speech topic and objectives. If you know that you have ten minutes to speak, you will not be able to cover “Car Maintenance for Dummies,” but you probably could give a good speech entitled “How to Change the Oil in Your Car.” When planning your speech, be sure to determine the amount of information that can reasonably be covered in the time allowed. In fact, rather than taking the entire allotted speaking time, you should get into the practice of speaking only for 90 – 95% of the time that you are given (Reynolds, 2008). More is not always better --- and your audience will appreciate it if you can skillfully make your point with time to spare.

> Today knowledge has power. It controls access to opportunity and advancement. ~Peter Drucker



make your speech memorable

Build in Repetition

Audience retention is determined by a number of factors including listeners’ interest, knowledge, physical and emotional state,

level of stress, background, and other competing demands (Fujishin, 2000). One way to help your audience remember the content of your speech is by repetition (Hughes & Phillips, 2000). There are three ways to incorporate repetition into your speech. The first form repetition involves restating your main points in your introduction, body and conclusion. When you do this, you will restate your points using different language --- not repeat the points word for word. The second form of repetition is where a word or a phrase is repeated in a poetic way, either throughout the speech or at a critical point in the speech. One example of this would be Abraham Lincoln's "government of the people, by the people, for the people." Another example can be found in Sojourner Truth's speech, delivered in 1851 at a women's rights convention.

... That man over there says that women need to be helped into carriages, and lifted over ditches, and to have the best place everywhere. Nobody ever helps me into carriages, or over mud-puddles, or gives me any best place! And ain't I a woman? Look at me! Look at my arm! I have ploughed and planted, and gathered into barns, and no man could head me! And ain't I a woman? I could work as much and eat as much as a man - when I could get it - and bear the lash as well! And ain't I a woman? I have borne thirteen children, and seen most all sold off to slavery, and when I cried out with my mother's grief, none but Jesus heard me! And ain't I a woman?

The final way to use repetition in your speech is through nonverbal communication. When you say the word "four" and you hold up four fingers, or when you verbally agree with a point and nod your head at the same time, you are reinforcing the idea verbally and nonverbally.

Appeal to Different Ways of Learning

Individuals have different learning styles, so some people are visual [V] learners, some are aural [A] learners, some learn by reading [R] and writing, and some learn kinesthetically [K] (Fleming, 2001). You can test your own learning style at www.vark-learn.com. Understanding your own and others' learning styles is useful for two reasons. First, you will find that you tend to teach others using your own learning style. Second, regardless of your own learning styles, you need to appeal to as many different learning styles as possible in your informative speech. To see how each learning style prefers to be taught, see the table below.

Unfortunately, since the ear alone is a very poor information gathering device, steps must be taken to improve retention. Typically listeners only retain only a small fraction of what is explained to them verbally. The first way to enhance retention is to appeal to as many of the senses as possible. Studies show that audiences retain 20 percent of what they hear, 30 percent of what they see, and 50 percent of what they hear *and* see (Westerfield, 2002). When the audience has an opportunity to *do* something (adding the kinesthetic sense), their retention increases to 80 percent (Walters, 1995). Or, if participation is not possible, a handout will raise retention to an impressive 85 percent – if the audience can review the handout at least once (Slutsky & Aun, 1997).

Table 10.5.3 The VARK Model of Learning

Learning Style	**Approach the Learner With...**
Visual Learners	Maps, charts, graphs, diagrams, brochures, flow charts, highlighters, different colors, pictures, word pictures, and different spatial arrangements
Aural Learners	Explanations of new ideas, large and small group discussions, lectures, audio recordings, stories, and jokes
Read/Write Learners	Lists, essays, reports, textbooks, definitions, printed handouts, readings, manuals, and web pages
Kinesthetic Learners	Field trips, hands-on projects, sensory stimulations, laboratories, recipes and solutions to problems, and collections of samples
From Hawk and Shaw (2007, p. 7)and Fleming (2001).	

Another way to help your listeners remember is by the use of techniques like *association*, linking the new topic to things that the audience knows about or already understands. If you were giving a speech about rugby, you might compare it to soccer and football to help the audience understand the rules. The use of *acronyms* also aids retention. On the *"Krusty Krab Training Video"* episode of *Spongebob Squarepants* (a spoof on corporate training videos), they use the acronym "POOP." When I asked my then eight- year-old son if he remembered (several weeks after watching the episode) what "POOP" stood for, he immediately and correctly answered "People Order Our Patties." The final technique to help audiences remember information is the*implicity criterion*. Information is best retained when it is explained from top to bottom (rather than bottom to top), when events are presented from first to last (rather than last to first), and when information is presented in the positive voice (rather than in the negative voice) (Devito, 1981).

Use Visuals

Visual aids can be a very powerful and efficient way to present facts that might otherwise be difficult to convey verbally. The benefits of visuals used for informative speeches include increasing interest, understanding, retention, and the speed at which your audience can understand complex facts. We live in a mediated culture, where people are visually oriented. This means that they expect to be visually stimulated with pictures, graphs, maps, video images and objects. Speakers who do not make use of visuals may be at a disadvantage when compared to speakers who use them. This is assuming of course that the visuals enhance what you are saying and that you use them well. As you know, plenty of people use Power Point, and it does not necessarily make their speech better or more memorable.



Perhaps the best reason to use visuals aids during an informative speech is to help your audience understand a concept that may be difficult to understand just by explaining it. In a speech about heart bypass surgery, would it be better to verbally describe the parts of the human heart, or to show a picture of it? How about a model of the heart? How about an actual human heart? Be sure to consider your audience! What if your speech is about an abstract concept that does not lend itself well to slick graphic representations? One way trainers get their audiences involved and make their presentations memorable is to provide handouts which the listeners complete (in part) themselves. You could use fill-in-the blank statements (where you provide the answer), open-ended questions where listeners can write their thoughts, and activities like matching or crossword puzzles. Regardless of the type of visual media you select for your speech, just make sure that it does not overpower you or the subject. Work to keep the audience's attention on you and what you are saying, and use the visual to complement what *you* have to say.

> Only one person in a million becomes enlightened without a teacher's help. ~ Bodhidharma

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10.6: Conclusion

The primary goal of informative speaking is to increase listeners' knowledge so they can better understand the world around them and can make more informed decisions. Discussing the impact a speaker can have on an audience, Perry Wilbur (2000, p. 99) explains:

Always keep in mind that if your talk helps just one listener in your audience, it has been successful. It is far more likely to have an impact on a number of listeners in your audiences. That is one of the real powers of spoken communication. Develop skill for getting the material across to audiences, and you can and will change lives for the better and make a worthy contribution as a speaker.

Informative speaking is a crucial skill that, if developed, will help you be more successful in both your personal life and your professional career.

When constructing an informative speech, you should strive to be objective, spend time developing your credibility, demonstrate that you have done your research, and link your subject to the lives of the listeners.

There are four main types of informative speeches. Definitional speeches present the meanings of concepts, theories, philosophies, or issues. Descriptive speeches provide detailed word pictures of people, animals, places, or objects. Explanatory speeches report events, customs, transformations, inventions,, policies, outcomes or options. Demonstration speeches show listeners how some process is done or how to do it themselves.

Several techniques can be used by speakers to increase the effectiveness of their informative speech. Speakers can arouse interest by using attention getting elements, telling a story, adding creative features, and stimulating the intellect of the audience. Speakers can create coherence through logical organization, the use of simple language, and by avoiding information overload. Finally, a speaker can make a speech more memorable via repetition, appealing to different ways of learning, and by using visuals appropriately.

> If you have knowledge, let others light their candles at it. ~Margaret Fuller

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11: DELIVERING YOUR SPEECH

11.1: Introduction

11.2: Methods of Delivery

11.3: Vocal Aspects of Delivery

11.4: Nonverbal Aspects of Delivery

11.5: Mastering the Location

11.6: Preparation, Practice and Delivery

11.7: Conclusion

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11.1: Introduction

Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Identify, define and give an example of each of the four main types of delivery
2. Determine the best speaking style for different types of speaking occasions
3. Identify and utilize voice aspects of speaking
4. Recognize and utilize the key "ingredients" of a well-performed speech
5. Adapt to the physical aspects of a speaking venue
6. Plan the speech in preparation for delivery/performance of a speech.

Imagine this. A speech topic is perfectly chosen; the content is nicely organized and flawlessly researched; a great deal of work was invested in preparing the "text" or "script" of the speech, but the speech is poorly delivered. Will the speech be effective? Will the audience stay alert and follow it? Will the audience properly interpret the speaker's intended message? These last questions contribute to the universal fear of public speaking. It is not the preparation of a speech that strikes terror in the hearts of so many, but the *performance* of a speech!

Don't lower your expectations to meet your performance. Raise your level of performance to meet your expectations. Expect the best of yourself, and then do what is necessary to make it a reality. ~ Ralph Marston

Since an audience does not usually read the text of a speech, but simply listens to it, all the preparation of the content by the speaker must be encoded into a complex combination of communication channels (words, sounds, visual elements, etc.) ready to be performed. The purpose of this chapter is to offer guidance to transfer the speech from the page to the stage.

There is an old Burlesque joke:

One man on a New York street comes up to another and asks,
"How can I get to Carnegie Hall?"

The second man answers, "PRACTICE."

Practice is the key to excellent performance. Trite as it might sound (or obvious), the basic foundation for a good speech delivery involves the two "P's": Preparation and Practice. There is not an actor, athlete, or musician worth his/her salary who does not prepare and practice. Even when a performance is given with spontaneity, the "P's" are crucial.

Stand-up comedy is everywhere; and those who are successful comedians do not make up their monologues on the spot. The phrasing, the pauses, the timing, is all rehearsed to assure the laughs will happen on cue. Good stand up comics are skilled in making it *look* as though they are making up their routine on the spot, which is part of the success of a good comedy performance. New speakers should think of themselves as performers facing an audience; actors ascending to stage; athletes stepping up to bat.

This chapter will describe the basic methods of delivery, and offer guidance in the aspects of presentation (such as voice, inflection, eye contact, and body and facial language). Some basic strategies for in setting up the room and **podium** for speaking will also be covered.

> It is delivery that makes the orator's success.~ Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe

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11.2: Methods of Delivery

There are four basic methods(sometimes called styles) of presenting a speech: manuscript, memorized, extemporaneous, and impromptu. Each has a variety of uses in various forums of communication.

manuscript style

The word **manuscript** is the clue to the style. The speech is written and the speaker reads it word for word to the audience. Originally, it was done from the hand-written paper manuscript. Today the **manuscript style** is common, but the paper is gone. Who reads the speech to the audience? Answer: Newscasters and television personalities. In the old days, the manuscript was hand-lettered on cue cards, which were held next to the camera lens. Then paper scrolls, like printed piano rolls were used, especially in Soap Operas. Today, a special teleprompter (working like a periscope) is attached to the camera so the newscaster is looking at the lens while reading.



Why is the manuscript important and in use? Precision. In the news- reporting industry, every fraction of a second counts because broadcast time is costly. Also, the facts and names must be exact and accurate so there is no room for error. Errors in reporting decrease the credibility of the news organization and the newscaster.

The most regular use of the teleprompter for **manuscript** delivery is by the U.S. President. In fact, the teleprompter, used by every President since Reagan, is called a “Presidential Teleprompter.” It is made of two pieces of glass, each flanking the podium. They reflect the text from a monitor on the floor like a periscope. The glass on both sides has the same text, and the speaker looks alternately from one glass to the other as though looking at the audience through the glass. The audience cannot see the projected text. The speeches a President gives will often reflect national policy, define international relationships, and the press will scrutinize every syllable. It has to be more than brilliantly accurate; it has to be impeccably phased. Professional writers and policy experts compose the speech; and the President delivers it as though he not only wrote it, but made it up on the spot. That is the skill of a good politician, actor, or speaker. Those who are not skilled using a teleprompter or manuscript will sound stilted and boring.

memorized style

The **memorized style** of speaking is when the manuscript is committed to memory and recited to the audience verbatim (word for word). In the days when **elocution** was taught, this was a typical approach. A speech was a recitation. The Optimists Club (a national organization) used to have a “Oratory” contest for high school students. Contestants wrote essays on a given theme, to create a speech at a specific time length (e.g.: three minutes). The essay was memorized and the delivery was judged by 1) the

quality of the writing, 2) the accuracy with which it was recited; and 3) the precise length of time. Such contests seem archaic by today's more casual and somewhat less formal standards.

Where is a memorized delivery style still common? Due to copyright laws and licensing contract agreements (other than scripts that are in the public domain), actors on stage are obligated to memorize the script of the play and perform it **verbatim** exactly as written. It is typical for speakers on high school and university speech and debate teams to memorize their competitive speeches. Corporate conventions often use large LCD monitors on the front of the stage as teleprompters. This allows the speaker to move more freely across the stage while sticking to his or her script. Some monologists (such as the stand-up comics mentioned at the start of the chapter) also use a memorized delivery style. In all cases, they create the impression that the speech is using the memorized delivery style if your speech is relatively short, or you know you will have to deliver your speech repeatedly such as a tour operator would.

Try This! Manuscript Delivery

Watch the local or national 6 p.m., 11 p.m. and 6 a.m. newscasts on the same T.V. station. Make notes on which news items repeat and how closely, or exactly, the phrasing is, even if different personalities are presenting the same item.

impromptu style

Theoretically, an "impromptu" speech is "made up on the spot." It is unprepared and unrehearsed. Often ceremonial toasts, grace before meals, an acknowledgement, an introduction, offering thanks and so on, fall into this category. While there are some occasions when a speech in those categories is actually prepared (prepare your acceptance for the Academy Award BEFORE you are called!), there are many occasions when there is little or no opportunity to prepare.

Impromptu speeches are generally short and are often given with little or no notice. Notes are rare and the speaker generally looks directly at the audience. It would be presumptuous and arrogant to declare rules for Impromptu Speaking. It is fair to explain that "impromptu" describes a range from absolutely no preparation, to a modest amount of preparation (mostly thought) and rarely incorporates research or the formalities of outlines and citations that more formal speeches would include.

> Be still when you have nothing to say; when genuine passion moves you, say what you've got to say, and say it hot. ~ D. H. Lawrence

An indelibly memorable example occurred to me when my siblings threw a surprise 10th anniversary party for my Mom (Margaret) and our stepdad (Lidio). It was the third marriage for both of them, and they were in their 60's. As soon as the yells of "surprise" subsided, Lidio picked up his wine glass and proposed a toast:

"I can't believe this surprise! I don't know what to say... um, Dino [his brother] when was that Yankee game Dad took us to when we were kids? It was 4th of July, wasn't it? 1939? And it was like it was yesterday; and today reminds me of that day, when Lou Gehrig came out to the mound. He was slow, but we were all cheering the 'Pride of the Yankees.' He wasn't playing anymore, he was too sick, but he looked around the crowd, and said 'I'm the luckiest man alive.' That's how I feel with you all here today; to celebrate our 10th anniversary. I'm here with you and with Margaret; and I'm the luckiest man alive."



The speech was short, emotionally charged, wonderfully articulate, and absolutely unprepared. The speech had one central emotionally charged message; simple, in words and phrasing, but complex by bringing an image of great sentimentality to the occasion. He was able to react to the moment, and speak “from the heart.”

In contrast, legendary magician Harry Houdini was often asked to perform for the amusement of his fellow passengers when sailing to Europe. I always associate “impromptu” with the stories of Houdini’s shipboard conjuring. Nothing was further from “impromptu.” The skill of the great magician was in making his illusions seem spontaneous with what appeared to be ordinary items that “happened” to be on hand. Houdini spent endless hours planning and rehearsing. The true illusion was that they “appeared” to be impromptu.

> Take advantage of every opportunity to practice your communication skills so that when important occasions arise, you will have the gift, the style, the sharpness, the clarity, and the emotions to affect other people.~ Jim Rohn

extemporaneous style

Sandwiched between the memorized and impromptu delivery styles you find the extemporaneous speech style. For this style, the speech is not completely written out. It is usually delivered with keynotes for reference. Most public speaking courses and books describe **extemporaneous** speeches as carefully prepared and rehearsed, but delivered using notes of key words and phrases to support the speaker. Phrasing is pre- rehearsed, words are pre-chosen, and the organization is fluid and well constructed. There should be no fumbling for words, no rambling, and length of time should be carefully monitored. The style does offer the speaker flexibility to include references to the immediate surroundings, previous speeches, news of the day, and so on.

> The trouble with talking too fast is you may say something you haven't thought of yet." ~ Ann Landers

How you develops the notes and what they look like are up to the individual, but a natural extemporaneous delivery is difficult if you are relying on a manuscript. Under no circumstances should the speaker be spending more than 20% of the speaking time looking at the notes. It would be ideal to practice so you only glance at your notes approximately 5% of the time of the speech.



Those who have limited experience in formal speaking find it helpful to write out the speech as though it were an essay, then read it, edit it, then create speaking notes from the text. This helps with editing and with thinking through the phrases. This process of public speaking was taught decades ago to my contemporaries and me and has fallen out of fashion. But it is a useful way of thoroughly thinking through the speech. If this procedure is used, it is advisable to rehearse the speech with the notes without the essay prior to delivering the speech. But be warned: having the fully written essay at the podium might detract from the delivery.

The extemporaneous style is the method most often recommended (and often required) in today's public speaking courses, and is generally the best method in other settings as well. While it is not the only method of delivering a speech, it is the most useful for presentations in other courses, in the corporate world and in pursuing future careers.

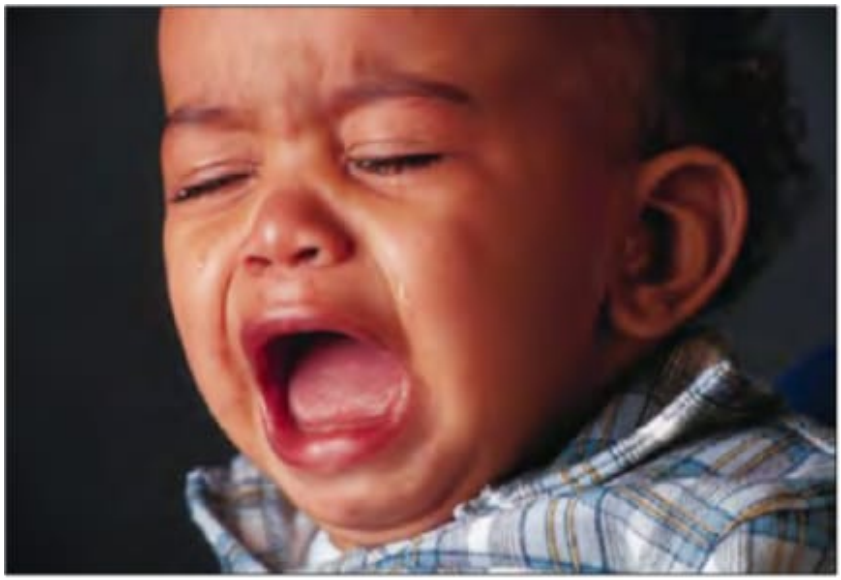
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11.3: Vocal Aspects of Delivery

Though we speak frequently during the course of a day, a formal speech requires extra attention to detail in preparation of a more formal speech presentation. What can one do in advance to prepare for a speech? The challenge is partly determined by the speaker's experience, background and sometimes cultural influence and existing habits of speaking. Articulation, Pronunciation, Dialect, Tone, Pitch, and Projection each depends on long-term practice for success. These aspects are like signatures, and should be developed and used by each speaker according to his own persona.

Voice, or vocal sound, is made when controlled air being exhaled from the lungs, passes over the vocal cords causing a controlled vibration. The vibrating air resonates in the body, chest cavity, mouth, and nasal passages. The vibrating air causes a chain reaction with the air in the room. The room's air, set in motion by the voice, is captured by the listener's ear. The vibration of the air against the eardrum is transferred to electrical impulses that are interpreted by the listener's brain. Thus, the sounds we can make are predicated on the breaths that we take.



Try Thisl Breathing

Talk without breathing.
It cannot be done. So if you are screaming (like a baby), you are also breathing!

The first word of advice on speaking to an audience: BREATHE!

articulation

We are often judged by how well we speak in general. A measure of perceived intellect or education is how well we **articulate**. That is: how well and correctly we form our vowels and consonants using our lips, jaw, tongue, and palate to form the sounds that are identified as speech. **Diction** and **enunciation** are other terms that refer to the same idea. For instance, saying "going to" instead of "gonna" or "did not" instead of "dint" are examples of good versus poor articulation. Consonant and vowels are spoken with standard accepted precision, and serious students and speakers will strive to practice the clarity of their sounds. Proper diction is as integral to the English language as proper spelling, but it takes practice.

Try Thisl Pronunciation

1. Flip though a book, article or scholarly work until you come to a word that is unfamiliar and you can only guess its pronunciation.

2. Go to the Merriam- Webster Dictionary website, and look up the word.

3. When the definition appears, click the icon of the loudspeaker. The word is audibly pronounced for you.

The online dictionary is useful in both articulation as well as pronunciation.

pronunciation

Proper **articulation** applied to a given word is that word's **pronunciation**. The pronunciation includes how the vowels and consonants are produced as well as which syllable is emphasized. For generations, speakers depended on "markings (such as the International Phonetics Alphabet or similar Dictionary Symbols) to discover or decide how words were officially pronounced. With online dictionaries now readily available, one needs only to "look up" a word and select "play" to hear an audible recording of the official and precise way a word should be pronounced. Now there is no excuse for mispronouncing a word in a speech. A mispronounced word will obliterate a speaker's credibility, and the audience's attention will be focused on the fault rather than the message.



accent, dialect, and regionalisms

Subtleties in the way we pronounce words and phrase our speech within a given language are evident in **accents**, **regionalisms** and **dialects**. An accent refers to the degree of prominence of the way syllables are spoken in words, as when someone from Australia says "undah" whereas we say "under." A **regionalism** is a type of expression, as when someone says "The dog wants walked," instead of "the dog wants to go for a walk." Dialect is a variety of language where one is distinguished from others by grammar and vocabulary. In Pennsylvania you might hear people say that they are going to "red up the room," which means "to clean the room."

Those who depend on speaking for a career (broadcasters, politicians, and entertainers) will often strive for unaccented General or Standard English. Listen to most major network newscasters for examples of regionalism-free speech. A given audience may be prejudiced towards or against a speaker with an identifiable accent or dialect. Though we would wish prejudice were not the case, the way we speak implies so much about our education, cultural background, and economic status, that prejudice is inevitable. Any speaker should be aware of how accent, dialect and regionalisms can be perceived by a given audience. If you speak in a

way that the audience might find difficult to understand, make an extra effort to pay attention to the accent and phrasing of your speech. Ask a sympathetic and objective listener to help you when you practice.

> We often refuse to accept an idea merely because the tone of voice in which it has been expressed is unsympathetic to us. ~ Friedrich Nietzsche

vocal quality

The quality of the voice, its **timbre**(distinctive sound) and texture, affects audibility and can affect the articulation. Our voices are unique to each of us. It is a result of our physical vocal instrument, including diaphragm, vocal cords, lungs and body mass. Some examples of vocal quality include warm, clear, soft, scratchy, mellow and breathy. Each speaker should practice at maximizing the vocal effect of his instrument, which can be developed with vocal exercises. There are numerous books, recordings and trainers available to develop one's vocal quality when needed. The quality of one's voice is related to its range of pitch.

pitch and inflection

Identical to musical parlance, the **pitch** is the "highness" or "lowness" of the voice. Each of us has a range of **tone**. Vocal sounds are actually vibrations sent out from the vocal cords resonating through chambers in the body. The vibrations can literally be measured in terms of audio frequency in the same way music is measured. When the pitch is altered to convey a meaning (like raising the pitch at the end of a sentence that is a question), it is the inflection. **Inflections** are variations, turns and slides in pitch to achieve the meaning.

In his writing "Poetics," Aristotle lists "Music" as an element of the Drama. Some scholars interpret that to include the musicalization of the spoken word with dramatic **inflection**. The meaning and effectiveness of a spoken line is greatly dependent on the "melody" of its inflection.

Though archaic, the study of **elocution** formalizes the conventions of inflection. In some contemporary cultures, inflection has been minimized because it sounds too "melodramatic" for the taste of the demographic group. It would be sensible to be aware of and avoid both extremes. With good animated inflection, a speaker is more interesting, and the inflection conveys energy and "aliveness" that compels the audience to listen.

When public speaking was known as elocution, sentences were "scored" like music, and spoken using formal rules. Sentences ending as a question went UP at the end. Sentences ending in a period, ended with a base note. And everyone had fun with exclamation points!

Try Thisl Inflection

Your voice goes UP, and then your voice goes down.

For most of music in history, including Opera, Broadway, and early Rock and Roll, songs were written so that the melody (raising and lowering the pitch) was consistent with what would be spoken. Many of today's songs, notably Rap songs, depend solely on rhythm. There is little if any inflection (melody) to enhance a lyric's meaning. Certain languages differ in their dependence on inflection. Japanese and German seem monotonic compared to Italian and French, which offer great variety of inflection.



The human voice is the most beautiful instrument of all, but it is the most difficult to play. ~ Richard Strauss

Even someone one who is not a singer can be expressive with inflection and pitch. Like the “Think System” of Professor Harold Hill in the musicalThe Music Man. If you THINK varied pitch, you can SPEAK varied pitch. Think of pitch inflections as seasoning spices that can make the speech more interesting. Sing “Happy Birthday.” You do not have to concentrate or analyze how to create the melody in your voice. Your memory and instinct take over. Notice how the pitch also

provides an audible version of punctuation, letting the audience know if your sentence has ended, if it is a question, and so on. The melody lets the audience know that there is more to come (a comma) and when the phrase is ended (a period). Remember that in a speech, the audience does not have the written punctuation to follow, so you have to provide the punctuation with your inflection.

Try Thisl Vocal Variation

Find a listening partner.Using only the sounds of “la” ha,” and “oh,” covey themeaning of the following:

1. It’s the biggest thing I’veever seen!

2. I’ve fallen and can’t get up!

3. I’ve got a crush on him/her.

4. That soup is disgusting and spoiled.

5. I got an “A” in my Speech Final!

If you cannot relay the meaning with just sounds, try a second time (each) with gestures and facial expressions until the listener understands. Then say the lines with the expressive inflections you have developed using only the sounds.

Those who do not use inflection, or use a range of pitch, are speaking in monotone. And, as the word implies, it can be monotonous, boring, and dull. A balance between melodramatic and monotonous would be preferred. The inflection should have a meaningful and interesting variety. Be careful not to turn a pattern of inflection into a repetitious sound. Think through each phrase and its musicalization separately.

Many speakers have developed the habit of ending each sentence as though it is a question. It may be becoming increasingly common. In the wake of the Valley Girl syndrome of the 1980’s, a bad inflection habit has entered the speech pattern: Some speakers end a declarative sentence with the inflection of a question.

Do you know what I mean?

A word of caution: Inflection and varied pitch must be “organic,” that is to say, natural for the speaker. You cannot fake it, or it sounds artificial and disingenuous. It is a skill that needs to develop over a period of time.

rate of speaking

In order to retain clarity of the speech with articulation and inflection, the speaker must be aware that there is a range of appropriate tempo for speaking. If the tempo is too slow, the speech might resemble a monotonous peal. If it is too fast, the articulation could suffer if consonants or vowels are dropped or rushed to keep up the speed. An audience could become frustrated with either extreme. The tempo needs to be appropriate to the speaker’s style, but neither paced like a Gilbertian Lyric (as in “Gilbert and Sullivan”) patter nor a funereal dirge. A comfortable and clear pace is the best. An ideal speaking rate will allow you to comfortably increase your pace to create a sense of excitement, or slow down to emphasize the seriousness of a topic.

> It is simple nonsense to speak of the fixed tempo of any particular vocal phrase. Each voice has its peculiarities. ~ Anton Seidl

pauses versus vocalized pauses

A text that is read has punctuation that the reader can see…miniature landmarks to define the text. When spoken, similar punctuation is needed for comprehension, and the speaker’s responsibility is to offer the text with pauses. Space between phrases, properly planted, gives the audience the opportunity to understand the structure of the speaker’s sentences and paragraphs. It also gives time for the audience to “digest” crucial phrases.

Generally, spoken sentences and paragraphs need to be simpler and shorter than what can be comprehended by reading. Pauses can help increase comprehension.

However, pauses that are filled with “uh’s, “um’s,” etc., are called **vocalized pauses**, or **fillers**, and should be avoided. They can be distracting and annoying, and give the impression of a lack of preparation if used excessively. Even worse is the use of vernacular phrases like, “y’ know” (a contraction of “Do You Know”) which gives the impression of lack of education or lack of concern for the audience. The use of vocalized pauses may be the result of a habit that deserves an effort to be overcome. Avoid using phrases such as *“Uh,” “OK?”, “y’know”, “like…, I mean,”” right?”*

Table 11.3.1 Finding the Right Pace for Your Speech

If you speak too quickly…	If you speak too slowly…
… the audience might get the impression you have nothing important to say.	… the audience might think you are too tired to be presenting.
… the audience has a difficult time catching up and comprehending what you are saying. They need time to “digest” the information. So plan on periodic pauses.	… the audience can forget the first part of your sentence by the time you get to the last! (It happens!) And they lose interest.
… the audience might think you really do not want to be there.	… the audience might think you are wasting their time by taking longer than necessary to relay your message.
As a speaker, you cannot race with the audience, nor drag their attention down. Like Goldilocks, look for the pace that is “just right.”	

vocal projection

The volume produced by the vocal instrument is **projection**. Supporting the voice volume with good breathing and energy can be practiced, and helping a speaker develop the correct volume is a main task of a vocal trainer, teacher or coach. Good vocal support with good posture, breathing, and energy should be practiced regularly, long before a speech is delivered. There are numerous exercises devoted to developing projection capabilities.

While there is no need to shout, a speaker should project to be easily heard from the furthest part of the audience. Even if the

speech is amplified with a microphone/sound system, one must speak with projection and energy. As with your rate of speech, you should speak at a volume that comfortably allows you to increase the volume of your voice without seeming to shout or decrease the volume of your voice and still be heard by all audience members.

Do not expect to walk up to the podium and have a full voice. Actors spend about a half-hour doing vocal warm-ups, and singers warm up much more. You might not have an opportunity to warm up immediately before your speech, but when you can, warm up with humming, yawning (loudly) or singing scales: all while breathing deeply and efficiently. It will loosen your voice, prevent irritation, and fire up your vocal energy.

One final note: If public speaking is or will be an important part of your career, it would be sensible to have an evaluation of your voice, articulation and projection done by an objective professional so you can take any remedial action that might be recommended. There are courses of study, private lessons, and professional voice coaches to work with your voice projection, tone, and pitch.

> Words mean more than what is set down on paper. It takes the human voice to infuse them with deeper meaning. ~ Maya Angelou

Try Thisl Projection

Go to the room in which you are to speak. Have a friend sit as far away from the podium is possible. Rehearse your speech, talking loudly enough so your friend can hear you comfortably. That is the projection you will need. When you mentally focus on the distant listener, you will tend to project better.

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11.4: Nonverbal Aspects of Delivery

personal appearance

Here is the golden rule: Dress appropriately for the situation. You don't need to sport a power tie (the predictable red tie politicians wore in the 1980s), but you should be comfortable and confident knowing that you look good.

With the exception of wearing formal black-tie tuxedo to a hockey game, it is good practice to dress a bit more formal than less. Err on the side of formal. Most class speeches would be best in business casual (which can vary from place to place and in time). The culture or standards of the audience should be considered. For men, it is usually a button-down shirt and casual dress pants. For women, it may be skirt or slacks and blouse/shirt.

There are exceptions depending on the speech. A student once arrived in pajamas to deliver his 9 a.m. speech. At first, I thought he got up too late to dress for class. However, his speech was on Sleep Deprivation, and his costume was deliberate. What he wore contributed to his speech.

If you have long hair, be sure it is out of the way so it won't cover your face. Flipping hair out of your face is very distracting, so it is wise to secure it with clips, gel, or some other method. Be sure you can be seen, especially your eyes and your mouth, even as you glance down to the podium.

Think of it as an interview...just like in an interview, you will want to make a good first impression. The corporate culture of the business will determine the dress. Always dress at the level of the person conducting the interview. For example, a construction foreman (or project manager) will conduct an interview to hire you as a carpenter. Do not dress like a carpenter; dress like the project manager.



Table 11.4.1 Dressing Appropriately

What to Wear: ◈ A button-down shirt or blouse ◈ Trousers (khaki or dark) or a skirt ◈ A dress appropriate for a business setting ◈ A nice sweater ◈ Limited, tasteful jewelry ◈ A suit or jacket may be appropriate ◈ A tie or scarf (optional)
What NOT to Wear: ◈ T-shirts, sweat shirts or sweat suits ◈ Sleeveless tops ◈ Printed logos or sayings (unless appropriate to the speech) ◈ Caps or hats ◈ Torn jeans ◈ Visible underwear ◈ Noisy or dangling jewelry ◈ Flip flops ◈ Provocative clothing ◈ Pockets full of keys or change

Actors know when they audition, the role is won by the time they step into the room. A speaker can launch success by stepping confidently to the podium.

Be tidy and clean. If you appear as though you took time to prepare because your speech is important, then your audience will recognize and respect what you have to say.



movement and gestures

Overall movement and specific gestures are integral to a speech. Body stance, gestures and facial expressions can be generally categorized as body language. Movement should be relaxed and natural, and not excessive. How you move takes practice. Actors usually have the advantage of directors helping to make decisions about movement, but a good objective listener or a rehearsal in front of a large mirror can yield productive observations.

Moving around the performance space can be a very powerful component of a speech; however, it should be rehearsed as part of the presentation. Too much movement can be distracting. This is particularly true if the movement appears to be a result of nervousness. Avoid fidgeting, stroking your hair, and any other nervousness-related movement.

Try Thisl Gestures

Using only your hands, convey the following:

1. “It’s OK.”
2. “I give up.”
3. “He’s crazy.”
4. “We will be victorious.”

Among the traditional common fears of novice speakers is not knowing what to do with one’s hands. Sometimes the speaker relies on clutching to the podium or keeping hands in pockets. Neither is a good pose. From my own observation, hand gestures are very common in Italy. We Italians can be seen in conversation from across the street, and an observer can often tell what is being said. There is no need to imitate an Italian in delivering a speech, but hand movement and the energy that the movement represents, can help hold attention as well as help express the message.

An actor practices using his whole body for expression, and regularly practices physical exercises to keep the body and hands and arms relaxed and in motion. An actor’s hand gestures are developed in rehearsal. A speaker’s gestures should also be considered during practice.

During the period when elocution was taught, hand gestures were regimented like a sign language. This is nonsense. Like inflections, gestures and movement should be organic and spontaneous, not contrived. If there is a hint of artificiality in your presentation, you will sacrifice your credibility.



facial expressions

Most readers are very familiar with emotions like these:

☺, ☹, :p; :o, ;), :/

Try Thisl Facial Expressions

While looking in a mirror, try to express these thoughts without words:
1. “I am thrilled that I am getting a raise.”

2. “I am worried about tomorrow.”

3. “Lemons are too sour for me.”

4. “I am suspicious about what he did.”

After you have determined a facial expression for each, say the phrase. And see how well the verbal expression goes with the nonverbal expression.

Emotions were not casual inventions, but graphic depictions of facial expressions that convey various meanings of emotions. They are based on a nearly universal language of expression that we begin learning soon after birth. We smile, we frown, we roll our eyes, and we wink. We open eyes wide with astonishment. We raise our eyebrows...occasionally one at a time, in suspicion; both, in astonishment. Sometimes we pucker our lips, either to offer a kiss or express disapproval, disappointment, or grave concern.

> I pretty much try to stay in a constant state of confusion just because of the expression it leaves on my face. ~ Johnny Depp

Since facial expression is a valid form of communication, it is integral to delivering a speech. The face supports the text, and the speaker’s commitment to the material is validated. The press scrutinizes a politician for every twitch of insincerity. Detectives have created a science of facial communication for interviewing suspects. Like inflections, gestures and movement: facial expressions should be organic and spontaneous, not contrived. If there is a hint of artificiality in your expression, you will sacrifice your credibility.

eye contact

Next to clearly speaking an organized text, eye contact is another very important element of speaking. An audience must feel interested in the speaker, and know the speaker cares about them.

Whether addressing an audience of 1000 or speaking across a “deuce” (table for two), eye contact solidifies the relationship between the speaker and audience. Good eye contact takes practice. The best practice is to be able to scan the audience making each member believe the speaker is speaking to him or her.

However, there are some eye contact failures.

head bobber:

This is a person who bobs his or her head looking down on the notes and up to the audience in an almost rhythmic pattern.

balcony gazer

A person who looks over the heads of his or her audience to avoid looking at any individual.

the obsessor

A person who looks at one or two audience members or who only looks in one direction.

The best way to develop good eye contact is to have an objective listener watch and comment on the eye contact.

The eyes are called the windows to the soul, and the importance of eye contact in communication cannot be overemphasized. Ideally, a speaker should include 80% to 90% of the delivery time with eye contact.

Eye contact is so important that modern teleprompters are designed to allow the speaker to look at the audience while actually reading the speech. The Presidential Teleprompter (two angled pieces of glass functioning like a periscope) is used so the politician can “connect” to the audience without missing a single syllable. Audience members will be much more attentive and responsive if they believe the speech is directed to them.

With good eye contact, the speaker can also observe and gauge the attention and response of the audience. This is actually part of the feedback process of communication. The ideal is that the audience is not overly aware of the speaker using notes.

How do you develop good eye contact? First, practice the speech with a generous amount of eye contact. Second, know the speech well enough to only periodically (and quickly) glance at your notes. Third, prepare your notes so they can be easily read and followed without hesitation.

> There are no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work, and learning from failure. ~ Colin Powell

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11.5: Mastering the Location

the room

Do not wait until the moment you step up to speak to see what it will be like. Check out the room (venue) and the podium before you need to speak.

Check the width of the room and where the audience will be seated. Rehearse giving the imaginary audience eye contact.



Will you be lighted brighter than the audience? Will they be able to see your face? Can you easily project your voice to the back row? Will you have a microphone?

the podium

Check the podium. Approach it with the confidence you should exhibit when speaking. Touch it. Lean on it. Is it the right height? (It should be about the height of your elbow.) Is it sturdy? Are your feet visible? Is there enough light to see your notes placed on top? Will you be well lit? Is the podium easily visible to the entire audience? How far left and right do you need to look to see the whole audience?

If you are using note cards, try placing them on the podium to be sure they will work, and you can maneuver them easily.

Plan where you will stand. It does not have to be behind the lectern. Practice standing with good posture; know where you will keep your hands and be sure your gestures are not hidden by the podium.

You might be a speaker who does not stay behind the podium, but you should still check it out. Every morsel of familiarity will contribute to your confidence in speaking.



the equipment

If you are using any multi-media such as PowerPoint, slides, video, or music, try it long before the speech. Of course, you would have practiced the speech with the media on your own, but if at all possible, run it in the venue in which you will speak.

Check the controls, slide clicker, and the relationship between the screen and the podium. Be sure the audience can see you as well as the screen. The screen should be positioned so you can glance at it without turning away from the audience. You should not be reading from the screen.

Check your own files to be sure the equipment in the room can play it correctly. Do not assume that every file can be played. Always be prepared by having multiple versions of your audio/video. If you have only one version, and it does not play, you will be very frustrated.

Check all PowerPoint slides. Give a last look at the spelling, content, and watch for some typical issues such as changes of formatting and inserted video or audio files not playing.

Even seasoned presenters break into a cold sweat over equipment failures or unpleasant surprises, so avoid the stress by checking the equipment.



using a microphone

In some cases, rather than merely using live voice projection, there will be a microphone for amplification. If at all possible, test it before the performance. Be sure the amplification is suitable for your projection. Be sure how near or far you should be for proper audio pick-up.

It is important to note that amplification cannot make up for poor articulation or weak inflections, but it can compensate for a room that is large or acoustically insufficient for speech.

If you are prone to move away from the podium, or plan any movement, be aware that the microphone must be considered.

If it is a stationary microphone, be careful to maintain a consistent distance, or the volume of your speaking will pop from louder to softer. Changes in volume or position can result in distortion or feedback (an escalating humming sound). Be careful that consonants do not “ring” with amplification.

In some venues, the time delay with the reverberation can cause an overlap of vocal sounds. You may have to slow down or use more pauses to prevent syllables from overlapping.

> I drank some boiling water because I wanted to whistle. ~ Mitch Hedberg



water rules

Water is the only liquid that should be provided for a speaker. It should be cool, but not ice cold to prevent temperature shock to the throat and vocal cords. If it is poured into a glass, the glass should not be too full so the quantity does not overwhelm the speaker. Under no circumstances should there be ice in the glass or in the pitcher at the podium. Pieces of ice can be a choking hazard to a speaker who is focused on speaking rather than drinking. The current trend is to provide bottled water for a guest speaker. It should be opened, but the cap kept on assuring sanitation. The water should be placed on an absorbent tray that prevents suction from making raising the glass difficult to pick up.

Drinking water is necessary for the hydration of the vocal chords. The act of taking a sip is sometimes used to achieve a pause in a speech for effect.

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11.6: Preparation, Practice and Delivery

preparing notes

Once you have created a comprehensive outline and have thought through your speech, you should be able to create your note cards or whatever you might be using (notes or an iPad for instance). Every speaker is a bit different, and different speech topics and organizational patterns may require different notation techniques.

Your note cards (or cue sheets) must have enough information on them to be able to deliver the speech without missing details and organized in the precise order that you have planned. A common technique is to print the outline in a font that is large enough to be read from a distance.

You should be able to glance at the cards, get your bearings, and look back at the audience. If you are reading the cards word-for-word, there are too many words on them, unless it is an extended exact quote, or group of statistics that must be delivered precisely.



Be sure your notes or cards are numbered (e.g., boldly in the upper right hand corner), so you can keep them organized. Color-coding is often done to easily distinguish the cards at a glance. Losing your place can be very stressful to you and distracting to the audience.

Avoid writing or printing on two sides; flipping a page or card is distracting to the audience. The audience should not be aware of the notes. It is best to simply slide the cards aside to advance to the next card.

Rehearse your speech using the notes that you will bring to the podium. Be sure you can glance at the notes, get your information, and look up to have eye contact with the audience.

> All the real work is done in the rehearsal period. ~ Donald Pleasence

rehearsing the speech

Remember how to get to Carnegie Hall. Rehearse your speech – aloud and ideally with a colleague or fellow student as an audience. Rehearse in front of a mirror if needed. There are some students who record a rehearsal speech so they can get a real sense of what the audience will hear. If you are using presentation aids, rehearse with them for timing and familiarity so you only have to glance at the screen or easel. Time the speech to be sure it within the assigned time. Phrase the speech as you will

phrase it in the actual delivery (and listen for the verbal fillers, awkward pauses, and other nonfluencies). Plan what to do with your hands.

You should also know exactly how your speech will begin and end. Regardless of how dependent on notes the speaker may be, here is one constant word of advice: know exactly how you are going to begin your speech. Not just an idea, but verbatim, with every inflection, every gesture, every eye contact with the audience. The first few sentences should be so ingrained, that you could perform it during an earthquake without batting an eye.

A memorized introduction accomplishes several goals. First, it gives you the opportunity to breathe, and realize it's not so bad to be up there after all! Second, it lets the audience know you are prepared. Third, it signals to the audience that what you are about to say is important. Finally, it gives you the opportunity for direct eye contact (because you are not reading) and commands the audience's attention. Eye contact is a signal to the audience that you care about them!

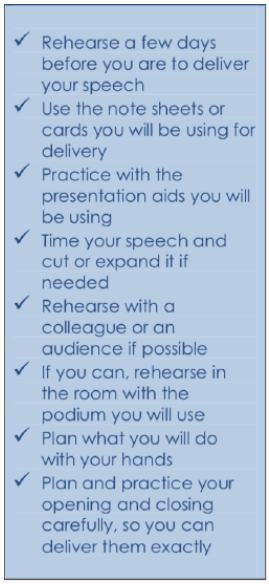


Figure 11.6.1 Rehearsal Checklist

The conclusion of your speech is equally important. In show business parlance, the end of a song or a scene is called a "button." It is a "TAH-DAH" moment that lets the audience know you are finished, and that it is their turn to applaud. The ending impression your speech leaves with the audience is greatly affected by how effective the ending is. The content and structure notwithstanding, you should also knowexactly how you will end (verbatim), so there is no hesitation, no stumbling, no tentative "I guess that's all" feeling. A confident and decisive beginning will draw the audience to you; a confident logical ending will be very effective in preserving a lasting impression on the audience.

> Stress is an important dragon to slay - or at least tame - in your life. ~ Marilu Henner

managing stress

As William Ball noted in his book for actors and directors, A Sense of Direction, getting in front of a group and speaking is people's greatest fear (greater than fear of death). Fear and stress result in psychological and physical manifestations that can affect a speech.

Stress physically causes muscles to tighten, often including vocal cords. This raises, and often limits, the vocal pitch of the speaker under stress. The tempo of the speech may also be affected. Novice speakers tend to rush as though to be anxious to "get it over with." It is a factor to remember in a corporate or business meeting: the speaker should speak slowly enough because what he has to say is important, and the audience should listen. Remember, as noted above, rushing gives the impression that the speaker thinks the message is not worth the time.

Stress can accelerate perspiration. It is wise to have a facial tissue or small towel handy for dabbing for comfort. Stress can also make the mouth and throat feel dry. Sipping water is a simple solution.

There are a myriad of solutions to relieving a speaker's stress: from hypnosis to imagining the audience to be naked. Among the simplest and most effective is to do a moderate amount of exercise prior to the speech, even as basic as walking. Exercising helps to naturally chemically relieve the tension; and helps deepen the breathing that supports the voice.

Simultaneously while exercising the body, it is a good idea to warm up the voice. The vocal cords are muscles, which should not be jump-started.

Physical exercises will likely help relaxing for better posture and hand and body gestures. As part of the relaxation process, actors "warm up" physically before performances and often do relaxation exercises to help concentration and relieve stress.

The best antidote for stress is to be well prepared and confident.



1. Approach the podium as you rehearsed.
2. Stand with confident posture.
3. Deliver your brilliant opening.
4. Realize you are a hit with the audience.
5. Breathe.
6. Spontaneously interject a humorous observation related to your topic.
7. Make all your points without hesitation, "um's," "like's," or "uh's."
8. Deliver your brilliantly prepared conclusion.
9. Leave the podium to thunderous applause.

Figure 11.6.2 Steps for Effective Delivery

delivering the speech

You have taken all of the right steps before stepping up to the podium or lectern. You have selected a good topic. You have researched the topic. You have organized the best information in a compelling way. You have rehearsed your speech. You have received feedback on your rehearsal from an objective listener. You have carefully constructed your notes and practiced with

them. You have planned and practiced your speech introduction and conclusion verbatim. You have checked out the room and the equipment. You did something to reduce your stress before your speech. You did vocal warm-ups. You chose the perfect outfit to wear. You made sure your gum was discarded and your hair pulled back. You arrived at least 15 minutes before your speech. You leapt to the podium with great enthusiasm when introduced.

Now you must deliver. If you look up the word “deliver,” you will find it means more than to just “give.” To “give” is a willingness to offer something without obligation or the expectation of something in return. To “give” also implies a pre-determined responsibility. You have a responsibility as a speaker to “deliver” information that will help your audience or enlighten them in some way. Speeches are delivered.

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11.7: Conclusion

The true test for this chapter is in the actual presentation of the speech. Like voice and diction, understanding what makes a speech effective without practice is insufficient. Merely knowing the best form for a golf swing is useless unless put into practice; and practice reinforces the knowledge. Comprehending the rules for driving on the road is moot (and/or dangerous) if the rules are not obeyed in practice. The same is true for this chapter. Practice speaking will make you a more effective speaker!



> A speech is poetry: cadence, rhythm, imagery, sweep! A speech reminds us that words, like children, have the power to make dance the dullest beanbag of a heart. ~Peggy Noonan

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12: ORIGINS OF PUBLIC SPEAKING

12.1: Introduction
12.2: Ancient Greece
12.3: The Roman Republic
12.4: The Middle Ages
12.5: The Renaissance
12.6: The Modern Period
12.7: Conclusion

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12.1: Introduction

Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Identify the historical events that led up to democracy and recognize persuasion and public speaking as art forms in Athens, Greece.
2. Describe the nature of public speaking in Athens during the 5th century B.C. and the role it played in a democratic society.
3. Apply Plato's approach to dialectics and logic.
4. Explain Aristotle's descriptions of rhetoric and public speaking.
5. Describe the Roman Republic's adoption of rhetoric to public speaking.
6. Elucidate Cicero's influence on the Roman Republic and public speaking.
7. Describe the relevance of Quintillion's influence on the Roman Empire, rhetoric, and public speaking.
8. Recognize the impact that St. Augustine, Christianity, and the Middle Ages had on rhetoric and public speaking.
9. Clarify the roles that the Renaissance, Rationalism, and the Humanists had on the rebirth of rhetoric and public speaking.
10. Explain the role that Classical rhetoric and the advent of psychology in the 18^{th}h and 19th centuries, known as the Modern Period, had on public speaking.
11. Describe the influence of the Elocutionary Movement on public speaking.
12. Describe the restoration of public speaking in the United States.

The art of public speaking was practiced long before the Greeks wrote about it in their treatises more than 2,500 years ago. For Greek men, it was a way of life, a way of being, just like football and baseball are to us today. We attribute today's field of communication to the ancient Greeks because they were the first to systematize the art of public speaking, which they called "rhetoric."

The art, or use of public speaking, is quite different today than when it was practiced by the Greeks, and then the Romans. Theirs was a time that didn't have multimedia -- television, radio, internet, movies, newspapers, and the like -- for getting their messages to the masses. Instead, the Greeks and Romans informed, praised, or persuaded people the old fashion way -- through discourse -- otherwise known as the oral tradition. That meant speaking face to face with their audience.

What we know today as the art of public speaking has undergone a number of changes since the days of Pericles, Cicero, and Quintilian. Public speaking brought us through the Middle Ages, experienced a rebirth as a result of the Renaissance, redefined to conquer and explain the known and unknown, interpreted to perform theatrics, and finally, along this historical path from the ancient Greeks and Romans, the art of public speaking was reinvented to accommodate the electronic age of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

So what is public speaking? Has it really changed since the days of the Greeks and Romans, St. Augustine, and Descartes? No, the concept of public speaking hasn't changed; it has basically remained the same. However, as the field of communication transitioned from one era to another, so did the understanding of public speaking.

> God, that all-powerful Creator of nature and architect of the world, has impressed man with no character so proper to distinguish him from other animals, as by the faculty of speech. ~ Quintilian

This chapter is meant to give you, the reader, an accurate and detailed history of how the art of public speaking came into existence beginning with the ancient Greeks and Romans. We will learn how the Greeks came to develop the art and then were followed by the Romans who codified and refined public speaking. After the fall of the Roman Empire, we will see how public speaking was kept alive by just a few individuals until the Renaissance, when documents, or extants (which are treatises and writings that survived history), were discovered in Italy, and the approaches, both scientific and Humanistic, that defined the art of public speaking came about. Finally, we visit the latter part of the 19th and 20th centuries to understand contemporary public speaking.

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12.2: Ancient Greece

The Rise of Democracy

In order to understand what contemporary public speaking is, we first must understand the genesis of public speaking. We begin with the Greeks and rhetoric. **Rhetoric**, as defined by Aristotle, is the "faculty of discovering in the particular case all the available means of persuasion" (Kennedy, 1963, p.19). For the Greeks, rhetoric, or the art of public speaking, was first and foremost a means to persuade. Greek society relied on oral expression, which also included the ability to inform and give speeches of praise, known then as epideictic (to praise or blame someone) speeches. The ability to practice rhetoric in a public forum was a direct result of generations of change in the governing structures of Attica (a peninsula jutting into the Aegean Sea), with the city of Athens located at its center. The citizens of Athens were known as Athenians, and were among the most prosperous of people in the Mediterranean region.

> Speech is the mirror of action. ~ Solon



It was in the Homeric Period, also known as "The Age of Homer," between 850 B.C. and 650 B.C., that an evolution in forms of government from monarchy to oligarchy, and tyranny to eventual democracy, began in ancient Greece. Homer was the major figure of ancient Greek literature and the author of the earliest epic poems, the Iliad and the Odyssey. In the year 630 B.C., the last tyrant of Attica, Ceylon, seized the Acropolis, which was the seat of government in Athens, and established himself as the ruler of all Attica. He didn't rule for long. Ceylon was overthrown within weeks by farmers and heavily armed foot soldiers known as hoplites. Many of Ceylon's followers were killed, and the few that escaped death fled into the mountains. Thus, Athenian democracy was born.

In 621 B.C., the citizens of Athens commissioned **Draco**, who was an elder citizen considered to be the wisest of the Greeks, to sort their laws into an organized system known as codification, because until that time, they simply remained an oral form of custom and tradition and weren't written like the laws of today. Draco was concerned only with criminal offenses, which until this time had been settled through blood feud (an eye-foran-eye type of revenge between families) or rulings by the King. Draco established courts, complete with juries, to hear cases of homicide, assault, and robbery. By conforming the codes for criminal offenses into standards of practice, Draco began the tradition of law, where cases were decided on clearly enunciated crimes and penalties determined by statute rather than by the whims of the nobility. His laws helped constitute a surge in Athenian democracy.



In 593 B.C. Draco's laws were reformed by Solon, an Athenian legislator, who introduced the first form of popular democracy into Athens. Solon's courts became the model for the Romans and centuries later for England and America. Murphy and Katula (1995) argued: "It is with Solon's reforms that we mark the unalterable impulse toward popular government in western civilization" (p. 7). The Athenian period of democratization included legislative as well as judicial reform.

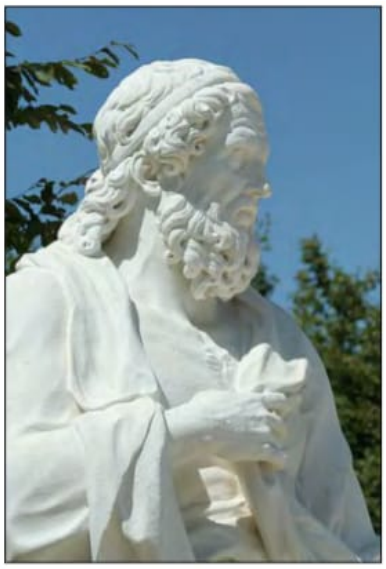
It was during the reign of **Pericles**, from 461 B.C. to 429 B.C., that Athens achieved its greatest glory. Some of these accomplishments included the installation of a pure democracy to maintain, a liberalized judicial system to include poor citizens so that they could serve on juries, and the establishment of a popular legislative assembly to review annually all laws. In addition, he established the right for any Athenian citizen to propose or oppose a law during assembly. Pericles' achievements far exceeded those mentioned. Because of his efforts, Athens became the crossroads of the world - the center of western civilization - and with it came the need for *public speaking*.

"Persuasion is the civilized substitute for harsh authority and ruthless force," wrote R.T. Oliver (1950, p.1). Oliver said that the recipients of any persuasive discourse must feel free to make a choice. In a free society it is persuasion that decides rules, determines behavior, and acts as the governing agent in human physical and mental activities. In every free society individuals are continuously attempting to change the thoughts and/or actions of others. It is a fundamental concept of a free society. Ian Harvey (1951) suggested that the technique of persuasion is the technique of persuading free people to a pattern of life; and persuasion is the only possible means of combining freedom and order. That combination successfully achieved is the solution to the overriding problems of our time. Rhetoric (persuasion), public speaking and democracy are inextricable. As long as there is rhetoric, and public speaking to deliver that message, there will exist democracy; and as long as there is democracy, there will exist rhetoric and public speaking.

I believe that the will of the people is resolved by a strong leadership. Even in a democratic society, events depend on a strong leadership with a strong power of persuasion, and not on the opinion of the masses. ~ Yitzhak Shamir

The Nature of Rhetoric

Pericles' democracy established the need for training in public speaking. Greek assemblies debated old and new laws on a yearly basis. The courtrooms that Solon reformed now bristled with litigation. Pericles' juries numbered between 500 and 2,000 people, so speaking at a public trial was similar to speaking at a public meeting. And to speak at a legislative assembly required serious, highly developed, and refined debate, because at stake generally were issues of peace and war. Murphy and Katula (1995) stated that the Athenian citizens realized that their very future often depended on their ability to speak persuasively. Public speaking was an Olympic event where the winner received an olive wreath and was paraded through his town like a hero. Thus, Athens became a city of words, a city dominated by the orator. Athens witnessed the birth of what we know today as *rhetoric*.



To say that rhetoric played an important role in Greek and Roman life would be an understatement. The significance of rhetoric and **oratory** was evident in Greek and Roman education. George Kennedy (1963) noted that rhetoric played the central role in ancient education. At about the age of fourteen, (only) boys were sent to the school of the rhetorician for theoretical instruction in public speaking, which was an important part of the teaching of the sophists. Public speaking was basic to the educational system of Isocrates (the most famous of the sophists); and it was even taught by Aristotle" (p.7).

Dialectics and Logic

It is important to note that rhetoric and oratory are not the same, although we use rhetoric and oratory synonymously; nor are rhetoric and dialectic the same. Zeno of Elea (5th century B.C.), a Greek mathematician and philosopher of the Eleatic school, is considered to be the inventor of dialectical reasoning. However, it is Plato, another Greek philosopher and teacher of Aristotle, and not Socrates, that we attribute the popularity of dialectical reasoning. **Dialectic** can be defined as a debate intended to resolve a conflict between two contradictory (or polar opposites), or apparently contradictory ideas or elements logically, establishing truths on both sides rather than disproving one argument. Both rhetoric and dialectic are forms of critical analysis.

Among the most significant thinkers of the fifth century B.C. were the traveling lecturers known as sophists. They were primarily teachers of political excellence who dealt with practical and immediate issues of the day, and whose investigations led in many instances to a **philosophical relativism**. Unlike Socrates and Plato, the sophists believed that absolute truth was unknowable and perhaps nonexistent, especially in the sphere of forensics and political life, where no universal principles could be accepted. Courses of action had to be presented in persuasive fashion. Unlike the sophists, Socrates taught that truth was absolute and knowable and that a clear distinction should be made between dialectic, the question and answer method of obtaining the one correct answer, and rhetoric, which does not seem interested in the universal validity of the answer but only in its persuasiveness for the moment. Plato developed this criticism of rhetoric to such an extent that he is the most famous and most thorough-going of the enemies of rhetoric. Plato preferred the philosophical method of formal inquiry known as *dialectic*.

> In making a speech one must study three points: first, the means of producing persuasion; second, the language; third, the proper arrangement of the various parts of the speech. ~ Aristotle

The Rhetorical Approach

Aristotle wrote that rhetoric is the faculty of discovering in the particular case all the available means of persuasion. He cited four uses of rhetoric: (1) by it truth and justice maintain their natural superiority; (2) it is suited to popular audiences, since they cannot follow scientific demonstration; (3) it teaches us to see both sides of an issue, and to refute unfair arguments; and (4) it is a means of self-defense. For Aristotle, rhetoric is the process of *developing* a persuasive argument, and oratory is the process of *delivering* that argument. He stated that the "authors of 'Arts of Speaking' have built up but a small portion of the art of rhetoric; because this art consists of proofs alone - all else is but accessory. Yet these writers say nothing of enthymemes, the very body and substance of persuasion" (Book 1, p. 1).



Aristotle said that rhetoric has no special subject-matter; that is, it isn't limited to particular topics and nothing else. He claimed that certain forms of persuasion come from outside and do not belong to the art itself. This refers to, for example, witnesses, forced confessions, and contracts that Aristotle said are external to the art of speaking. He considered these to be *non-artistic* proofs. Aristotle identified what he considered to be *artistic* proofs which must be supplied by the speaker's invention (the "faculty of discovering" that Aristotle used in his definition of rhetoric); and these artistic means of persuasion are threefold. They consist in (1) evincing through the speech a personal character that will win the confidence of the listener; (2) engaging the listener's emotions; and (3) proving a truth, real or apparent, by argument. Aristotle concluded that the *mastery* of the art, then, called for (1) the power of logical reasoning (logos); a knowledge of character (ethos); and a knowledge of the emotions (pathos).

In summary, Plato had opposed rhetoric to dialectic; Aristotle compared the two: both have to do with things which are within the field of knowledge of all men and are not part of any specialized science. They do not differ in nature, but in subject and form: dialectic is primarily philosophical, rhetoric political; dialectic consists of question and answer, rhetoric of a set speech. Both can be reduced to a system and thus are properly called "art."

> Rhetoric is the art of ruling the minds of men. ~ Plato

Aristotle became the primary source of all later rhetorical theory. Eventually, the dispute between rhetoric and philosophy in the time of Aristotle had ended in a compromise in which philosophy accepted rhetoric as a means to a goal. The rhetoric of not only Cicero and Quintilian, but of the Middle Ages, of the Renaissance, and of modern times, is basically Aristotelian.

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12.3: The Roman Republic

As Athens declined in power, a new force emerged, the Roman Republic. The Senate was the only permanent governing body and the only body where debate was possible. In order to debate, one had to know the persuasive art of rhetoric and oratory, or public speaking.

Greek rhetoric appeared in republican Rome in the middle of the second century B.C. The teachers of rhetoric were Greek, and they taught in both Greek and Latin. Eventually Roman teachers were produced. The remarkable thing about Roman rhetorical theory, wrote Murphy and Katula (1995), is that it appeared for the first time in its fullest form around 90 B.C., with very little direct evidence as to how it developed into its completed form. Sometime after Aristotle, writers refined and identified the subject of rhetoric into five parts - Invention, Arrangement, Style, Memory, and Delivery. These five canons are still a part of public speaking in education today. Two Romans stand out as quintessential figures of Roman rhetoric, Cicero and Quintilian.

Cicero's Influence

Marcus Tullius Cicero was born on January 3, 106 BC and was murdered on December 7, 43 BC. His life coincided with the decline and fall of the Roman Republic, and he was an important participant in many of the significant political events of his time. He is considered to be the greatest of the Roman orators, and was, among other things, a lawyer, politician, and philosopher.

In Cicero's Rome the government eventually came under the control of a well-trained ruling class. Legal training became an integral part of this ruling class. Roman rhetoric provided rules for all forms of oratory; however, legal speaking became the primary emphasis of textbooks.



Cicero is noted for writing the De Inventione when he was about twenty years old. It is important because it gives us insight into the general nature of rhetorical instruction in the first century B.C. And later in life, as a more mature individual, he wrote the *De Oratore*, which he compared and contrasted to the *De Inventione*. Cicero's contributions to the theory of oral discourse included the belief that the orator must have a firm foundation of general knowledge. Cicero believed that the perfect orator should be able to speak wisely and eloquently on any subject with a dignified, restrained delivery. Corbett (1965) wrote that "Cicero felt that the perfect orator had to be conversant with many subjects. In order to invent his arguments, the perfect orator must have a command of a wide range of knowledge" (p. 542). Cicero despised the shallowness of orators who depended exclusively on perfect diction and elegant words that lacked substance. His ideal person was the philosopher-statesman-learned orator who used rhetoric to mold public opinion.

> It is not by muscle, speed, or physical dexterity that great things are achieved, but by reflection, force of character, and judgment. ~ Marcus Tullius Cicero

Cicero firmly held that oratory was more than legal pleadings or a school subject. Cicero considered oratory to be the highest form of intellectual activity and an instrument indispensable for the welfare of the state. In addition, he combined the three functions of the orator to the three levels of style. He was able to provide his colleagues with a broad interpretation of **Atticism**, and he revived the best of the Greek theoreticians and practitioners of oratory. It can be said that Cicero was an idealist. As a student of Greek rhetoric, he encouraged his contemporaries to practice the same ideals, ethics and standards of the past. His primary focus was to adapt Hellenic (ancient Greece) doctrine to the needs of Rome. During Cicero's time, Rome had become a place where the free expression of ideas was no longer tolerated. The government had been corrupted.

Quintilian's Influence

Marcus Fabius Quintilianus (A.D. 35-95) was a celebrated orator, rhetorician, Latin teacher and writer who promoted rhetorical theory from ancient Greece and from the height of Roman rhetoric. His work on rhetoric, the Institutio Oratoria, is an exhaustive volume of twelve books and was a major contribution to educational theory and literary criticism. Many later rhetoricians, especially from the Renaissance, derived their rhetorical theory directly from this text.

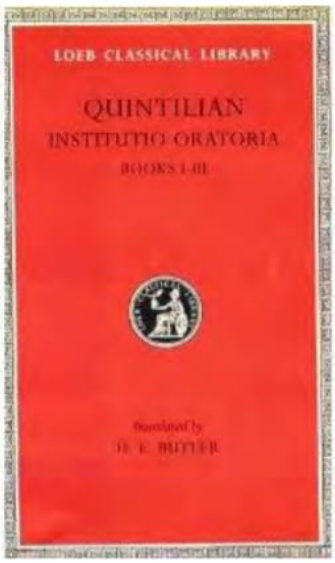


> The mind is exercised by the variety and multiplicity of the subject matter, while the character is molded by the contemplation of virtue and vice. ~ Quintilian

During the hundred years plus which elapsed between the death of Cicero and the birth of Quintilian, education had vastly spread all over the Roman Empire, with rhetoric as the most important part of education. But by Quintilian's time (Gwynn, 1926), the popular trend in oratory was not rhetoric in the traditional sense, rather it was called "silver Latin," a style that favored ornate embellishment over clarity and precision. During this time rhetoric was primarily composed of three aspects: the theoretical (contemplating new rhetorical methods), the educational (teaching students the five canons), and the practical (courtroom and political speeches).

Quintilian's Institutio Oratoria may be read as a reaction against this trend; it advocated a return to simpler and clearer language. Gwynn (1926) wrote that Quintilian adopted Cicero's oratory prowess as the model for this return to rhetorical tradition; because during the previous century, Cicero's far more concise style was the standard. Quintilian disliked the excessive ornamentation popular in the oratory style of his contemporaries (silver Latin). Quintilian believed that deviating from natural language and the natural order of thought in pursuit of an over-elaborate style created confusion in both the orator and his audience.

Much of this work dealt with the technical aspects of rhetoric and the Institutio Oratoria stood -- along with Aristotle's Rhetoric and Cicero's writing -- as one of the ancient world's greatest works on rhetoric. According to Barrett (1987), he organized the practice of oratory into five canons: *inventio* (discovery of arguments), *dispositio* (arrangement of arguments), *elocutio* (expression or style), *memoria* (memorization), and *pronuntiatio* (delivery). This thorough presentation reflects his extensive experience as an orator and teacher, and in many ways the work can be seen as the culmination of Greek and Roman rhetorical theory.



Quintilian emphasized the value of rhetoric as a moral force in the community. “My aim,” said Quintilian, “is the education of the perfect orator” (I. Pref. 8). Since the function of the orator is to advance the cause of truth and good government, Quintilian said he must by definition be a good man morally and not just an effective speaker. According to Gwynn (1926) this was a revolutionary doctrine in the development of rhetoric: Aristotle saw rhetoric as morally neutral, a human tool whose moral character resided in the speaker not the art. Quintilian saw rhetoric as a means for a better selfgoverning society; to make moral goodness integral to oratory.

hetoric compare to Plato, Aristotle, and Cicero? Plato defined rhetoric as a philosophy rather than an art, an unnecessary tool. Plato was concerned more with the truth than Quintilian, while Aristotle believed that rhetoric was “finding the available means of persuasion.” Quintilian challenged this definition because he felt that Aristotle had omitted the fact that anyone, not just the learned, can persuade. To Quintilian, rhetoric was “the good man speaking well” (Honeycutt, 2007).

Quintilian’s system of rhetorical education aimed at the creation of the ideal Roman orator: a virtuous, efficient, courageous, eloquent man. His goal was to prepare an oratorphilosopher-statesman who could combine wisdom with persuasion for the sake of regulating the state. It was this insistence on the intellectual and moral training of the aspiring orator that made Cicero and Quintilian the two most potent classical influences on rhetorical education in England and America.

From the death of Quintilian (about A.D. 100) until the fall of the Roman Empire (A.D. 410), very little was contributed to the rhetorical doctrine. A Greek cultural movement in the second and third centuries A.D. (although some sources place this movement during the fourth and fifth centuries A.D.) called the “Second Sophistic,” was centered in Athens (Barrett, 1987). However, the art of oratory focused more on excessive performance (delivery) and professional speech making rather than the art of intellectual development. There isn’t a total gap between Quintilian and medieval rhetoric. This period produced works by Victorinus, who wrote a systematic commentary on Cicero’s rhetoric, Aquila Romanus, Fortunatianus, and Sulpitius Victor. They are mentioned because they reflect the type of rhetorical education common to the third and fourth centuries and provide a bridge between classical and medieval rhetoric.

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12.4: The Middle Ages

St. Augustine

The Middle Ages (400-1400 A.D.) followed the Second Sophistic movement, wrote Foss, Foss and Trapp (1991), and during this period, rhetoric became aligned with preaching, letter writing, and education. As Christianity grew in power, rhetoric was condemned as a pagan art; many Christians believed that the rhetorical ideas expressed by the pagans of classical Greece and Rome should not be studied and that one's belief in Christian truth brought with it the ability to communicate that truth effectively. St. Augustine had been a teacher of rhetoric before converting to Christianity in A.D. 386, and is considered to be the only major thinker on rhetoric associated with the Middle Ages. Rhetoric played a role in education in the Middle Ages as one of the three great liberal arts. Along with logic and grammar, rhetoric is considered part of the trivium of learning, similar in function to the West's three R's of reading, writing and arithmetic today.

> A thing is not necessarily true because badly uttered, nor false because spoken magnificently. ~ Saint Augustine



Christianity

The clearest bridge to the Middle Ages, according to Murphy and Katula (1995), is found in the *De doctrina christiana* of Saint Augustine (354-430 A.D.). Augustine divided his work into four books. The first three deal with "sign," or "that which is used to signify something else" (Robertson, 1958). For example, language was for Augustine a set of conventional signs which human beings agree to show each other to convey ideas and feelings. He posited that the world itself is a sign of God. Augustine argued that human beings needed to know the nature of signs in order to understand the language of the Bible, and then needed to understand rhetoric in order to explain the Christian message, and then teach it to others. He believed every Christian was obligated to spread Christ's message (e.g. Matthew 18:20), thus, rhetoric became an obligation to every Christian.

His influence prevailed, and the Christian Church adopted the Ciceronian rhetoric as a guide to preachers. Saint Augustine is sometimes called "the last classical man and the first medieval man." With respect to rhetoric, Foss et al., (1991) stated that this is certainly true, and it is possible to see him an agent of communication from one age to another. the renaissance The end of the Middle Ages was witnessed by the birth of the Renaissance (1400-1600), and with it the rise of Humanism, a movement that brought such thinkers and writers as Petrarch, Francis Bacon, Albertus Magnus, Joseph Webber, Ben Jonson, William Shakespeare, Thomas More, Descartes, Hobbes, Locke, Hume, and Kant. This emergence also produced the great discoveries of Copernicus, Galileo, Kepler, and Newton. In architecture it brought about the revival of the classical style. And in the fine arts it inspired new schools of painting in Italy, such as Raphael, Leonardo, Bellini, Michael Angelo, Giorgione, and the Flemish school in the Netherlands.

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12.5: The Renaissance

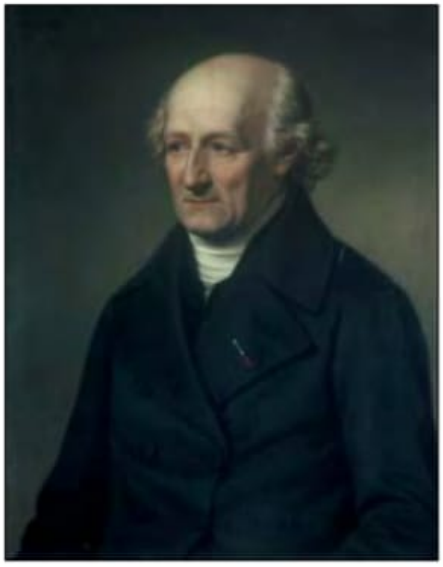
The end of the Middle Ages was witnessed by the birth of **the Renaissance** (1400-1600), and with it the rise of Humanism, a movement that brought such thinkers and writers as Petrarch, Francis Bacon, Albertus Magnus, Joseph Webber, Ben Jonson, William Shakespeare, Thomas More, Descartes, Hobbes, Locke, Hume, and Kant. This emergence also produced the great discoveries of Copernicus, Galileo, Kepler, and Newton. In architecture it brought about the revival of the classical style. And in the fine arts it inspired new schools of painting in Italy, such as Raphael, Leonardo, Bellini, Michael Angelo, Giorgione, and the Flemish school in the Netherlands.

The Renaissance is the name of the great intellectual and cultural movement of the revival of interest in classical culture that occurred in the 14th, 15th , and 16th centuries. The Renaissance began in Italy as a major revolt against an intellectually barren medieval spirit, and especially against scholasticism, in favor of intellectual freedom. A hunger developed for all things classical. Greek scholars were encouraged to travel to Italy. Florence became the cradle of classical revival. Latin classics were in demand. Libraries were built. And schools for the study of Greek and Latin in their classic forms were opened in Rome and other major cities.



The Humanists

The second period of the Renaissance produced a continued passion for classical study, which was later coined “Humanism” in 1808 by a German educator, F.J. Niethammer, to describe a program of study distinct from scientific and engineering educational programs. Of all the practices of Renaissance Europe, nothing is used to distinguish the Renaissance from the Middle Ages more than Humanism as both a program and a philosophy.



The Humanists began by rediscovering lost Latin texts, rather than searching for classical Greek extants. The two most important classical authors of the Renaissance were Cicero and Quintilian, not Aristotle or Plato. Petrarch spearheaded the rediscovery of Cicero; and one of the texts he found, the Brutus, a handbook on rhetoric, became one of the most important books in the Renaissance. Quintilian later became the basis of the Humanistic education curriculum. The most important influences on Petrarch were Cicero and Augustine. He took from Cicero the principles of composing Latin and much of his philosophy; and from Augustine he derived his ideas about the relationship of the human to the divine. Throughout the Renaissance, the single most important author, classical or otherwise, during the entire Humanist movement is Cicero.

> Love is the crowning grace of humanity, the holiest right of the soul, the golden link which binds us to duty and truth, the redeeming principle that chiefly reconciles the heart to life, and is prophetic of eternal good. ~ Petrarch

Interested in the human world as constructed through language, rather than the natural world, the Humanists focused on the human epistemologically. They emphasized the world of human culture and language, believing in the power of the word not only because it gives those with a command of it special advantage in daily interactions, but because of its inherent capacity to disclose to the world of humans. The Italian Humanists believed rhetoric, not philosophy, to be the primary discipline because it is through language that humans gain access to the world (Foss et al., 1991).

The Rationalists

A second trend in rhetoric also began during the Renaissance -- a trend that dominated the theories of rhetoric to follow. Rationalism, represented by the work of Peter Ramus (1515-1572) and René Descartes (1596-1650), sought objective, scientific truths that would exist for all time. Foss et al., (1991) wrote that, “Not surprisingly, the rationalists had little patience for rhetoric: while poetry and oratory might be aesthetically pleasing, they were seen as having no connection to science and truth” (p. 8).



Howell (1956) claimed that Ramus was a French scholar who made rhetoric subordinate to logic by placing invention and organization under the rubric of logic and leaving rhetoric with only style and delivery. Ramus argued that invention should not be an intellectual process governed by contingencies, as Aristotle or Cicero would have it. He presented invention as a rhetorical procedure that must conform to the theory of logic. He successfully argued that rhetoric must be concerned with the canons of style and delivery only. Ramus' identification of rhetoric with style launched a denigration of invention that lasted for centuries (Virtualology.com, 2007).

René Descartes is one of the most important Western philosophers of the past few centuries. During his lifetime, Descartes was just as famous as an original physicist, physiologist and mathematician. But it is as a highly original philosopher that he is most frequently read today. He attempted to restart philosophy in a fresh direction. For example, his philosophy refused to accept the Aristotelian and Scholastic traditions that had dominated philosophical thought throughout the Medieval period; it attempted to fully integrate philosophy with the "new" sciences; and Descartes changed the relationship between philosophy and theology. Descartes believed that in order to reach certain knowledge, the foundations of thought provided by others had to be abandoned. He was willing to accept only that which would withstand all doubt. He rejected truths established in speech or in the course of social or political action. Language became only a means of communicating the truth once it was discovered, not a powerful sphere in which human life emerges (Foss, et al., 1991).

> I think; therefore I am. ~ Rene Descartes

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12.6: The Modern Period

Dominated by the rationalism instituted by Descartes and Ramus, modern rhetoric continued to promote the importance of science and philosophy over rhetoric. Francis Bacon (1561-1626) was a prominent figure of the modern period. He was concerned with the lack of scholarly progress during the Middle Ages and sought to promote a revival of secular knowledge through an empirical examination of the world. His definition of rhetoric suggests his effort to bring the power of language under rational control, ". . . the duty of rhetoric is to apply Reason to Imagination for the better moving of the will" (Dick, 1955, p.100). Bacon, then, advanced the scientific approach to the study of rhetoric that would support the three trends of modern rhetorical thought.

The three trends in rhetoric that characterized the modern period are - epistemological, belletristic, and elocutionist. **Epistemology** is the study of the origin, nature, methods, and limits of human knowledge. Epistemological thinkers, such as Bacon, sought to change classical approaches in terms of modern developments in psychology. They attempted to understand rhetoric in relation to the psychological process and contributed to the development of a rhetoric premised on human nature.

The Epistemological Tradition



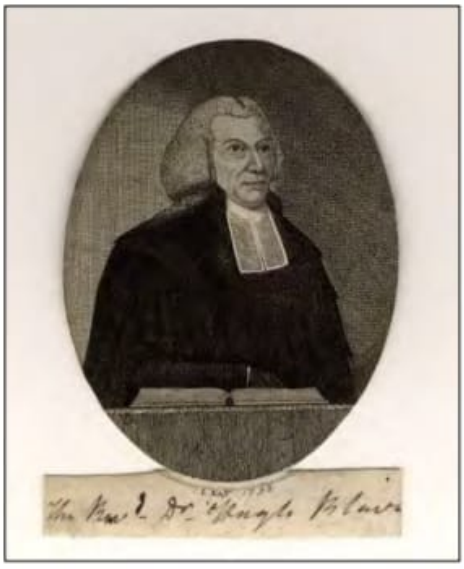
George Campbell (1719-1796) and Richard Whately (1758-1859) exemplify the best of the epistemological tradition. Campbell authored *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (1776). He drew on Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian as well as faculty psychology and empiricism (experience of the senses) of his times. Faculty psychology attempted to explain human behavior in terms of the five faculties of the mind - understanding, memory, imagination, passion, and will - and Campbell's definition of rhetoric was directed to these faculties. Campbell distinguished three types of evidence - mathematical axioms, derived through reasoning; consciousness, or the result of sensory stimulation; and common sense, an intuitive sense shared by virtually all humans (Foss et al., 1991).

As one may bring himself to believe almost anything he is inclined to believe, it makes all the difference whether we begin or end with the inquiry, "What is truth?" ~ Richard Whately

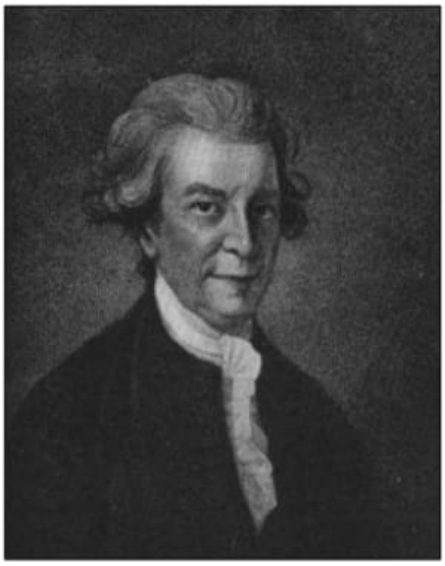
Richard Whately published *Elements of Rhetoric* in 1828. His view of rhetoric was similar to Campbell's in its dependence on psychology, but he shifted from Campbell by making argumentation the focus of the art of rhetoric. He is also known for his analysis of presumption [of innocence] and burden of proof, which paved the way for modern argumentation and debate practices. The epistemologists combined their knowledge of classical rhetoric and contemporary psychology to create rhetorics based on an understanding of human nature. By doing this, they introduced audiencecentered approaches to rhetoric and pioneered the way for contemporary investigations with audience analysis.

The Belles Lettres Movement

The second direction rhetoric took in the modern period is known as the belles lettre movement; the term, in French, literally means “fine or beautiful letters.” This is a departure from both the rationalists and elocutionists because this form of literature valued the aesthetic qualities of writing rather than any informative value it may have. The scope of what was considered to be rhetoric broadened to include all of the fine arts of the period, poetry, music, drama, gardening and architecture, along with oral discourse, writing and criticism.



Hugh Blair is best known for his advocacy of the belletristic movement. He was a Presbyterian preacher and occupied the Chair of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres at the University of Edinburgh. He had a number of publications, but his most well-known was the Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres, which was based on his lectures. Lectures is important because it drew on the works of Cicero and Quintilian and combined them with the modern works of Addison and Burke to become one of the first whole language guides. Blair’s theories were founded in the belief that the principles of rhetoric evolve from the principles of nature.



Gentleness corrects whatever is offensive in our manner. ~ Hugh Blair

The Elocutionary Movement

The **elocutionary movement**, the third rhetorical trend of the modern period, reached its height in the mideighteenth century. Before the Elocutionary Movement most scholars of rhetoric quickly assimilated the Latin *elocutio* (style) with the English word elocution. However, by the eighteenth century scholars more accurately began to regard elocution as the Latin *pronunciato* (delivery). This change in association gave rise to the Elocutionary Movement, a movement that focused primarily on delivery. Although there are many theorists associated with the Elocutionary Movement, the most widely publicized is Thomas Sheridan. Sheridan was an Irish actor and educator of elocution. He wanted to reform the educational system of Britain to correct the serious neglect of rhetorical delivery-elocution. This belief not only involved the voice, but also incorporated the entire person with facial expressions, gesture, posture and movement.

He steps on stage and draws the sword of rhetoric, and when he is through, someone is lying wounded and thousands of others are either angry or consoled. ~ Pete Hamill

However, the elocutionists of this period regarded themselves as rhetoricians and their work as rhetoric. There were a number of reasons why the movement flourished. During the eighteenth and nineteenth century an increasing number of professions required the skill of public speaking. As a result, a needed change from style to delivery developed in response to the poor delivery styles of contemporary preachers, lawyers, and other public figures.

Foss el al., (1991) explain that like the epistemologists, the elocutionists were concerned about contributing to a more scientific understanding of the human being and believed that their observations on voice and gesture -- characteristics unique to humans -- constituted such contribution. The elocutionists also sought to determine the effects of delivery on the continuing the link with modern psychology.

The practices the elocutionists promoted eventually led to their demise. Toward the end of their success the public began to see rhetoric as empty, insincere speaking that hid behind the mask of sophistication. It declined as a subject matter of study and of teaching. As college curriculum became more diverse and specialized, new departments were formed that did not include rhetoric as a multidisciplinary art, rather, instruction was generally limited to departments of English - until a major shift again occurred in the States in 1910. In 1914 a new association, the Speech Communication Association, was formed in the United States by a small group of public speaking teachers who wanted to restore the rich qualities and scope that were once attributed to rhetoric. Today, this organization is called the National Communication Association.



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12.7: Conclusion

We have explored a brief history of rhetoric, the basis for persuasion, from the time of Aristotle to the beginning of the twentieth century. This exploration is by no means complete, but it is intended to provide you with a particular understanding about rhetoric. From Aristotle to Saint Augustine, we see that the rhetoric served a threefold purpose: first, it was a tool designed to develop and cultivate one's mental faculties in order to be a "good citizen" who could serve the state well. And serving the state well meant having the ability to think well and to discover and develop sound arguments. Second, it gave a person the oratorical skills necessary to convince a decision-maker body, that they should adhere to a particular argument. And third, all of this could only be attained if one had moral fiber -ethos- in both thought and character. These condition were seminal for the classicists in their in their pursuit of advancing the art of rhetoric. Eventually, new thoughts and trends distorted, altered, and at times, removed these conditions. The Greeks and Romans held one's character to the highest degree, and no man could be rhetorically successful if they did not possess this quality.



Rhetoric brought us through the Middle Ages and St. Augustine as a unifying figure. The Renaissance gave us a rebirth of the Greek and Roman classical art of public speaking, a new breath for public discourse and education, and the emergence of *humanist* and *rationalist* thinkers. And we have learned that the art of public speaking was, for a short time in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, used as a means for entertainment.

Today, persuasion has taken many forms, with rhetoric being just one of these forms. We know that people will say and do most anything to get their way, whether that be in politics, sales, religion or advertising, and whether what they attempt to do is ethical or not. As you continue to read this on-line test, remember one fundamental premise: that public speaking, ultimately, is all about affecting human behavior; about getting people to do something they normally would not want to do. The key of public speaking is effectively answering the question, "How do I create a message that will connect with my audience?"

> The design of Rhetoric is to remove those Prejudices that lie in the way of Truth, to Reduce the Passions to the Government of Reasons; to place our Subject in a Right Light, and excite our Hearers to a due consideration of it.
> ~Mary Astell

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13: USING LANGUAGE WELL

13.1: Introduction
13.2: Constructing Clear and Vivid Messages
13.3: Using Stylized Language
13.4: The Importance of Ethical and Accurate Language
13.5: Avoiding Language Pitfalls
13.6: Conclusion

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13.1: Introduction

Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Understand the power of language to define our world and our relationship to the world
2. Choose language that positively impacts the ability to inform and persuade
3. Choose language to create a clear and vivid message
4. Use language that is ethical and accurate
5. Use language to enhance his or her speaker credibility

the power of language

Imagine for a moment that you were asked to list everything that you know about the country of Italy in spite of the fact that you have never actually visited the country. What would you write? You would have to think about all that you were told about Italy throughout your life, and you would probably list first the bits of information that have been repeated to you by various people and in a variety of contexts. So, for example, you might recall that in geography class you learned particular things about Italy. You might also recall the various movies you've seen that were either supposedly set in Italy or dealt with some element of what has been deemed by the film as "Italian culture." Those movies could include The Godfather, The Italian Job, or The DaVinci Code. You might think about stories your Italian grandmother told you about her childhood spent in Rome or remember images you have seen in history books about World War II. In other words, throughout your life you have learned a lot of different things that you now assume to be true about this country called "Italy" and you've learned all of these things about Italy through language, whether it be through verbal storytelling or through your interpretation of images in a book or on a screen. Now, consider for a moment the possibility that everything you've heard about Italy has been incorrect. Since you have not ever actually been to the country and had first-hand experience with its geography and culture, for example, how would you know if what you've been told is true or not?



> Your purpose is to make your audience see what you saw, hear what you heard, feel what you felt. Relevant detail, couched in concrete, colorful language, is the best way to recreate the incident as it happened and to picture it for the audience. ~ Dale Carnegie

Language is one of the most influential and powerful aspects of our daily lives and yet very few people pay attention to it in their interpersonal and public communication. The power of language cannot be overemphasized—language constructs, reflects, and

maintains our social realities, or what we believe to be "true" with regard to the world around us. The point of the example above is that what we "know is true" about a person, place, thing, idea, or any other aspect of our daily lives very much depends on what experiences we have had (or not), what information we have (or have not) come across, and what words people have used (or not used) when communicating about our world.

> Language is a process of free creation; its laws and principles are fixed, but the manner in which the principles of generation are used is free and infinitely varied. Even the interpretation and use of words involves a process of free creation. ~ Noam Chomsky

Language can also have an impact on how we feel about this reality. How we define words and how we feel about those words is highly subjective. In fact, cognitive psychologist Lera Boroditsky showed a key to a group of Spanish-speakers and to a group of German-speakers. The researchers then asked the participants to describe the key they had been shown. Because the Spanish word for "key" is gendered as feminine, Spanish speakers defined the key using words such as lovely, tiny, and magic. The German word for "key" is gendered masculine, however, and German speakers defined the key using adjectives like hard, jagged, and awkward (Boroditsky cited in Thomas et al., 2003, pp. 26-27). This study suggests that the words we use to define something can have an impact on how we perceive what those words represent.

Because language is such a powerful, yet unexamined, part of our lives, this chapter focuses on how language functions and how competent speakers harness the power of language.

Consider the case of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Indeed, many speakers before him made the very same persuasive arguments regarding the lack of civil rights for Black Americans, yet we regularly point to the Reverend Dr. King as a preeminent speaker for the civil rights movement because he was a master of language— he employed the power of language to move his audiences in ways they had not been moved before, and we remember him for his eloquence.



communication vs. language

To understand the power of language, we need to differentiate between communication and language. Communication occurs when we try to transfer what is in our minds to the minds of our audience. Whether speaking to inform, persuade, or entertain, the main goal of a speaker is to effectively communicate her or his thoughts to audience members. Most chapters in this text help you determine how best to communicate information through considerations such as organizational structure, audience analysis, delivery, and the like. Language, on the other hand, is the means by which we communicate—a system of symbols we use to form messages. We learn language as a child in order to read, write, and speak. Once we have mastered enough language we can communicate with relative ease, yet growing up we rarely learn much about language choices and what they mean for our communication. We regularly hear people say, "If we just communicated more or for longer periods of time we'd better understand each other." What these types of statements reflect is our lack of understanding of the differences between communication and language. Therefore, many of us believe that when problems arise we should strive to have more communication between the parties. But what we need is better communication by focusing on language choice.

language creates social reality

Our social realities are constructed through language; and therefore, people with different experiences in, and understandings of, the world can define the same things in very different ways. Language is culturally transmitted—we learn how to define our world first from our families and then our later definitions of the world are influenced by friends and institutions such as the media, education, and religion. If we grow up in a sexist culture, we are likely to hold sexist attitudes.
Similarly, if we grow up in a culture that defines the environment as our first priority in making any decisions, we're likely to grow with environmentally friendly attitudes. Language, then, is not neutral. As a culture, as groups of people, and as individuals, we decide what words we're going to use to define one thing or another.

> Culture is the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one category of people from another. ~ Geert Hofstede

For public speakers, these facts are important for three primary reasons. First, the careful use of language can make the difference between you giving a remarkable speech and one that is utterly forgettable. Second, you must remember that audience members may not share the same language for the definition of the very same ideas, realities, or even specific items. Finally, the language that you use in public (and even private) communication says something about you—about how you define and therefore perceive the world. If you are not careful with your language you may unintentionally communicate something negative about yourself simply because of a careless use of language. You should think very carefully about your audience's and your own language when you prepare to speak publicly. You can master all of the other elements in this textbook, but without an effective use of language those other mastered skills will not mean much to your audience. The suggestions in this chapter will help you communicate as effectively as possible using appropriate and expressive. You'll also learn about language to avoid so that your language leaves the audience with a positive impression of you.

the differences language choices can make

When I discuss the importance of language choice with my students, I generally begin with two different paragraphs based on a section from Reverend Jesse Jackson's "Rainbow Coalition" speech. The first paragraph I read them is a section of Reverend Jackson's speech that I have rewritten. The second paragraph is the actual text from Reverend Jackson's speech. Let's start with my version first:

America should dream. Choose people over building bombs. Destroy the weapons and don't hurt the people. Think about a new system of values. Think about lawyers more interested in the law than promotions. Consider doctors more interested in helping people get better than in making money. Imagine preachers and priests who will preach and not just solicit money.

This paragraph is clear and simple. It gets the point across to the audience. But compare my version of his paragraph to Reverend Jackson's actual words:

Young America dream. Choose the human race over the nuclear race. Bury the weapons and don't burn the people. Dream of a new value system. Dream of lawyers more concerned about justice than a judgeship. Dream of doctors more concerned about public health than personal wealth. Dream of preachers and priests who will prophecy and not just profiteer.

The significant difference between these two versions of the paragraph can be explained simply as the difference between carefully choosing one group of words over another group of words. My version of the speech is fine, but it is utterly forgettable. Reverend Jackson's exact wording, however, is stunning. The audience probably remembered his speech and the chills that went down their spines when they heard it long after it was over. This example, I hope, exemplifies the difference language choice can make. Using language in a way that makes you and your speech memorable, however, takes work. Few people come by this talent naturally, so give yourself plenty of time to rework your first draft to fine tune and perfect your language choice. Using some of the strategies discussed below will help you in this process.

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13.2: Constructing Clear and Vivid Messages

When asked to write a speech or a paper, many of us pull out the thesaurus (or call it up on our computer) when we want to replace a common word with one that we believe is more elevated or intellectual. There are certainly times when using a thesaurus is a good thing, but if you're pulling that big book out to turn a simple idea into one that sounds more complex, put it back on the shelf. Good speakers use simple language for two primary reasons.

First, audiences can sense a fake. When you turn in your term paper with words that aren't typically used by people in everyday conversation and those words are simply replacing the common words we all use, your instructor knows what you've done. Part of having strong credibility as a speaker is convincing your audience of your sincerity, both in terms of your ideas and your character. When you elevate your language simply for the sake of using big words when small words will do, audiences may perceive you as insincere, and that perception might also transfer onto your message. In addition, the audience's attention can drift to questions about your character and veracity, making it less likely that they are paying attention to your message.

Second, using a long word when a short one will do inhibits your ability to communicate clearly. Your goal as a speaker should be to be as clear as you possibly can. Using language that makes it more difficult for your audience to understand your message can negatively impact your ability to get a clear message across to your audience. If your audience can't understand your vocabulary, they can't understand your message.



A good example of a speaker whose communication was obstructed by language use is Former Secretary of State Alexander Haig. Some examples of his problematic language choice include: "careful caution," "epistemologically wise," "exacerbating restraint," "saddle myself with a statistical fence," and "definitizing an answer" ("Haigledygook and Secretaryspeak", 1981). Chances are good that after reading these phrases over and over you still don't understand him. You can imagine how much harder it would be to understand Haig's message as it was delivered orally—spoken in an instant and then gone! Haig's language clouds rather than clarifies ideas, but it is easy to make sure your message gets across to the audience by avoiding big words that are not necessary.

If you're paying attention to the language strategies discussed in this chapter, you'll find that you won't need to pull out that thesaurus to impress your audience—your command of language will make that positive impression for you. In addition, when you use language that your audience expects to hear and is used to hearing you may find that the audience perceives you as more sincere than someone who uses elevated language and sounds pretentious. Remember: It is rarely the case that you should use a long word when a short one will do.

> Most of the fundamental ideas of science are essentially simple, and may, as a rule, be expressed in a language comprehensible to everyone. ~ Albert Einstein

use concrete and precise language

How many times a week do you say something to someone only to have them misunderstand? You believe that you were very clear and the person you were talking to thought that she understood you perfectly, and yet you both ended up with a problem we often deem “miscommunication.” You said you’d “call later” and your friend got angry because you didn’t. By “later” you probably meant one time frame while your friend defined that time frame very differently. Often in these cases both people are right. You *were* perfectly clear and your friend *did* understand you perfectly—so how did the miscommunication happen?



One of the primary reasons we miscommunicate is because language is an abstract phenomenon. Meanings exist in people’s understandings, not the words we use. Therefore, if you’re telling a story about “a dog” you could be talking about a German Shepherd while the person you’re talking with is envisioning a Chihuahua. If you do not use concrete language, you risk at least sending a weaker or different message than you intended. When speaking, you want to use the concrete term “German shepherd” over the more abstract term “dog.”



When you are writing your speech, look for words that you might need to define more clearly. Instead of talking about “bad weather,” tell the audience that it was raining or that hail the size of golf balls was coming down. “Bad weather” means different things to different people. In discussing the aftermath of a natural disaster, rather than saying “a lot of people were affected” say, “25,000 citizens, 1 in every 5, were affected by this disaster.” “A lot” means different things to different people. Most words mean

different things to different people, so use concrete language over abstract words to better your chances of communicating your message as intended.

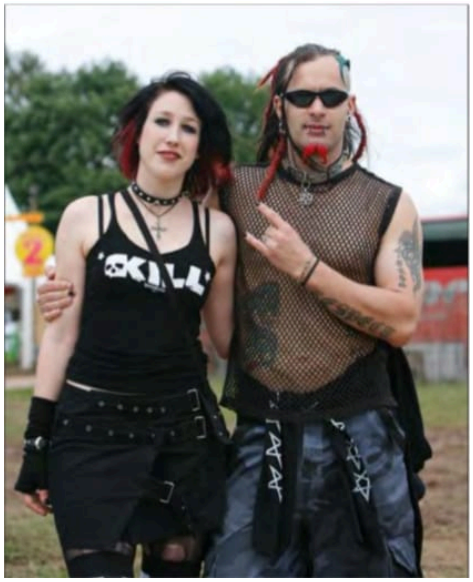
You also want to make sure that you're precise. Someone might call a sweater "green" while someone else calls it "teal." Even though those are just differences in perception not purposeful or mindless communication meant to be inaccurate, not being clear about exactly which color you're talking about can lead to confusion. It is best to remember to be as precise as possible when choosing words. Don't say something was "big"—tell us its weight or height, and to be sure you're communicating clearly compare that weigh or height to something we understand. So, instead of saying "The piles of garbage I saw in the local dump were really big" say "The piles of garbage I saw in the local dump weighed about 10,000 pounds, which is equivalent to the weight of the average female elephant." The more precise you are the less likely it is that your audience will misinterpret your message.

> Our business is infested with idiots who try to impress by using pretentious jargon. ~ David Ogilvy

Another way to avoid language that obstructs communication is to avoid the use of **jargon**. Jargon is the "specialized language of a group or profession" (Hamilton, 2008, p. 286).
It is appropriate to use jargon when you know that your audience understands the terms you are using. For example, if you are a computer science major and you are presenting to a group of similarly trained computer science majors, using jargon will help establish your credibility with that audience. Using terms even as basic as "RAM" and "binary code" with a general audience, however, will likely not go over well—you risk confusing the audience rather than informing or persuading them. Even people who can use computers may not know how they work or the technical terms associated with them. So you must be careful to only use jargon when you know your audience will understand it. If you must use jargon while speaking to a general audience, be sure to define your terms and err on the side of over- clarification.

> Slang is a language that rolls up its sleeves, spits on its hands and goes to work. ~ Carl Sandburg

Finally, another way to avoid confusion is to avoid using slang when it is not appropriate. Slang is language that some people might understand but that is not considered acceptable in formal or polite conversation. Slang may be a poor choice for a speaker because some members of your audience may not be familiar with the slang term(s) you use. Slang is often based in a very specific audience, defined by age, region, subculture and the like. If you are speaking to an audience that you know will understand and respond positively, you may choose to include that language in your speech. Otherwise, do not use slang, or you may confuse and frustrate audience members and cause them to lose interest in your speech. In addition, because slang is often not considered appropriate in formal and polite conversation, using it in your speech may communicate negative ideas about you to audience members. Don't let a mindless use of slang negatively impact your audience's perception of you and your message.



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13.3: Using Stylized Language

Stylized language is language that communicates your meaning clearly, vividly and with flair. Stylized language doesn't just make you sound better; it also helps make your speeches more memorable. Speakers who are thoughtful about using language strategies in their speeches are more memorable as speakers and therefore so too are their messages more unforgettable as well.

metaphors and similes

One strategy that promotes vivid language is the use of metaphors. **Metaphors** are comparisons made by speaking of one thing in terms of another. **Similes** are similar to metaphors in how they function; however, similes make comparisons by using the word "like" or "as," whereas metaphors do not. The power of a metaphor is in its ability to create an image that is linked to emotion in the mind of the audience. It is one thing to talk about racial injustice, it is quite another for the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to note that people have been "...battered by storms of persecution and staggered by the winds of police brutality." Throughout his "I Have a Dream" speech the Reverend Dr. King uses the metaphor of the checking account to make his point.
He notes that the crowd has come to the March on Washington to "cash a check" and claims that America has "defaulted on this promissory note" by giving "the Negro people a bad check, a check that has come back "insufficient funds." By using checking and bank account terms that most people are familiar with, the Reverend Dr. King is able to more clearly communicate what he believes has occurred. In addition, the use of this metaphor acts as a sort of "shortcut." He gets his point across very quickly by comparing the problems of civil rights to the problems of a checking account.

In the same speech the Reverend Dr. King also makes use of similes, which also compare two things but do so using "like" or "as." In discussing his goals for the Civil Rights movement in his "I Have a Dream" speech, the Reverend Dr. exclaims: "No, no we are not satisfied and we will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream." Similes also help make your message clearer by using ideas that are more concrete for your audience. For example, to give the audience an idea of what a winter day looked like you could note that the "snow looked as solid as pearls." To communicate sweltering heat you could say that "the tar on the road looked like satin." A simile most of us are familiar with is the notion of the United States being "like a melting pot" with regard to its diversity. We also often note that a friend or colleague that stays out of conflicts between friends is "like Switzerland." In each of these instances similes have been used to more clearly and vividly communicate a message.

> Metaphors have a way of holding the most truth in the least space. ~ Orson Scott Card

alliteration

Remember challenging yourself or a friend to repeat a tongue twister "five times fast?" Perhaps it was "Sally sold seashells by the seashore" or "Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers." Tongue twisters are difficult to say to say but very easy to remember. Why? Alliteration. **Alliteration** is the repetition of the initial sounds of words. Alliteration is a useful tool for helping people remember your message, and it's as simple as taking a few minutes to see if there are ways to reword your speech so that you can add some alliteration—this is a great time to use that thesaurus we talked about putting away early in this chapter. Look for alternative words to use that allow for alliteration in your speech. You might consider doing this especially when it comes to the points that you would like your audience to remember most.

> The soul selects her own society. ~ Emily Dickinson

antithesis

Antithesis allows you to use contrasting statements in order to make a rhetorical point. Perhaps the most famous example of antithesis comes from the Inaugural Address of President John F. Kennedy when he stated, "And so, my fellow Americans, ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country." Going back to Reverend Jackson's "Rainbow Coalition" speech he notes, "I challenge them to put hope in their brains and not dope in their veins." In each of these cases, the speakers have juxtaposed two competing ideas in one statement to make an argument in order to draw the listener's attention.

You're easy on the eyes --- hard on the heart. ~ Terri Clark

parallel structure and language

Antithesis is often worded using parallel structure or language. **Parallel structure** is the balance of two or more similar phrases or clauses, and parallel wording is the balance of two or more similar words. The Reverend Dr. King's "I Have a Dream" speech exemplifies both strategies in action. Indeed, the section where he repeats "I Have a Dream" over and over again is an example of the use of both parallel structure and language. The use of parallel structure and language helps your audience remember without beating them over the head with repetition. If worded and delivered carefully, you can communicate a main point over and over again, as did the Reverend Dr. King, and it doesn't seem as though you are simply repeating the same phrase over and over. You are often doing just that, of course, but because you are careful with your wording (it should be powerful and creative, not pedantic) and your delivery (the correct use of pause, volumes, and other elements of delivery), the audience often perceives the repetition as dramatic and memorable. The use of parallel language and structure can also help you when you are speaking persuasively. Through the use of these strategies you can create a speech that takes your audience through a series of ideas or arguments that seem to "naturally" build to your conclusion.

personalized language

We're all very busy people. Perhaps you've got work, studying, classes, a job, and extracurricular activities to juggle. Because we are all so busy, one problem that speakers often face is trying to get their audience interested in their topic or motivated to care about their argument. A way to help solve this problem is through the use of language that personalizes your topic. Rather than saying, "One might argue" say "You might argue." Rather than saying "This could impact the country in ways we have not yet imagined," say "This could impact your life in ways that you have not imagined." By using language that directly connects your topic or argument to the audience you better your chances of getting your audience to listen and to be persuaded that your subject matter is serious and important to them. Using words like "us," "you," and "we" can be a subtle means of getting your audience to pay attention to your speech. Most people are most interested in things that they believe impact their lives directly—make those connections clear for your audience by using personal language.



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13.4: The Importance of Ethical and Accurate Language

language and ethics

As was noted at the beginning of this chapter, language is culturally transmitted—we learn our language from those around us. For most of us this means that we may first learn language from our parents, but as we grow older, other family members, friends, educators and even the media impact our vocabularies and our choices regarding what language we use. Think about a world without language. Quite simply, we'd have no way of participating in our world without it. People constantly produce language to categorize and organize the world.

Think back to our discussion of how language influences your social reality. In my work as a mentor, I tutored a girl in elementary school who had a very difficult time saying the word "lake." I used the word "lake" as part of a homework exercise. What I had not realized was that she had never seen a lake, either in person or in a picture, or, if she had seen a lake no one had pointed to that body of water and called it a "lake." The concept of a "lake" was simply not in her reality. No "lakes" existed in her world. This is a key example of how the language that we learn and that we choose to use says something about our social reality.

Consider the above example another way. Let's say that my young friend had seen a lake and knew how to say the word and what the word referred to, but that she had only been privy to people who used the word negatively. If throughout her life "lakes" were discussed as "bad things" to be avoided, she would have a very different perspective on lakes than most people. Switching this example around a little helps illustrate the fact that language is not neutral. Language carries ideas, and while there is often more than one choice in terms of which word to use, often the words from which you are choosing are not equal in terms of the reality that they communicate.

Think about the difference between calling a specific place "the projects" versus calling that same place "public housing." Both phrases refer to a particular geographical space, but calling a neighborhood "the projects" as opposed to "public housing" communicates something very different, and more negative, about this neighborhood. Often students use the words that they hear more commonly used, so referring to "the projects" as opposed to "public housing" usually indicates that they have not thought enough about their word choices or thought about the impact of those choices.

> By and large, language is a tool for concealing the truth. ~ George Carlin

As this example points out, we have a variety of words from which to choose when constructing a message. Successful speakers recognize that in addition to choosing words that help with clarity and vividness, it is important to think about the connotations associated with one word or the other. When speakers are not careful in terms of word choice in this sense, it is possible to lose credibility with the audience and to create the perception that you are someone that perhaps you are not. If you use "the projects" instead of "public housing," audience members may view you as someone who has negative perceptions of people who live in public housing when you do not feel that way at all. Clearly, not being careful about language choices can be a costly mistake.

But what do these examples have to do with ethics? For our purposes here, there are two ways to think about communication and ethics. First, ethical communication is that which does not unfairly label one thing or another based on personal bias. So, in addition to choosing "public housing" over "the projects," an ethical speaker will choose terms that steer clear from intentional bias. For example, pro-life

speakers would refrain from calling "pro-choice" people "pro-abortion" since the basic principle of the "pro- choice" position is that it is up to the person, not society, to choose whether or not an abortion is acceptable. That is a very different position than being "pro-abortion." Indeed, many pro- choice citizens would not choose abortion if faced with an unplanned pregnancy; therefore calling them "pro- abortion" does not reflect the reality of the situation; rather, it is the purposeful and unethical use of one term over the other for emotional impact. Similarly, if a pro-choice person is addressing a crowd where religious organizations are protesting against the legality of abortion, it would not be ethical for the pro-choice speaker to refer to the "anti- abortion" protestors as "religious fanatics." Simply because someone is protesting abortion on religious grounds does not make that person a "religious fanatic," and as in the first example, choosing the latter phrase is another purposeful and unethical use of one term over another for emotional impact.

> Language exerts hidden power, like the moon on the tides. ~ Rita Mae Brown

A second way to link communication and ethics is to remember that ethical speakers attempt to communicate reality to the best of their ability. Granted, as was noted above, each person's social reality is different, depending on background, influences, and cultural institutions, for example. But regardless of whether you think that a "lake" is a good or bad thing, lakes still exist in reality. Regardless of whether or not you think rocks are useful or not, rocks still exist. So ethical communication also means trying to define or explain your subject in terms that are as closely tied to an objective reality as is possible—it is your best attempt to communicate accurately about your topic. Sexist and heterosexist language are two types of language to be avoided by ethical speakers because each type of language does communicate inaccuracies to the audience.



sexist and heterosexist language

One of the primary means by which speakers regularly communicate inaccurate information is through the use of sexist language. In spite of the fact that the Modern Language Association deemed sexist language as grammatically incorrect back in the 1970s, many people and institutions (including most colleges and universities) still regularly use sexist language in their communication.

An argument I regularly hear from students is that language has "always been sexist." This is, in fact, not true. As Dale Spender notes in her book,Man Made Language, until 1746 when John Kirkby formulated his "Eighty Eight Grammatical Rules," the words "they" and "their" were used in sentences for sex-indeterminable sentences (Spender, 1990, pp. 148- 149.) Kirkby's rule number twenty-one stated that the male sex was more comprehensive than the female and thus argued that "he" was the grammatically correct way to note menand women in writing where mixed sexed or sex-indeterminable situations are referred to (Spender, 1990, pp. 148- 149). Women were not given equal access to education at this time and thus the male grammarians who filled the halls of the academy and had no incentive to disagree with Mr. Kirkby, accepted his eighty-eight rules in full.

Interestingly though, the general population was not as easily convinced. Perhaps because they were not used to identifying women as men in language or perhaps because it did not make rational sense to do so, the general public ignored rule number twenty-one.

Incensed by the continued misuse of "they," male grammarians were influential in the passing of the 1850 Act of Parliament which legally asserted that "he" stood for "she" (Spender, 1990, p. 150), Yes, you read correctly. Parliament passed legislation in an effort to promote the use of sexist language. And it worked! Eventually the rule was adhered to by the public and thus we have the regular and rarely challenged use of sexist language. But this use of language was not "natural" or even "normal" for many millennia.

Pretending that we haven't learned about the work of Dale Spender, let's assume that language has "always been sexist." Even if language was always sexist, that does not make the use of sexist language right. We wouldn't make a similar argument about racist language, so that argument isn't any stronger with regard to language that is sexist. It simply isn't acceptable today to use sexist language; and by learning to avoid these common mistakes, you can avoid using language that is grammatically incorrect, unethical, and problematic. See Table 10.1 for examples of sexist and non-sexist language.

> Is your remarkably sexist drivel intentional, or just some horrible mistake? ~ Yeardley Smith

First, you should avoid the use of what is called the **generic "he" or "man,"** which is the use of terms such as "mankind" instead of "humankind" or "humanity," or the use of "man" or "he" to refer to all people. A common response from students with regard

to the use of “generic he” is that the word is intended to represent men and women, therefore when it’s used it is not used to be sexist. If it were really the case that people truly recognized in their minds that the term “man” includes women, then we would talk about situations in which “man has difficulty giving birth” (Spender, 1990, p. 156) or the “impact of menstruation on man’s biology.” Of course, we do

not say those things because they simply wouldn’t make sense to us. Perhaps you can now see why the people of the 1700s and 1800s had trouble switching from non-sexist to sexist language—it defied their own common sense just as discussing how “man gets pregnant” defies yours.

Table 13.4.1 Comparison of Sexist and Gender-Neutral Terms

Sexist Terms	Gender-Neutral Terms
Actress	Actor
Ballerina	Ballet Dancer
Businessman	Business Person
Chairman	Chairperson
Fireman	Firefighter
Fisherman	Fisher
Mailman/Postman	Mail/Letter Carrier
Male Nurse	Nurse
Policeman	Police Officer
Stewardess	Flight Attendant
Waitress	Server
He (to mean men and women)	He or She, He/She, They
Example: If a student wants to do well, he must study.	Examples: If a student wants to do well, he or she must study. If students want to do well, they must study
From: eca.state.gov/forum/vols/vol4.../p36.htm#chart	

Second, you should avoid using **man-linked terms**, which are terms such as “fireman” or “policemen.” It is appropriate to use these terms when you know that the people you are speaking about are men only, but if you do not know for sure or if you’re talking about groups generally, you should avoid using these types of terms and replace them with “firefighters” and “police officers.” Colleges and universities should replace “freshman” with “first-year students” and so should you. Other, non job-oriented words also suffer from this same problem. People often note that tables need to be “manned” rather than “staffed” and that items are “man-made” instead of “human made” or “handmade.”



A final common use of sexist language occurs when people use **spotlighting** when discussing the occupations of men and women. How often have you heard (or used) a phrase such as "he's a male nurse" or "that female lawyer?" When we spotlight in these ways, we are pointing out that a person is deviating from the "norm" and implying that someone's sex is relevant to a particular job. According to Peccei, in the English language there is a very strong tendency to "place the adjective expressing the most 'defining' characteristic closest to the noun" (Peccei, 2003, p. 118). Thus, as Turner points out, a phrase like the "old intelligent woman" violates our sense of "correct," not because there's anything wrong with the word order grammatically, but because it contradicts our customary way of thinking that values youth over age (Peccei, 2003, p. 118). If you talk about a "male nurse" or a "female cop," you risk communicating to the audience that you believe the most salient aspect of a particular job is the sex of the person that normally does it, and some audience members may not appreciate that assumption on your part.

The use of sexist language is not just grammatically incorrect; its use is also linked to ethics because it communicates a reality that does not exist—it is not accurate. Man-linked language communicates male superiority and that there are more men than women because women are regularly erased linguistically in speech and writing. Man-linked terms and spotlighting communicate that some job activities are appropriate for men but not women and vice versa by putting focus on the sex of a person as linked to their job or activity. Finally, the use of the generic "he" or "man" communicates that men are the norm and women deviate from that norm. If all humans are called "man," what does that say about women? Sexist language can also limit what young males and females believe that they can accomplish in their lives. Ethical speakers should therefore avoid using language that communicates these sexist practices.

Speakers who choose to continue to use sexist language are not only speaking in a manner that is grammatically incorrect, they are also risking communicating negative ideas about themselves to audience members. Often the use of sexist language is because of a careless error, so be careful about language choice so that you don't accidentally communicate something about yourself that you didn't intend or that isn't true. Remember that if one person in your audience is offended by some aspect of your language use, they may share their opinions with others in the room. If that one person is a leader of the larger group or is someone whose opinions people care about, offending that one audience member may cause you to "lose" many other audience members as well.



Heterosexist language is language that assumes the heterosexual orientation of a person or group of people. Be careful when speaking not to use words or phrases that assume the sexual orientation of your audience members. Do not make the mistake of pointing to someone in your audience as an example and discussing that person with the assumption that she is heterosexual by saying something like, “Let’s say this woman here is having trouble with her husband.” When thinking of examples to use, consider using names that could ring true for heterosexuals and homosexuals alike. Instead of talking about Pat and Martha, discuss an issue involving Pat and Chris. Not only will you avoid language that assumes everyone’s partner is of the opposite sex, you will also better your chances of persuading using your example. If the use of sex- specific names doesn’t ring true with members of your audience that are homosexual, it is possible that they are not as likely to continue to listen to your example with the same level of interest. They are more likely to follow your example if they aren’t confronted immediately with names that assume a heterosexual relationship. There are, of course, ethical considerations as well. Because it is likely that your entire audience is not heterosexual (and certainly they do not all hold heterosexist attitudes), using heterosexist language is another way that speakers may alienate audience members. In reality the world is not completely heterosexual and even in the unlikely case that you’re speaking in a room of consisting completely of heterosexuals, many people have friends or relatives that are homosexual, so the use of heterosexist language to construct the world as if this were not the case runs counter to ethical communication.

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13.5: Avoiding Language Pitfalls

There are other aspects of language you should consider when thinking about how language choices impact the audience's perception of you.

profanity

It seems obvious, but this fact bears repeating—you should **refrain from using profanity** in your speeches. One of the primary rules of all aspects of public speaking (audience analysis, delivery, topic selection, etc.) is that you should never ignore audience expectations. Audiences do not expect speakers to use profane language, and in most cases, doing so will hurt your credibility with the audience. It is true that certain audiences will not mind an occasional profane word used for effect, but unless you are speaking to a group of people with whom you are very familiar, it is difficult to know for sure whether the majority of the audience will respond positively or negatively to such language use. If you even offend one person in an audience and that person happens to be an opinion leader for other audience members, the negative impact of your language on that one person could end up having a much larger influence on the audience's perception of you.

> I wanted to cut down on the profanity, because I think I'm funnier without sayin' a lot of cuss words. ~ Chris Tucker

exaggeration

Speakers should also be careful about exaggeration. **Hyperbole** is the use of moderate exaggeration for effect and is an acceptable and useful language strategy. What is not acceptable, however, is the use of exaggeration to an extent that you risk losing credibility. For example, while it is acceptable to note that "it snows in South Texas as often as pigs fly," it would not be acceptable to state that "It never snows in South Texas." In the first case, you are using hyperbole as a form of exaggeration meant to creatively communicate an idea. In the second case, your use of exaggeration is stating something that is not true. It is unwise to use words such as "never" and "always" when speaking. It may be the case that speakers make this mistake accidentally because they are not careful with regard to word choice. We so easily throw words like "always" and "never" around in everyday conversation that this tendency transfers onto our public speeches when we are not thinking carefully about word choice.

There are two problems with the careless use of exaggeration. First, when you use words like "always" and "never," it is not likely that the statement you are making is true—as very few things always or never happen. Therefore, audiences might mistake your careless use of language for an attempt to purposefully misrepresent the truth. Second, when you suggest that something "always" or "never" happens, you are explicitly challenging your audience members to offer up evidence that contradicts your statement. Such a challenge may serve to impact your credibility negatively with the audience, as an audience member can make you look careless and/or silly by pointing out that your "always" or "never" statement is incorrect.

> Exaggeration is a blood relation to falsehood and nearly as blamable. ~ Hosea Ballou

powerless language

Finally, think about using powerful language when speaking. Because women are more likely than men to be socialized to take the feelings of others into account, women tend to use less powerful language than men (Gamble and Gamble, 2003, 62). Both men and women, however, can use language that communicates a lack of power. In some cases speakers use powerless **language that communicates uncertainty**. For example, a speaker might say "It seems to me that things are getting worse," or "In my estimation, things are getting worse." These phrases communicate a lack of certainty in your statements. It is likely that in the case of these speeches, the speaker is arguing that some problem is getting worse, therefore more powerful language would be acceptable. Simply state that "Things are getting worse" and don't weaken your statement with phrases that communicate uncertainty.

Speakers should also beware of **hedges**, **tag questions,** and **qualifiers**. Examples of hedges would include, "I thought we should," "I sort of think," or "Maybe we should." Use more powerful statements such as "We should" or "I believe." In addition, speakers should avoid the use of tag questions, which are quick questions at the end of a statement that also communicate uncertainty. People who use tag questions might end a statement with "Don't you think?" or "Don't you agree?" rather than flatly

stating what they believe because it can appear to audiences that you are seeking validation for your statements. Qualifiers such as “around” or “about” make your sentences less definitive, so generally avoid using them.

Interestingly, however, there are cases when using less powerful language may be useful. While a full discussion of these instances is out of the purview of this chapter, good speakers will recognize when they should use more or less powerful language. I tell my students that there are some cases when negotiation between two or more parties is the key and that in these instances using language that communicates complete certainty might impede fruitful negotiation because other parties may incorrectly perceive you as inflexible. On the other hand, in some cases you must “win” an argument or “beat” another speaker in order to even get to the negotiation table, and in those cases, the use of more powerful language may be warranted. It bears repeating that better speakers know how to use language in response to specific contexts in order to be successful, hence thinking about what contexts require more or less powerful language is always a good idea.

> There may be times when we are powerless to prevent injustice, but there must never be a time when we fail to protest.
> ~ Elie Wiesel

incorrect grammar

While the use of sexist or heterosexist language may imply some negative qualities about you to your audience, the use of incorrect grammar in your speech will explicitly communicate negative attributes about you quite clearly. There are four primary means by which incorrect grammar tends to make its way into speeches, including **basic error**, **mispronunciations**, **regionalisms**, and **colloquialisms**.

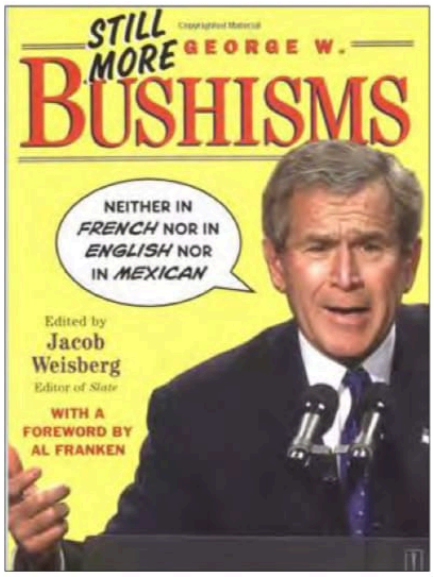
Basic errors occur when people make simple mistakes in grammar because of carelessness or a lack of knowledge. If you are unsure about the grammatical structure of a sentence, ask someone.

> Although spoken English doesn't obey the rules of written language, a person who doesn't know the rules thoroughly is at a great disadvantage. ~ Marilyn vos Savant

Practicing your speech in front of others can help you catch mistakes. Grammatical errors can also happen when speakers aren’t familiar enough with their speech. If you do not know your topic well and have not given yourself an adequate amount of time for practice, you may fumble some during your speech and use incorrect grammar that you normally wouldn’t use. One of the most regular critiques made of President George W. Bush is that he regularly makes grammatical errors in public. In one case President Bush stated, “Rarely is the question asked: Is our children learning?” In another instance he stated, “I have a different vision of leadership. A leadership is someone who brings people together” (“Bushisms”, 2007). When President Bush makes these mistakes, many people take note and it gives his detractors ammunition to critique his ability to lead. Unlike President Bush, you do not have a team of public relations specialists ready to explain away your grammatical error so you should take great care to make sure that you’re prepared to speak.

> Apparently Arnold was inspired by President Bush, who proved you can be a successful politician in this country even if English is your second language. ~ Conan O'Brien

In addition, you must be sure that you are pronouncing words correctly. In one instance I had a student who began discussing the philosopher Plato, except she pronounced his name “Platt- o” instead of “Play-toe.” I could see students glancing at each other and rolling their eyes in response to this mistake. Indeed, it was even difficult for me to pay attention after the mistake because it was such a blatant error. Making pronunciation mistakes, especially when you’re pronouncing words that the general public deems ordinary, can seriously impede your credibility. It was likely difficult for students to take this speaker’s remaining comments seriously after she’d made such a big mistake. If you’re unsure about how to pronounce a word, check with someone else or with the dictionary to make sure you’re pronouncing it correctly. In fact, many online dictionaries such as Merriam- Webster.com and Dictionary.com now include a function that allows you to hear how the word is pronounced. And if it’s a word you’re not used to saying, such as a technical or medical term, practice saying it out loud 10-20 times a day until you’re comfortable with the word. Remember that our mouths are machines and that our tongues, teeth, cheeks, lips, etc. all work together to pronounce sounds. When faced with a word that our mouths are not yet “trained” to say, it is more likely that we’ll mispronounce the word or stutter some on it during a speech. But if you practice saying the word out loud several times a day leading up to your speech, you’re less likely to make a mistake and your confidence will be boosted instead of hurt in the midst of your speech.



Remember: Y'all is singular. All y'all is plural. All y'all's is plural possessive. ~ Kinky Friedman

Some grammar problems occur because people use regionalisms when speaking, which may pose problems for people in the audience not familiar with the terms being used. **Regionalisms** are customary words or phrases used in different geographic regions. For example, growing up in Texas I used “y’all,” while my students in Pennsylvania might use “youins” or “yins” to mean a group of people. In the South, many people use the phrase “Coke” to mean any soft drink (probably because Coco-Cola is headquartered in Atlanta), while in the Northeast a “Coke” might be called a “tonic” and in other regions it might be called a “pop” or “soda pop.” You must be careful when using regional terms because your audience may not interpret your message correctly if they are not familiar with the regionalism you’re using. Try to find terms that are broader in their use, perhaps using “you all” or “soft drink” instead of the regional terms you may be used to using in everyday conversations.



Another grammar issue often linked to region is the use of colloquialisms.Colloquialisms are words or phrases used in informal speech but not typically used in formal speech. Using the word “crick” instead of “creek” is one example of a colloquialism, and in some areas “I’m getting ready to cook dinner” would be said, “I’m fixin’ to make dinner.” Colloquialisms can also be phrases that stem from particular regions. In some regions nice clothes are often referred to as your “Sunday best,” and in some areas, when people are preparing to vacuum, they note that they are getting ready to “red up the place” (make it ready for visitors).
Like regionalisms, an audience understanding your use of colloquialisms depends on their familiarity with the language tendencies of a certain geographic area, so steering clear of their use can help you make sure that your message is understood

by your audience. Another problem that regionalisms and colloquialisms have in common is that some audience members may consider their use a sign of lesser intellect because they are not considered proper grammar, so you also risk leaving a bad impression of yourself with audience members if you make these language choices for a formal presentation.

> I personally think we developed language because of our deep need to complain. ~ Lily Tomlin

other language choices to consider

Clichés are phrases or expressions that, because of overuse, have lost their rhetorical power. Examples include sayings such as “The early bird gets the worm” or “Making a mountain out of a molehill.” Phrases such as these were once powerful ways of communicating an idea, but because of overuse these phrases just don’t have the impact that they once had. Using clichés in your speeches runs the risk of having two negative attributions being placed on you by audience members. First, audience members may feel that your use of a cliché communicates that you didn’t take the speech seriously and/or were lazy in constructing it. Second, your audience members may perceive you as someone who is not terribly creative. Clichés area easy ways to communicate your message, but you might pay for that ease with negative feelings about you as a speaker from your audience. Try to avoid using clichés so that audiences are more likely to perceive you positively as a speaker.

Another consideration for speakers is whether or not to use **language central to the popular culture of a time period**. Whether we’re talking about “groovy, man” from the 1970s or “like totally awesome” from the 1980s, or “word to your mutha” from the 1990s, the language central to the popular culture of any time period is generally something to be avoided in formal public speaking. Like slang or profanity, language stemming from popular culture can be limited in its appeal. Some audiences may not understand it, some audiences may negatively evaluate you for using language that is too informal, and other audiences will have negative preconceived notions about “the kind of people” that use such language (e.g., “hippies” in the 1970s), and they will most likely transfer those negative evaluations onto you.



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13.6: Conclusion

This chapter has discussed a number of important aspects of language that good speakers should always consider.

It is important for speakers to remember the power of language and to harness that power effectively, yet ethically. We've discussed the relationship between the language we use and the way we see the world, the importance of using language that is clear, vivid, stylized, ethical and that reflects well on you as the speaker.
The difference between choosing one word over another can be as significant as an audience member remembering your presentation or forgetting it and/or an audience turning against you and your ideas. Taking a few extra moments to add some alliteration or to check for language that might offend others is time very well spent. The next time you have to write or speak about an issue, remember the importance of language and its impact on our lives— carefully consider what language will you use and how will those language choices make a difference in how your audiences defines and understands your topic.

> If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart. ~ Nelson Mandela

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14: VISUAL AIDS

14.1: Introduction
14.2: Effective Visual Aids
14.3: Types of Visual Aids
14.4: Design Principles
14.5: Implementation
14.6: Conclusion

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14.1: Introduction

Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Identify when and how visual aids will enhance a presentation
2. Identify the different types of visual aids
3. Identify effective and ineffective use of visual aids
4. Apply basic design principles to slide design
5. Identify best practices to incorporating visual aids in a presentation

"I know you can't read this from the back there," the presenter apologizes to a screen so full of words you would think the entire speech had been crammed into one slide. This is just the first of a seemingly endless string of slides I can't read, charts so full of numbers I can't decipher the meaning, and clip art so clichéd I can't help but roll my eyes and sigh. It is not long before I'm presented with an incredibly dense graph I can't make any sense of since he keeps interrupting my concentration with actual talking. "When is he going to come to the point already?" I think to myself as I start to doodle in the margins of the handout of the PowerPoint slides for the very talk I'm currently sitting through. Why did he even bother with a presentation? He could have just emailed us all of the handout and saved us from this painful, dull spectacle. As he reads from his slides and belabors his statistics, my mind drifts to grocery lists and the upcoming weekend. I can think of a hundred better uses for an hour.



It seems nearly impossible to see a presentation that doesn't revolve around a lengthy PowerPoint, so much so that you might think it was a requirement for giving a speech. The phrase "death by PowerPoint" was coined in response to the ubiquitous, wordy, and intellectually deadening presentations that focus on the slides rather than the content or the presenter. With the speaker reading directly from the slides, or worse, showing slides with text so small that it can't be read, viewers are often left wondering what the need for the presentation is at all. A simple handout would convey the message and save everyone's time. PowerPoint, however, is just one of the visual aids available to you as a speaker. Your ability to incorporate the right visual aid at the right time and in the right format can have a powerful effect on your audience. Because your message is the central focus of your speech, you only want to add visual aids that enhance your message, clarify the meaning of your words, target the emotions of your audience, and/or show what words fail to clearly describe.

> A visual image is a simple thing, a picture that enters the eyes. ~ Roy H. Williams

Learning how to create effective visuals that resonate with your audience is important for a quality presentation. Understanding basic principles of how visual information is processed alone and in combination with audio information can make or break your

visuals' effectiveness and impact. Incorporating visuals into your speech that complement your words rather than stand in place of them or distract from them, will set you apart from other presenters, increase your credibility, and make a bigger and more memorable impact on your audience.

> It has been said that 80% of what people learn is visual. ~ Allen Klein



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14.2: Effective Visual Aids

Before you just open up PowerPoint and begin creating slides, you should stop for a moment and consider what type of visual aid will best serve your purpose and if you even need an aid at all. Select a visual aid that adds to your presentation in a meaningful way, not merely something pretty to look at or a substitute for thorough preparation. Visuals are not there for you to hide behind when you are in front of your audience. Because of the tendency for novice speakers to use visuals as a crutch in their speeches, it has even been suggested that beginner speakers be forbidden from using visual aids while they are learning to present (Palmer, 2011).

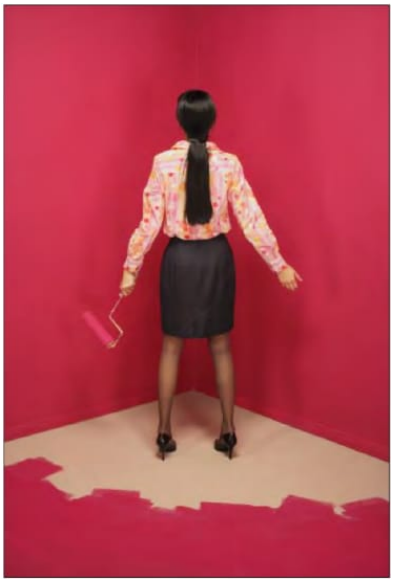
Visual aids serve a unique role in a presentation, and you should consider the specific purpose and desired outcome of your speech when determining if, when, to what extent, and in what format you use visual aids.

Visuals can spark interest, build emotional connections, clarify your words, explain abstract ideas, help draw conclusions, or increase understanding. For instance, a speaker may show a stacks of books to represent the amount of data storage in a speech about the evolution of computers; or demonstrate the proper use of ear plugs by distributing ear plugs, showing how to insert them, and then blasting an air horn in a speech about preventing hearing loss in order to make the value of ear protection more memorable and concrete. Done well—simple, visible, relevant, memorable, and audience-focused— visual aids can have a profound impact on your audience and your overall message.

Visual aids can be an important part of conveying your message effectively since people learn far more by hearing and seeing than through hearing or seeing alone (Vasile, 2004). The brain processes verbal and visual information separately. By helping the audience build visual and verbal memories, they are more likely to be able to remember the information at a later time (Malamed, 2009). If you can find a visual aid to complement what you are saying, you will help your audience understand the information you are presenting and remember your message. For example, a speaker might show the proper and improper ways to bow when being introduced in Japan while at the same time talking about the movements and also displaying a slide with the appropriate angles and postures for bowing. By using multiple modes in concert with each other, the message is strengthened by the pairing of words, images, and movement.

Not just any visual will do, however. Each visual should be relevant to your message, convey an important point, be clearly understandable, and be visible by your entire audience. Visuals should be used to make concepts easier to understand and to reinforce your message. They should illustrate important points that are otherwise hard to understand (Detz, 2000; Palmer, 2011; Young & Travis, 2008).

Use visuals for speeches about processes, products, or demonstrations of how to do something, such as a diagram of how email is delivered in a speech about computer security. Use visuals when you need to explain things you cannot see because they are hidden or abstract, like a model of your internal organs in a speech about gastric bypass surgery. Use them when you need to grab your audience's attention or stir their emotions. A speaker could use a photo of a starving child and a bag of rice that represents the daily calorie intake of a poor child in a speech about food insecurity to create a visceral reaction in the audience. As they say, a picture is worth a thousand words, so use images to tell a story or create a visual metaphor. Visual metaphors are useful when trying to evoke an emotion, such as showing an image of someone running or diving into a pool when you want to evoke action on the part of your audience. The images convey the message to "get going" or "dive in." When talking about numbers or statistics, use visuals to provide context, comparison, and to help your audience understand the meaning of data. Done well, graphs can convey your point where numbers only provide data (Malamed, 2009; Palmer, 2011; Tufte 1997; Vasile, 2004). While there are many possible reasons to use visuals in your presentation, your guiding principle should be: does this make the message clearer or more memorable? If you cannot answer with a resounding "YES!" then re-think the plan for your visuals and begin again.



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14.3: Types of Visual Aids

In the past, transparencies displayed with overhead projectors, posters, and flip charts were common visual aids, but these have mostly been replaced with computer technology. For many people, the term “visual aids” for presentations or speeches is synonymous with PowerPoint (often long, dry, painful PowerPoint at that), but this is just one type of visual aid. You should consider all the available options to determine what will be most effective and appropriate for your presentation.

> If you wear clothes that don't suit you, you're a fashion victim. You have to wear clothes that make you look better. ~ Vivienne Westwood

personal appearance

Some people chose to dress up as part of their presentation, and this can help set the tone of the speech or reinforce a specific point. A speaker may choose to wear a handmade sweater in a talk about knitting in order to inspire others to begin the hobby. Another speaker may opt for a firefighter's uniform in a speech about joining the local volunteer fire department in an effort to appeal to the respect most people have for people in uniform.

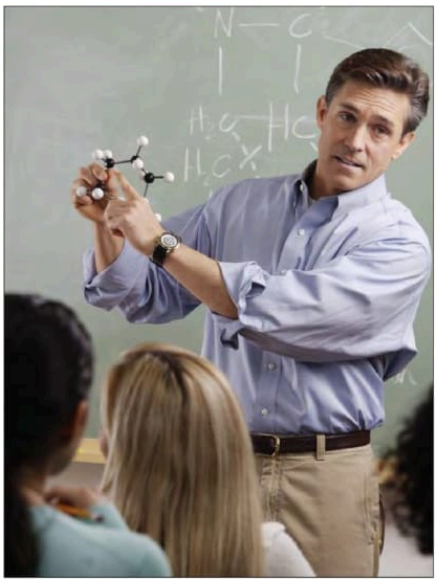
If you aren't dressing in relation to your topic, you should dress appropriately for your audience and venue. A presentation to a professional audience or at a professional conference would lend itself to appropriate business attire. If you are giving a presentation to your local Girl Scout troop, more casual clothing may be the best choice. Any time you are doing a demonstration, make sure you are dressed appropriately to give the demonstration. It is difficult for a speaker to show how to correctly put on a rock climbing harness if she is wearing a skirt the day of the presentation.

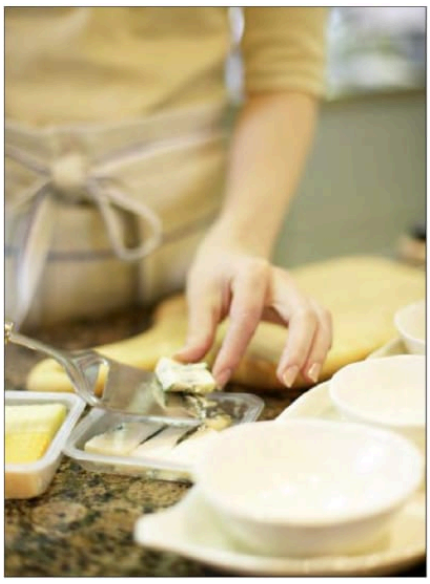
Beyond dressing appropriately for your audience and topic, the audience will make judgments about you even before your presentation begins. Your dress, mannerisms, the way you greet the audience when they are arriving, how you are introduced, and the first words out of your mouth all impact your credibility and ability to connect with your audience. Make sure you are calm and welcoming to your audience when they arrive and greet them in a professional manner. Your credibility and professionalism suffer when the audience arrives and you are busy scrambling around attempting to finish your preparations (Duarte, 2010).

objects and props

Objects and props, such as a bicycle helmet for a speech on bike safety or an actual sample of the product you are trying to sell, can greatly enhance your presentation. Seeing the actual item will often make it easier for your audience to understand your meaning and will help you connect with your audience on an emotional level. Props can be used as part of demonstrations (discussed below) or as a stand-alone item that you refer to in your speech.

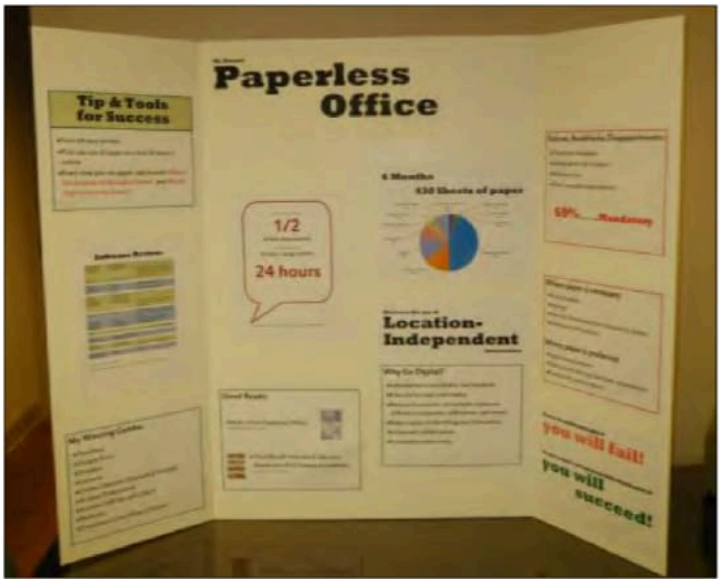
There are several important considerations for using props in your presentation. If you have a large audience, showing the prop at the front of the venue may mean that audience members can't see the item. The alternative to this is to pass the item around, though Young and Travis (2008) advise caution in passing objects around during your speech, as most people will be seeing the object after you have moved on with your talk. Having your prop out of sync with your presentation, either as it is passed around disrupting your audience's attention or by having your prop visible when you aren't talking about it, is distracting to your audience and message. To make the most effective use of props in your presentation, carefully consider how the object will be visible to your entire audience when you are speaking about it, and make sure it is out of sight when you are not.





Demonstration

A demonstration can serve two different purposes in a speech. First, it can be used to “wow” the audience. Showing off the features of your new product, illustrating the catastrophic failure of a poorly tied climbing knot, or launching a cork across the room during a chemistry experiment are all ways of capturing the audience's attention. Demonstration should not be gimmicky, but should add value to your presentation. When done well, it can be the memorable moment from your speech, so make sure it reinforces the central message of your talk.



Demonstration can also be used to show how something is done. People have different learning styles, and a process demonstration can help visual learners better understand the concept being taught. Consider for a moment

the difference between reading the instructions on how to perform CPR, watching someone perform CPR, and trying CPR on the training dummy. As evidenced by the huge number of online videos illustrating how to do something, there is great value in watching while you learn a new task.

If your presentation includes a process where seeing will improve understanding, consider including a demonstration.

Because you have a limited time to present, make sure your demonstrations are succinct, well rehearsed, and visible to the entire audience. Be prepared for the demonstration to fail and have a back-up plan in place. It is better to move forward with your presentation than to fret with trying to get your demonstration perfect or fixed. However, if you are providing a demonstration of your new product, make sure it is as error free as possible. If you can't be positive the product will perform as expected, it is better to skip the demonstration.

posters and flip charts

If you are presenting to a small audience, around a dozen people, you may choose to use a poster rather than PowerPoint. The focus of your poster should be to support your core message and can be left behind to remind those in attendance of your presentation after you have left. Posters should look professional (e.g., not handwritten), be visible to everyone in the room, and follow design rules covered later in this chapter. Before your presentation, you should ask whether posters must be hung or be free standing. For posters that will be hung from a wall, sturdy poster or matte boards will suffice. If your poster is going to be free standing or if you are going to use the same poster for multiple presentations, you should consider using a tri-fold display board.

Other text-based visual aids include white boards and flip charts. Both can be used to write or draw on during the presentation and should be used with several caveats. Writing during your presentation actually takes away from

your speaking time, so make sure to factor this into your speaking time. Speaking and writing at the same time can be tricky because the audience will have a difficult time processing what they are hearing when they are also trying to read what you write. Additionally, if you are writing, you need to be careful not to turn your back on your audience, which is makes it harder for them to hear you and for you to connect with your audience. Legible handwriting that can be seen at a distance is of prime importance, so using these kinds of visual aids should be limited to small audiences. While some speakers write and draw to highlight important points, this takes an enormous amount of skill and practice. For those with less developed skills, flip charts are best limited to situations where audience input is necessary for the direction or continuation of the presentation (Duarte, 2008).

> The soul never thinks without a picture. ~ Aristotle

audio and video

A large amount of digitized audio and video is now available to be included and embedded in your presentation. Select short clips; Young and Travis (2008) recommend only 10- 20 seconds, but this will depend in part on the length of the presentation, the purpose of the presentation, and clip content and relevance. You should not have a presentation primarily composed of audio/video clips. Select only clips that reinforce the message or serve as an appropriate segue into your next topic.

When including audio or video in your speech, there are several technical considerations. It is important that the clip be properly cued to start at exactly where you want it to begin playing. It distracts from both your audience's attention and your credibility when you are fumbling with technology during a speech. It is also important that your file format can be played on the computer you are using. Since not all computers will play all file formats, be sure to test playability and audio volume before your presentation. Again, going back to providing a professional appearance from your first interaction with your audience, you should iron out the technical details before they enter the room. As with a demonstration, if your clip isn't playing properly, move on rather than attempt to correct the issue. Fumbling with technology is a waste of your audience's valuable time.

handouts

There are many schools of thought on the use of handouts during a presentation. The most common current practice is that the presenters provide a copy of their PowerPoint slides to the participants before or after the presentation. This is so common that some academic and professional conferences require presenters to submit their slides prior to the event, so copies of the slides can be made for each attendee. Despite this prevailing trend, you should avoid using your slides as handouts because they serve different purposes. Using your presentation slides as the handout both shortchanges your slides and fails as a handout.

Handouts are best used to supplement the content of your talk. If you are providing statistical data, your slide may only show the relevant statistic focusing on the conclusion you want your audience to draw. Your handout, on the other hand, can contain the full table of data. If you need to show a complex diagram or chart, a handout will be more legible than trying to cram all that information on a slide. Since you need to simplify the data to make it understandable on a slide, the handout can contain the evidence for your message in a way that is legible, detailed, complex, and shows respect for the audience's time and intelligence (Tufte, 2003).

You don't need to include everything in your talk, and you don't need to pack all your information into your slides. Write a handout document with as much detail as you want and keep the slides simple. Presenters often feel the need to display all the data and information they have so they will appear knowledgeable, informed, and thoroughly prepared. You can help ease this feeling by creating a handout with all of the detailed data you wish, which leaves your slides open to focus on your key message (Reynolds, 2008).

> There are many true statements about complex topics that are too long to fit on a PowerPoint slide. ~ Edward Tufte

Crafting an appropriate handout will take additional time for the presenter, but doing so will result in a take-away document that will stand on its own and a slide show that focuses on effective visual content. Duarte (2008) and Tufte (2003) recommend handouts only for dense, detailed information. Reynolds (2008) expands on this idea, noting that your handout needs to be complete enough to stand in your place since you won't be there to present the information or answer questions.

When to distribute handouts is also heavily debated. So common is the practice of providing handouts at the beginning of a presentation that it may seem wrong to break the convention. It is important to understand, however, that if people have paper in front of them while you are speaking, their attention will be split between the handout, your other visual aids, and your words. To counter this, you might consider distributing handouts as they are needed during the presentation and allowing time for people to review them before continuing on (Vasile, 2004). This may not be a viable option for shorter presentations, and the interruption in the flow of the presentation may be hard to recover from. Unless having the documents in front of your audience is absolutely critical to the success of the presentation, handouts should be distributed at the end of the presentation.

slideware

Slideware is a generic term for the software used create and display slide shows such as Microsoft PowerPoint, Apple iWorks Keynote, Google Drive Presentation, Zoho Show and others. Composed of individual slides, collectively known as the **slide deck**, slideware is a de facto standard for presentation visual aids despite criticisms and complaints about the format. In truth, the problem is not with the software but in the use of the program. The focus of much of the remainder of this chapter will be

suggestions and best practices for creating effective slide decks that will be high impact and avoid many of the complaints of slideware detractors. Before this discussion, there are two distinct slideware presentation styles that should be mentioned.



A picture is a poem without words. ~ Horace

Pecha Kucha

Pecha Kucha is a method of presenting using a slide deck of 20 slides that display for 20 seconds per slide, advance automatically, and generally contain no text (Duarte, 2008). This method began in 2003 as a way to contain the length of presentations of architects and continues to grow in popularity, but is still reserved mostly for people in creative industries (Lehtonen, 2011). Because of the restrictive format, Pecha Kucha-style presentations help the speaker practice editing, pacing, connecting with the audience, focusing on the message, and using images in place of words (Beyer, 2011).

Prezi

While not quite slideware, Prezi is digital presentation software that breaks away from the standard slide deck presentation. It requires users to plot out their themes before adding primarily image-focused content (Panag, 2010). Instead of flipping through the slide deck, the presenter zooms in and out of the presentation to visually demonstrate connections not available in other slideware. The design of the software lends itself toward more rapidly changing visuals. This helps to keep the viewer engaged but also lends itself to over-populating the blank canvas with images (Yee & Hargis, 2010).

Prezi's fast moving images and, at times, unusual movement can make users dizzy or disoriented. Careful work is needed during planning and practice so that the point of the talk isn't the wow factor of the Prezi software, but that your visuals enhance your presentation. The best way to learn more about this emerging tool is to visit the Prezi website to view examples (http://prezi.com/explore/).
If opting to use Prezi in a corporate environment, you should strongly consider one of the paid options for the sole purpose of removing the Prezi logo from the presentation.

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14.4: Design Principles

Slide and slide show design have a major impact on your ability to get your message across to your audience. Numerous books address various design fundamentals and slide design, but there isn't always consensus on what is “best.” What research has shown, though, is that people have trouble grasping information when it comes at them simultaneously. “They will either listen to you or read your slides; they cannot do both” (Duarte, 2010, p. 178). This leaves you, the presenter, with a lot of power to direct or scatter your audience's attention. This section will serve as an overview of basic design considerations that even novices can use to improve their slides.

First and foremost, design with your audience in mind. Your slide show is not your outline. The show is also not your handout. As discussed earlier, you can make a significantly more meaningful, content-rich handout that complements your presentation if you do not try to save time by making a slide show that serves as both. Keep your slides short, create a separate handout if needed, and write as many notes for yourself as you need.

All decisions, from the images you use to their placement, should be done with a focus on your message, your

medium, and your audience. Each slide should reinforce or enhance your message, so make conscious decisions about each element and concept you include (Reynolds, 2008) and edit mercilessly. Taken a step further, graphic designer Robin Williams (2004) suggests each element be placed on the slide deliberately in relation to every other element on the slide.



Figure 14.4.1

Providing the right amount of information, neither too much nor too little, is one of the key aspects in effective communication (Kosslyn, 2007). See Figure 13.1 as an example of slides with too little or too much information. The foundation of this idea is that if the viewers have too little information, they must struggle to put the pieces of the presentation together. Most people, however, include too much information (e.g., slides full of text, meaningless images, overly complicated charts), which taxes the audience's ability to process the message. “There is simply a limit to a person’s ability to process new information efficiently and effectively” (Reynolds, 2008, p. 122). As a presenter, reducing the amount of information directed at your audience (words, images, sounds, etc.) will help them to better remember your message (Mayer, 2011). In this case, less is actually more.

The first strategy to keeping it simple is to include only one concept or idea per slide. If you need more than one slide, use it, but don't cram more than one idea on a slide. While many have tried to proscribe the number of slides you need based on the length of your talk, there is no formula that works for every presentation. Use only the number of slides necessary to communicate your message, and make sure the number of slides corresponds to the amount of time allotted for your speech. Practice with more and fewer slides and more and less content on each slide to find the balance between too much information and too little.

With simplicity in mind, the goal is to have a slide that can be understood in 3 seconds. Think of it like a billboard you are passing

on the highway (Duarte, 2010). You can achieve this by reducing the amount of irrelevant information, also known as noise, in your slide as much as possible. This might include eliminating background images, using clear icons and images, or creating simplified graphs. Your approach should be to remove as much from your slide as possible until it no longer makes any sense if you remove more (Reynolds, 2008).



Figure 14.4.3

slide layout

It is easy to simply open up your slideware and start typing in the bullet points that outline your talk. If you do this, you will likely fall into the traps for which PowerPoint is infamous. Presentation design experts Reynolds (2008) and Duarte (2010) both recommend starting with paper and pen. This will help you break away from the text-based, bullet-filled slide shows we all dread. Instead, consider how you can turn your words and concepts into images. Don't let the software lead you into making a mediocre slide show.

Regarding slide design, focus on simplicity. Don't over-crowd your slide with text and images. Cluttered slides are hard to understand (see Figure 14.4.2). Leaving empty space, also known as **white space,** gives breathing room to your design. The white space actually draws attention to your focus point and makes your slide appear more elegant and professional. Using repetition of color, font, images, and layout throughout your presentation will help tie all of your slides together. This is especially important if a group is putting visuals together collaboratively. If you have handouts, they should also match this formatting in order to convey a more professional look and tie all your pieces together (Reynolds, 2008).

Another general principle is to use contrast to highlight your message. Contrast should not be subtle. Make type sizes significantly different. Make contrasting image placements, such as horizontal and vertical, glaringly obvious. A general principle to follow: if things are not the same, then make them very, very different (Williams, 2004), as in Figure Figure 14.4.3.



Figure 14.4.4

A common layout design is called the rule of thirds. If you divide the screen using two imaginary lines horizontally and two vertically, you end up with nine sections. The most visually interesting and pleasing portions of the screen will be at the points where the lines intersect. Aliening your text and images with these points is preferred to centering everything on the screen. (Kadavy, 2011; Reynolds, 2008). See Figure 14.4.4. Feel free to experiment with right and left aligned content for contrast and interest. Sticking with a centered layout means more work trying to make the slide interesting (Williams, 2004). Understanding how people view images (and thus slides) can help you direct the viewer's attention to the main point of your slide In countries that read text from left to right and top to bottom. like English-speaking countries, people tend to also read images and slides the same way. Starting in the upper left of the screen, they read in a Z pattern, exiting the page in the bottom right corner unless their vision is side-tracked by the objects they are looking at (as in Figure 14.4.5).

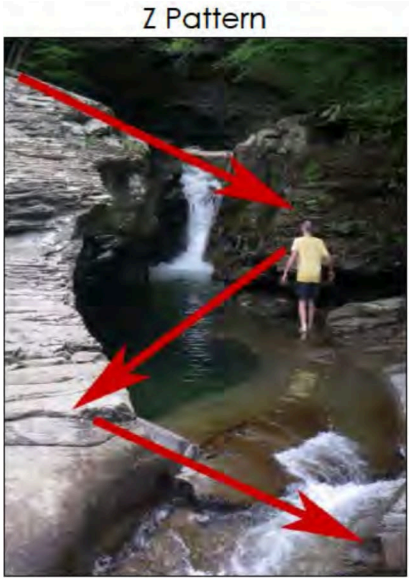


Figure 14.4.5

Viewers' eyes are scanning from focus point to focus point in an image, so you need to consciously create visual cues to direct them to the relevant information. Cues can be created subtly by the placement of objects in the slide, by showing movement, or more obviously by using a simple arrow (Malamed, 2009). Make sure all people and pets are facing into your slide and preferably at your main point, as in Figure 13.6. If your slide contains a road, path, car, plane, etc., have them also facing into your slide. When the natural motion or gaze of your images points away from your slide, your viewers look that way too. Being aware of and addressing the natural tendencies of people when viewing images can help you select images and design slides that keep the viewer engaged in your message (Duarte. 2008).



Figure 14.4.6

backgrounds and effects

PowerPoint and other slideware has a variety of templates containing backgrounds that are easy to implement for a consistent slide show. Most of them, however, contain distracting graphics that are counter to the simplicity you are aiming for in order to produce a clear message. It is best to use solid colors, if you even need a background at all. For some slide shows, you can make the slides with full-screen images, thus eliminating the need for a background color.

> *Graphic design is the paradise of individuality, eccentricity, heresy, abnormality, hobbies and humors. ~George Santayana*

Should you choose to use a background color, make sure you are consistent throughout your presentation. Different colors portray different meanings, but much of this is cultural and contextual, so there are few hard and fast rules about the meaning of colors. One universal recommendation is to avoid the color red because it has been shown to reduce your ability to think clearly. Bright colors, such as yellow, pink, and orange, should also be avoided as background colors, as they are too distracting. Black, on the other hand, is generally associated with sophistication and can be a very effective background as long as there is sufficient contrast with the other elements on your slide (Kadavy, 2011). When designing your presentation, it is tempting to show off your tech skills with glitzy transitions, wipes, fades, moving text, sounds, and a variety of other actions. These are distracting to your audience and should be avoided. They draw attention away from you and your message, instead focusing the audience's attention on the screen. Since people naturally look at what is moving and expect it to mean something, meaningless effects, no matter how subtle, distract your audience, and affect their ability to grasp the content. Make sure that all your changes are meaningful and reinforce your message (Duarte, 2008; Kosslyn, 2007).

colors

There are complicated and fascinating biological and psychological processes associated with color and color perception that are beyond the scope of this chapter. Because color can have such a huge impact on the ability to see and understand your visuals, this section will explore basic rules and recommendations for working with color.

> Color does not add a pleasant quality to design - it reinforces it. ~ Pierre Bonnard

Much of what we perceive in terms of a color is based on what color is next to it. Be sure to use colors that contrast so they can be easily distinguished from each other (think yellow and dark blue for high contrast, not dark blue and purple). High contrast improves visibility, particularly at a distance. To ensure you have sufficient contrast, you can view your presentation in **greyscale** either in the software if available or by printing out your slides on a black and white printer (Bajaj, 2007).



Figure 14.4.7

As seen in Figure 14.4.7, warm colors (reds, oranges, yellows) appear to come to the foreground when set next to a cool color (blues, grays, purples) which recede into the background. Tints (pure color mixed with white, think pink) stand out against a darker background. Shades (pure color mixed with black, think maroon) recede into a light background (Kadavy, 2011). If you want something to stand out, these color combination rules can act as a guide.



Figure 14.4.8

Avoid using red and green closely together. Red-green color blindness is the predominate form of color blindness, meaning that the person cannot distinguish between those two colors (Vorick, 2011). There are other forms of color blindness, and you can easily check to see if your visuals will be understandable to everyone using an online tool such as the Coblis Color Blindness Simulator (http://www.colblindor.com/coblis- color-blindness-simulator/) to preview images as a color-blind person would see it. Certain red-blue pairings can be difficult to look at for the non-color blind. These colors appear to vibrate when adjacent to each other and are distracting and sometimes unpleasant to view (Kosslyn, 2007).

With all these rules in place, selecting a **color palette**, the group of colors to use throughout your presentation, can be daunting. Some color pairs, like **complementary colors** or **analogous colors** as in Figure 14.4.8, are naturally pleasing to the eye and can be easy options for the color novice. There are also online tools for selecting pleasing color palettes using standard color pairings including Kuler (https://kuler.adobe.com/) and Color Scheme Designer (colors chemedesigner.com/). You can also use websites like Colorbrewer (http://colorbrewer2.org/) to help identify an appropriate palette of colors that are visually distinct, appropriate

for the colorblind, and that will photocopy well, should you decide to also include this information in a handout.

> I'm a visual thinker, not a language-based thinker. My brain is like Google Images.~ Temple Grandin

fonts

There are thousands of fonts available today. One might even say there has been a renaissance in font design with the onset of the digital age. Despite many beautiful options, it is best to stick to standard fonts that are considered screen-friendly. These include the **serif fonts** Times New Roman, Georgia, and Palatino, and the **sansserif fonts** Ariel, Helvetica, Tahoma, and Veranda (Kadavy, 2011). These fonts work well with the limitations of computer screens and are legible from a distance if sized appropriately. Other non-standard fonts, while attractive and eye-catching, may not display properly on all computers. If the font isn't installed on the computer you are presenting from, the default font will be used which alters the text and design of the slide.

Readability is a top concern with font use, particularly for those at the back of your audience, furthest from the screen. After you have selected a font (see previous paragraph), make sure that the font size is large enough for everyone to read clearly. If you have the opportunity to use the presentation room before the event, view your slides from the back of the room. They should be clearly visible. This is not always possible and should not be done immediately preceding your talk, as you won't have time to effectively edit your entire presentation. Presentation guru Duarte (2008) describes an ingenious way to test visibility from your own computer. Measure your monitor diagonally in inches, display your slides, then step back the same number of feet as you measured on your monitor in inches. If you have a 17 inch screen, step back 17 feet to see what is legible.

> Create your own visual style... let it be unique for yourself and yet identifiable for others. ~ Orson Welles

In addition to font style and size, there are other font “rules” to improve your slides. Don't use decorative, script, or visually complex fonts. Never use the Comic Sans font if you want to retain any credibility with your audience. If you must use more than one font, use one serif font and one sansserif font. Use the same font(s) and size(s) consistently throughout your presentation. Don't use all upper case or all bold. Avoid small caps and all word art, shadows, outlines, stretching text, and other visual effects. Use italics and underlines only for their intended purposes, not for design. While there are many rules listed here, they can be summarized as” keep it as simple as possible” (Kadavy, 2011; Kosslyn, 2007). See Figure 14.4.9 for examples of poor font choices.



Figure 14.4.9

text

Nothing is more hotly debated in slide design than the amount of text that should be on a slide. Godin says “no more than six words on a slide. EVER” (as cited in Reynolds, 2008, p. 20). Other common approaches include the 5x5 rule – 5 lines of text, 5 words per line – and similar 6x6 and 7x7 rules (Weaver, 1999). Even with these recommendations, it is still painfully common to see slides with so much text on them that they can't be read by the audience. The type has to be so small to fit all the words on

the slide that no one can read it. Duarte (2008) keenly points out that if you have too many words, you no longer have a visual aid. You have either a paper or a teleprompter, and she recommends opting for a small number of words.

Once you understand that the words on the screen are competing for your audience's attention, it will be easier to edit your slide text down to a minimum. The next time you are watching a presentation and the slide changes, notice how you aren't really grasping what the speaker is saying, and you also aren't really understanding what you are reading. Studies have proved this split-attention affects our ability to retain information (Mayer, 2001); so when presenting, you need to give your audience silent reading time when you display a new slide. That is: talk, advance to your next slide, wait for them to read the slide, and resume talking. If you consider how much time your audience is reading rather than listening, hopefully you will decide to reduce the text on your slide and return the focus back to you, the speaker, and your message.

There are several ways to reduce the number of words on your page, but don't do it haphazardly. Tufte (2003) warns against abbreviating your message just to make it fit. He says this dumbs down your message, which does a disservice to your purpose and insults your audience's intelligence. Instead, Duarte (2008) and Reynolds (2008) recommend turning as many concepts as possible into images. Studies have shown that people retain more information when they see images that relate to the words they are hearing (Mayer, 2001). And when people are presented information for a very short time, they remember images better than words (Reynolds, 2008).

Tip

An easy way to judge how much time your audience needs to read your slide silently, is to read the slide text to yourself in reverse order.

The ubiquitous use of bulleted lists is also hotly debated. PowerPoint is practically designed around the bulleted-list format, even though is it regularly blamed for dull, tedious presentations with either overly dense or overly superficial content (Tufte, 2003). Mostly this format is used (incorrectly) as a presenter's outline."No one can do a good presentation with slide after slide of bullet points. No One" (Reynolds, 2008, p. 130). Reserve bulleted lists for specifications or explaining the order of processes. In images, a short phrase, or even no visual at all.

Quotes, on the other hand, are not as offensive to design when they are short, legible, and infrequently used. They can be a very powerful way to hammer a point home or to launch into your next topic (Reynolds, 2008). See Figure 13.10 for an example. If you do use a quote in your slide show, immediately stop and read it out loud or allow time for it to be read silently. If the quote is important enough for you to include it in the talk, the quote deserves the audience's time to read and think about it. Alternately, use a photo of the speaker or of the subject with a phrase from the quote you will be reading them, making the slide enhance the point of the quote.

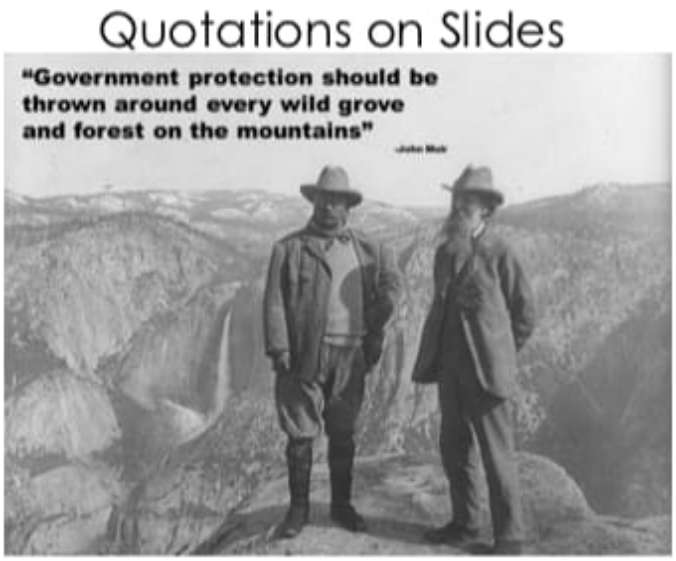


Figure 14.4.10

images

Images can be powerful and efficient ways to tap into your audience's emotions. Use photographs to introduce an abstract idea, to evoke emotion, to present evidence, or to direct the audience attention, just make sure it is compatible with your message (Kosslyn, 2007). Photos aren't the only images available. You might consider using simplified images like **silhouettes**, **line art**, diagrams, enlargements, or **exploded views**, but these should be high quality and relevant. Simplified can be easier to understand, particularly if you are showing something that has a lot of detail. Simple images also translate better than words to a multicultural audience (Malamed, 2009). In all cases, choose only images that enhance your spoken words and are professional-quality. This generally rules out the clip art that comes with slideware, whose use is a sign of amateurism. Select high-quality images and don't be afraid to use your entire slide to display the image. Boldness with images often adds impact.

When using images, do not enlarge them to the point that the image becomes blurry, also known as **pixelation**. Pixelation, (Figure 14.4.11) is caused when the resolution of your image is too low for your output device (e.g. printer, monitor, projector). When selecting images, look for clear ones that can be placed in your presentation without enlarging them. A good rule of thumb is to use images over 1,000 pixels wide for filling an entire slide. If your images begin to pixelate, either reduce the size of the image or select a different image.



Figure 14.4.11

Never use an image that has a **watermark** on it, as in Figure 14.4.2. A watermark is text or a logo that is placed in a digital image to prevent people from re-using it. It is common for companies that sell images to have a preview available that has a watermark on it. This allows you, the potential customer, to see the image, but prevents you from using the image until you have paid for it. Using a watermarked image in your presentation is unprofessional. Select another image without a watermark, take a similar photo yourself, or pay to get the watermark-free version.



Figure 14.4.12

You can create images yourself, use free images, or pay for images from companies like iStockphoto for your presentations. Purchasing images can get expensive quickly, and searching for free images is time consuming. Be sure to only use images that you have permission or rights to use and give proper credit for their use. If you are looking for free images, try searching the Creative Commons database (http://search.creativecommons.org/) for images from places like Flickr, Google, and others. The creators of images with a **Creative Commons License** allow others to use their work, but with specific restrictions. What is and isn't allowed is described in the license for each image. Generally, images can be used in educational or non-commercial settings at no cost as long as you give the photographer credit. Also, images created by the U.S. government and its agencies are copyright free and can be used at no cost.

One final consideration with using images: having the same image on every page, be it part of the slide background or your company logo, can be distracting and should be removed or minimized. As mentioned earlier, the more you can simplify your slide, the easier it will be for your message to be understood.

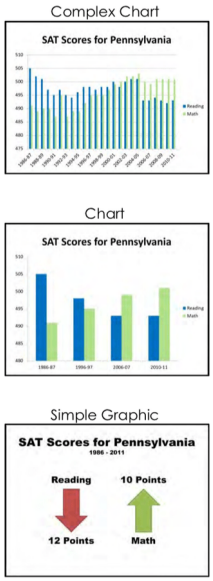


Figure 14.4.13

graphs and charts

If you have numerical data that you want to present, consider using a graph or chart. You are trying to make a specific point with

the data on the slide, so make sure that the point – the conclusion you want your audience to draw – is clear. This may mean that you reduce the amount of data you present, even though it is tempting to include all of your data on your slide.

It is best to minimize the amount of information and focus instead on the simple and clear conclusion (Duarte, 2008). You can include the complete data set in your handout if you feel it is necessary (Reynolds, 2008). Particularly when it comes to numerical data, identify the meaning in the numbers and exclude the rest. “Audiences are screaming ‘make it clear,’ not ‘cram more in.’ You won’t often hear an audience member say, ‘That presentation would have been so much better if it were longer’” (Duarte, 2008, p. 118). In some cases you can even ditch the graph altogether and display the one relevant fact that is your conclusion.

Different charts have different purposes, and it is important to select the one that puts your data in the appropriate context to be clearly understood (Tufte, 1997). Pie charts show how the parts relate to the whole and are suitable for up to eight segments, as long as they remain visually distinct (Duarte, 2008). Start your first slice of the pie at 12:00 with your smallest portion and continue around the circle clockwise as the sections increase in size. Use a line graph to show trends over time or how data relates or interacts. Bar charts are good for showing comparisons of size or magnitude (Kosslyn, 2007; Kupsch, 1998) and for showing precise comparisons (Duarte, 2008). There are other types of charts and graphs available, but these are the most common.

When designing charts, one should use easily distinguishable colors with clear labels. Be consistent with your colors and data groupings (Kosslyn, 2007). For clarity, avoid using 3-D graphs and charts, and remove as much of the background noise (lines, shading, etc.) as possible (Reynolds, 2008). All components of your graph, once the clutter is removed, should be distinct from any background color. Finally, don't get too complex in any one graph, make sure your message is as clear as possible, and make sure to visually highlight the conclusion you want the audience to draw.

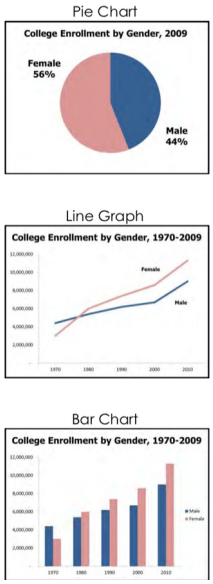


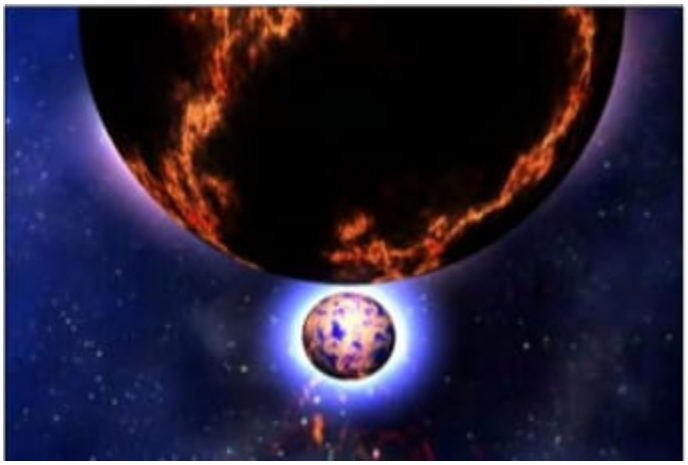
Figure 14.4.14

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14.5: Implementation

If you have chosen to use visual aids in your presentation, it is important to give credit where credit is due. Make sure to mention the source of your props if you borrowed them from a person or organization. You should cite the source of all data and images used in your presentation. There are conflicting opinions about whether the source citations should be on the individual slides or at the end of the presentation on a final slide. Including citations throughout the slide deck places the source information adjacent to the relevant text, but it is often so small as to be unreadable. Placing citations at the end of your presentation reduces clutter on the slides and allows the citation information to be larger and more legible. In all cases, refer to your sources when speaking and be able to provide exact citations for anyone interested in your sources. Citing your sources provides credibility to your content and shows you are a professional.



Once you have decided on which visual aids to use and have prepared them for your presentation, you should practice with them repeatedly. Through practice you will be able to seamlessly incorporate them into your presentation, which will reduce distractions, increase your credibility, and keep the audience's attention focused on your message. Practice will also help determine the time required for your presentation so you can edit before you speak if necessary. No audience benefits from the speaker looking at the time, admitting how off schedule they are, or rushing through their remaining slides.

No matter which visual aid(s) you have chosen, they should be displayed only when you are ready to talk about them. Otherwise, the audience will spend time reading any text or guessing the meaning of the visual instead of focusing on the presenter's words. Once used, visuals should also be removed from sight so as not to continue to distract the audience (Palmer, 2011).

> A picture is the expression of an impression. If the beautiful were not in us, how would we ever recognize it? ~ Ernst Haas

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14.6: Conclusion

This chapter addresses both the role and value of using visual aids, including slideware, objects, audio and video clips, and demonstrations. They should be used only when they help to clarify or enhance your spoken words or will help your audience remember your message.

Be sure that any visual aid you use adds to what you are saying. Slides should be brief, easy to understand, and complement your message. Objects and slides should not be revealed before you begin talking about them, lest your audience become distracted from your point. Remember that people cannot read your slides or handouts at the same time as they are listening to you.

When designing slides make sure they are clear and visible to the entire audience. Contrasting colors with consideration for common color blindness should be used. Screen- friendly fonts of sufficient size to be read from the back of the room are extremely important. Avoid clutter on your slides and leverage the power of white space, aiming always for simplicity and impact.

Practice your presentation with your visual aids, remembering to allow time for your audience to read any new text you present. Be prepared to continue in a professional manner should your visuals falter or fail. The ease with which you implement your visuals and move past any problems demonstrates your professionalism and bolsters your credibility.

Effective selection, design, and implementation of visual aids will increase your audience's attention and help to vanquish “death by PowerPoint.” It will make you and your message clearer and more memorable, which will help you to achieve your primary goal: an audience that understands and connects with your message.

Table 14.6.1 Visual Aid Tips

◈ Select only visual aids that enhance or clarify your message.
◈ Select visual aids that will have the greatest impact on your audience.
◈ Speak to your audience not to your visual aid or the screen.
◈ Reveal your visuals only when they are relevant to your current point, and take them away when they are no longer being talked about.
◈ Practice with your visual aids and make sure all demonstrations work smoothly.
◈ Design visuals so they can be understood within 3 seconds.
◈ Keep your visuals as simple as possible while still conveying your message.
◈ When presenting text to your audience, give them time to read before you begin speaking again.
◈ Be prepared to move on with your presentation should any of the visual aids falter or fail. No matter how great your visuals are, you need to be prepared to speak without them.

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15: PERSUASIVE SPEAKING

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15.1: Introduction

Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Explain what a persuasive speech is.
2. Describe the functions of persuasive speeches.
3. List the different types of persuasive speeches.
4. Identify persuasive strategies that make a speech more effective.
5. Apply the appropriate organizational pattern based on your persuasive goals.
6. Distinguish between ethical and unethical forms of persuasion.
7. Apply module concepts in final questions and activities.

At the gas pump, on eggs in the grocery store, in the examination room of your doctor's office, everywhere you go, advertisers are trying to persuade you to buy their product. This form of persuasion used to be reserved for magazines and television commercials, but now it is unavoidable. One marketing research firm estimates that a person living in a large city today sees approximately 5,000 ads per day (Story, 2007). It is easy to assume that our over-exposure to persuasion makes us immune to its effect, but research demonstrates that we are more susceptible than ever. In fact, advertisers have gotten even better at learning exactly the right times and places to reach us by studying different audiences and techniques (Aral & Walker, 2012; Blackman, 2009; Rosendaal, Lapierre, van Reijmersdal, & Buijzen, 2011).

> I do not read advertisements. I would spend all of my time wanting things. ~ Franz Kafka

We also encounter persuasion in our daily interactions. Imagine you stop at a café on your way to school, and the barista persuades you to try something new. While enjoying your espresso, a sales person attempts to persuade you to upgrade your home Internet package. Later, while walking across campus, you observe students who are enthusiastically inviting others to join their organizations. Within thirty minutes, you have encountered at least three instances of persuasion, and there were likely others emanating in the background unbeknownst to you. Amidst being persuaded, you were also actively persuading others. You may have tried to convince the Internet sales person to give you a better deal and an extended contract, and later persuaded a group of friends to enjoy a night on the town. Persuasion is everywhere.

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15.2: What is Persuasive Speaking?

You are used to experiencing persuasion in many forms, and may have an easy time identifying examples of **persuasion**, but can you explain how persuasion works? Osborn and Osborn (1997) define persuasion this way: "the art of convincing others to give favorable attention to our point of view" (p. 415). There are two components that make this definition a useful one. First, it acknowledges the artfulness, or skill, required to persuade others. Whether you are challenged with convincing an auditorium of 500 that they should sell their cars and opt for a pedestrian lifestyle or with convincing your friends to eat pizza instead of hamburgers, persuasion does not normally just happen. Rather it is planned and executed in a thoughtful manner. Second, this definition delineates the ends of persuasion—to convince others to think favorably of our point of view. Persuasion "encompasses a wide range of communication activities, including advertising, marketing, sales, political campaigns, and interpersonal relations" (German, Gronbeck, Ehninger, & Monroe, 2004, p. 242). Because of its widespread utility, persuasion is a pervasive part of our everyday lives.



Although persuasion occurs in nearly every facet of our day-to-day lives, there are occasions when more formal acts of persuasion—persuasive speeches—are appropriate. Persuasive speeches "intend to influence the beliefs, attitudes, values, and acts of others" (O'Hair & Stewart, 1999, p. 337). Unlike an informative speech, where the speaker is charged with making some information known to an audience, in a persuasive speech the speaker attempts to influence people to think or behave in a particular way. This art of convincing others is propelled by reasoned argument, the cornerstone of persuasive speeches. Reasoned arguments, which might consist of facts, statistics, personal testimonies, or narratives, are employed to motivate audiences to think or behave differently than before they heard the speech.

There are particular circumstances that warrant a persuasive approach. As O'Hair and Stewart point out, it makes sense to engage strategies of persuasion when your end goal is to influence any of these things—"beliefs, attitudes, values, and acts"—or to reinforce something that already exists. For instance, safe sex advocates often present messages of reinforcement to already safe sexual actors, reminding them that wearing condoms and asking for consent are solid practices with desirable outcomes. By the same token, safer sex advocates also routinely spread the message to populations who might be likely to engage in unsafe or nonconsensual sexual behavior.

In a nutshell, persuasive speeches must confront the complex challenge of influencing or reinforcing peoples' beliefs, attitudes, values, or actions, all characteristics that may seem natural, ingrained, or unchangeable to an audience. Because of this, rhetors (or speakers) must motivate their audiences to think or behave differently by presenting reasoned arguments.

> The triumph of persuasion over force is the sign of a civilized society. ~ Mark Skousen

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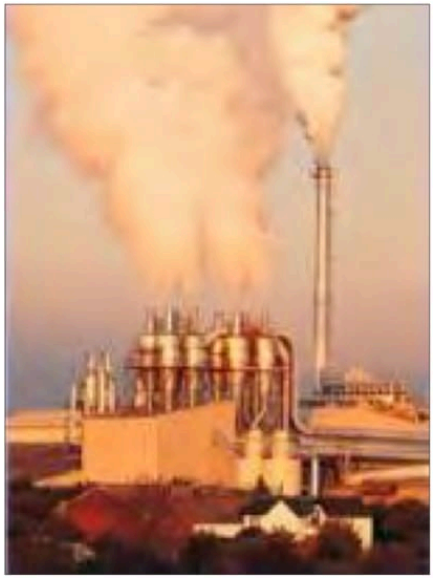
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15.3: Functions of Persuasive Speeches

So far, we have discussed the functions of persuasive speeches—to influence or reinforce—only peripherally as they relate to our working definition. Next, we turn to an in-depth discussion about how persuasive speeches function.

Speeches to Convince

Some persuasive speeches attempt to influence or reinforce particular beliefs, attitudes, or values. In these speeches, called speeches to convince, the speaker seeks to establish agreement about a particular topic. For instance, a climatologist who believes that global warming is caused by human behavior might try to convince an audience of government officials to adopt this belief. She might end her speech by saying, “In recent years, humans have been producing machines that expel CO2 either in their production, their consumption, or in both. At the same time, the level of CO2 in the atmosphere increased dramatically. The connection is clear to many of us that humans have caused this damage and that it is up to us to similarly intervene.” Throughout her speech, the scientist would likely recite a number of statistics linking human productivity with global warming in her effort to convince the government officials that both the causes and solutions to the climatic changes were a distinctly human problem.



Speeches to Actuate

Other times, persuasive speeches attempt to influence or reinforce actions. **Speeches to actuate** are designed to motivate particular behaviors. Think of a time when you found yourself up at 2 a.m. watching infomercials. Someone on the television screen was trying very hard to sell you a $20 spatula that morphed into a spoon with the click of a button. The salesperson described its utility and innovation for your kitchen, and he described why it would be a good purchase for you—after all, how does a busy person like you have time to use two different utensils? “But wait,” he would say, “there’s more!” In case he had not already convinced you that you needed this kitchen tool, he ended his spiel with a final plea—an extra Spoonatula for free. In this infomercial, the salesperson attempted to convince you that you needed to buy the kitchen tool—it will save you time and money. Thus, not only was the commercial an attempt to convince you to change how you felt about spoons and spatulas, but also an effort to incite you to action— to actually purchase the Spoonatula. This illustrates a function of persuasive speeches, to motivate behavior.

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15.4: Types of Persuasive Speeches

Persuasive speeches revolve around propositions that can be defended through the use of data and reasoning. Persuasive propositions respond to one of three types of questions: questions of fact, questions of value, and questions of policy. These questions can help the speaker determine what forms of argument and reasoning are necessary to support a specific purpose statement.

> Everything we hear is an opinion, not a fact. Everything we see is a perspective, not the truth. ~ Marcus Aurelius

propositions of fact

Questions of fact ask whether something "can potentially be verified as either true or false" (Herrick, 2011, p. 20). These questions can seem very straightforward—something is or it is not—but in reality, the search for truth is a complex endeavor. Questions of fact rarely address simple issues such as, "is the sky blue?" They tend to deal with deep-seated controversies such as the existence of global warming, the cause of a major disaster, or someone's guilt or innocence in a court of law. To answer these questions, a proposition of fact may focus on whether or not something exists. For example, in the U.S. there is a debate over the prevalence of racial profiling, the practice of law enforcement officers targeting people for investigation and arrest based on skin color. On one hand, the American Civil Liberties Union advances the proposition: "Racial profiling continues to be a prevalent and egregious form of discrimination in the United States" (ACLU, 2012, para. 2). They verify this claim using data from government studies, crime statistics, and personal narratives. However, journalist Heather MacDonald (2002) proposes that studies confirming racial profiling are often based in "junk science"; in fact she says, "there's no credible evidence that racial profiling exists" (para. 1). To substantiate her proposition, MacDonald relies on a study of traffic stops on the New Jersey turnpike along with personal narratives, policy analysis, and testimony from a criminologist. The claim that racial profiling exists is either true or false, but there is evidence for and against both propositions; therefore no consensus exists.

While some propositions of fact deal with the existence of a particular phenomenon or the accuracy of a theory, others focus on causality. For example, the U.S. government appointed a commission to evaluate the causes of the nation's recent economic crisis. In their report the commission concluded by proposing that recklessness in the financial industry and failures on the part of government regulators caused the economic crisis. However, Congressman Paul Ryan has proposed that Medicare is to blame, and the chief investment officer at JP Morgan has proposed that U.S. housing policy is the root cause of the problem (Angelides, 2011). Each of these three propositions of fact is backed by its own set of historical and economic analysis.



Propositions of fact may also be used to make predictions concerning what will happen in the future. In the summer of 2011, ten miles of a popular Southern California freeway were closed for an entire weekend. Motorists, news outlets, and government officials called the closure "Carmageddon" because they proposed there would be an "inevitable and likely epic traffic tie-up"

(Kandel, 2011, para. 1). As a result of the predictions motorists stayed off the roads and made alternative plans that weekend resulting in much lighter traffic than expected. The proposition may have been true, but the prediction was not fulfilled because people were persuaded to stay off the freeway.

When advancing propositions of fact, you should focus on the evidence you can offer in support of your proposition. First, make sure that your speech contains sufficient evidence to back up your proposition. Next, take the time to interpret that evidence so that it makes sense to your audience. Last, emphasize the relationship between your evidence and your proposition as well as its relevance to the audience (Herrick, 2011).

> Bitter experience has taught us how fundamental our values are and how great the mission they represent. ~ Jan Peter Balkenende

propositions of value

Persuasive speakers may also be called to address questions of value, which call for a proposition judging the (relative) worth of something. These propositions make an evaluative claim regarding morality, aesthetics, wisdom, or desirability. For example, some vegetarians propose that eating meat is immoral because of the way that animals are slaughtered. Vegetarians may base this claim in a philosophy of utilitarianism or animal rights (DeGrazia, 2009).

Sometimes a proposition of valuecompares multiple options to determine which is best. Consumers call for these comparisons regularly to determine which products to buy. Car buyers may look to the most recent Car and Driver "10 Best Cars" list to determine their next purchase. In labeling a car one of the best on the market for a given year Car and Driver (2011) says that the cars "don't have to be the newest, and they don't have to be expensive . . . They just have to meet our abundant needs while satisfying our every want" (para. 1).



Both the vegetarian and car examples offer standards for evaluating the proposition. Since propositions of value tend to be more subjective, speakers need to establish **evaluation criteria** by which the audience can judge and choose to align with their position. When advancing a proposition of value, offer a clear set of criteria, offer evidence for your evaluation, and apply the evidence to demonstrate that you have satisfied the evaluation criteria (Herrick, 2011).

> An inner process stands in need of outward criteria.~ Ludwig Wittgenstein

The 2005 disagreement between family members over removing a woman's feeding tube after she had been in a coma for 15 years sparked a national debate over the value of life that highlights the importance of evaluation criteria. After years of failed medical treatments and rehabilitation attempts, Terri Schiavo's husband petitioned the court to remove her feeding tube, initiating a legal battle with her parents that went all the way to the President of the United States (Cerminara & Goodman, 2012). Opposing sides in the debate both claimed to value life. To support his proposition that his wife had a right to die, Mr. Schaivo applied the evaluation criteria of quality of life and argued that she would not want to continue to live in a vegetative state (Caplan,

2005). Ms. Schiavo's parents vehemently disagreed with his argument. They also claimed to value life and, with the support of religious groups, relied on the evaluation criteria of the sanctity of life to contend that she should be kept alive (Catholic Culture, 2005). Both sides gained widespread support based on people's agreement or disagreement with their evaluation criteria. Despite intervention on behalf of both state and federal legislators, the courts eventually ruled that Mr. Schiavo had the right to have his wife's feeding tube removed and allow her to die.

> A policy is a temporary creed liable to be changed, but while it holds good, it has got to be pursued with apostolic zeal.~ Mahatma Gandhi

propositions of policy

Although the Schiavo case was rooted in a question of value, the debate resulted in a question of policy.Questions of policy ask the speaker to advocate for an appropriate course of action. This form of persuasive speech is used every day in Congress to determine laws, but it is also used interpersonally to determine how we ought to behave. A proposition of policy may call for people to stop a particular behavior, or to start one. For example, some U.S. cities have started banning single use plastic bags in grocery stores. Long before official public policy on this issue was established, organizations such as The Surfrider Foundation and the Earth Resource Foundation advocated that people stop using these bags because of the damage plastic bags cause to marine life. In this case local governments and private organizations attempted to persuade people to stop engaging in a damaging behavior— shopping with single use plastic bags. However, the organizations also attempted to persuade people to start a new behavior—shopping with reusable bags.

When answering a question of policy, speakers will typically begin by describing the status quo. If you are arguing that a change must be made, you must first identify the problem inherent in the current behavior, and then demonstrate that the problem is significant enough to warrant immediate consideration. Once you have established that there is a problem which the audience ought to consider, you can then offer your proposal for a preferable course of action (Herrick, 2011). Then, it is up to you to demonstrate that your proposed policy will have more benefits than costs.



In 2011 the U.S. Postal Service, the nation's second-largest employer, told Congress it was facing an $8.3 billion budget shortfall (Bingham, 2011). To solve the problem, the Postal Service proposed that be permitted to end Saturday mail delivery and close some post offices. To make their argument, they first described the status quo saying that the demand for their service had dramatically decreased with the popularity of email and online bill-pay services. They explained that in preceding years they laid off workers and cut spending to help with the shortfall of revenue, but now another plan was necessary to avoid defaulting on their financial obligations. They offered evidence that people preferred ending Saturday mail to alternatives such as paying more for stamps or allocating more tax money to post offices (Bingham, 2011). Although they made a compelling case, the USPS still needed to overcome perceived disadvantages to their proposition such as the negative impact on businesses and rural towns (Bingham, 2011; Stephenson, 2012). A full year later, the policy proposition passed the U.S. Senate but continues to await approval in the House (Stephenson, 2012).

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15.5: Choosing a Persuasive Speech Topic

In order to offer a persuasive speech, you must decide precisely what it is you want to talk about, to whom you will be speaking, and to what ends you hope the speech will lead. Persuasive speeches do not normally happen within a vacuum, even in a public speaking course where that might seem to be the case. In fact, most persuasive speeches serve as a response to larger circumstances—gas prices increase dramatically and drivers cannot afford to fill up their tanks; war veterans suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and can find little governmental assistance for the necessary treatments; an election is forthcoming and candidates need to secure votes. These are just a few times when a persuasive speech would make sense. A driver might try to persuade their employer to embrace telecommuting as a response to the high rate of gasoline. Veterans with PTSD might stage speeches to a national audience imploring them to advocate for better mental health care for people who have fought in wars. And candidates, of course, will give many speeches during a campaign that tease out the various reasons they, and not another candidate, should be elected. Appendix A (at the end of the chapter) offers a lengthier list of possible topics for persuasive speaking, but keep in mind the advice that Burnett offers in Chapter 8 (public speaking: the virtual text) regarding topic selection. The topics in Appendix A are written as propositions that can be defended. Some are propositions of fact, others are propositions of value, and yet others are propositions of policy.



> If I can get you to laugh with me, you like me better, which makes you more open to my ideas. And if I can persuade you to laugh at the particular point I make, by laughing at it you acknowledge its truth. ~ John Cleese

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15.6: Approaching Audiences

When choosing a topic for your persuasive speech, it is crucial to consider the composition of your audience. Because persuasive speeches are intended to influence or reinforce an audience's thoughts or behaviors, speakers must consider what and how the audience thinks, feels, and does. Your audience might be ambivalent about your topic, or they may be strongly opposed, in strong agreement, or somewhere along the spectrum. In persuasive speeches, it matters where they fall on this continuum. For instance, if you want to argue that abortion should be illegal and your audience is composed of pro-life advocates, your speech might seem like you are preaching to the choir. But if your audience is made up of staunch pro-choice activists, your speech would be raising a significant objection to a set of beliefs, values, attitudes, and actions the audience was already committed to. Decaro, Adams and Jefferis offer advice for carrying out a thorough audience analysis in Chapter 5 of this book. Some questions you might ask before giving a speech include, "Who is hosting the speech?" Often this can provide a great deal of information about who will be in the audience. Audience members at a National Rifle Association gathering probably do not need to be convinced that the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution— the right to keep and bear arms—is worth upholding. You should also ask, "Is the audience fairly heterogeneous?" In a public speaking class, you may be able to gauge that through your interactions with your fellow classmates before you make your way to the podium; but in other settings this may not be the case. If an organization is sponsoring or has invited you to speak, this is a question that can be directed to organizational staff with access to demographic information. Some demographics that may be useful as you craft your speech include age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic or cultural background, socioeconomic status, religion, and political affiliation. Each of these characteristics is known to influence a listener's beliefs, attitudes, values, and actions.



receptive audiences

Persuasive speakers will not generally address an audience that already fully agrees with them and is behaving in the way they would like, because that audience no longer needs to be persuaded. However, you may find yourself in situations that allow you to appeal to a **receptive audience** which already knows something about your topic and is generally supportive of, or open to, the point you are trying to make. For example, parents are generally interested in keeping their children safe. If you seek to persuade them that they should work with their kids to prevent them from being taken advantage of on social networking sites, they are likely to welcome what you have to say. Although they are already convinced that it is important to keep their children safe, this audience may not yet be persuaded that they have the need or ability to keep their kids safe in an online environment. In order to persuade this receptive audience, you should first attempt to foster **identification** with them by highlighting things you have in common. If you are a parent you might say something like, "I have two children and one of my biggest concerns is making sure they are safe." If you are not a parent you might say, "one of the things I appreciate most about my parents is that I know they are always trying to keep me safe." With these statements, you not only relate to the audience, but also demonstrate that you share a common concern.

If you would persuade, you must appeal to interest rather than intellect.~ Benjamin Franklin



Next, offer a clear statement of purpose and tell the audience what you would like them to do in response to your message. If the audience is already likely to agree with your point, they will be looking for ways to act on it. Offer practical steps that they can take. Even if the steps must be carried out later (i.e. the parents in our example may have to wait to get home and start talking with their child about social networking habits), give them a way to respond to the message immediately and show their support. In this case you may have them write down the first thing they will say to their child, or practice saying it to the person next to them. Having them act on your message before leaving reinforces their already favorable response to what you are asking (Beebe & Beebe, 2003).

I swore never to be silent whenever and wherever human beings endure suffering and humiliation. We must always take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented. ~ Elie Wiesel

neutral audiences

Most of the groups that a persuasive speaker addresses are neutral audiences. These audiences are not passionate about the topic or speaker, often because they do not have enough information or because they are not aware that they should be concerned. Beebe & Beebe (2003) explain that the challenge in addressing a neutral audience is to foster their interest in your proposition. They offer a few tips for cultivating interest in a neutral audience. Begin by gaining their attention. To do this you might offer a story or statistic that relates the topic directly to the dominant demographic in the audience. If you are trying to convince first-year college students to avoid credit card solicitors on campus you might start with something like, “I know those t-shirts the credit card vendors are handing out are stylish and, best of all, free! But that t-shirt could cost you thousands of dollars before you even graduate.” Rather than beginning with a diatribe on the evils of debt, which many of them may not yet have experienced, you relate to their desire for a free t-shirt and a common belief they are likely to share, that “free” should not translate to “expensive.” If you cannot relate the topic directly to the audience, another approach is to relate the topic to someone they care about, like a family member or friend. Keep in mind that, while the receptive audience may be eager to respond immediately, the neutral audience may simply be more concerned about the topic or more inclined to consider the behavior change you are advocating (Beebe & Beebe, 2003). In this case, consider offering resources for more information, or a few minor steps they can take when they are ready.

He who dreads hostility too much is unfit to rule. ~ Lucius Annaeus Seneca



hostile audiences

Unfortunately, some audiences may be resistant or even hostile to your persuasive speech. A hostile audiencemay take issue with your topic or with you as a speaker. In this case, your primary goal is to persuade the audience to listen to what you have to say (Beebe & Beebe, 2003). Once they are willing to listen, then you will have the ability to change their minds in the future. Later in this chapter we will address ways that you can foster a better relationship with the audience by building your ethos. However, if the audience is opposed to your proposition, there are a few steps that you can take to encourage them to at least hear you out. If the audience is not likely to agree with your proposition, wait until later in the speech to offer it. Opening with a clear statement of purpose, which a receptive audience welcomes, will make an unreceptive audience more hostile to your goals. For example, if you begin by telling business owners that you think they should pay workers more, they are likely to think of all the reasons that will threaten their livelihood rather than listening to your message. Instead, begin by highlighting issues on which you agree. You might open with a discussion of the challenges businesses face in attempting to retain quality workers and increase productivity.

> I have spent many years of my life in opposition, and I rather like the role. ~ Eleanor Roosevelt

Once you have identified areas of agreement, you can offer your proposition as a way of addressing your shared goals. To promote an increase in wages, you might explain that a study of more than 10,000 workers and managers in a variety of industries demonstrated that companies who pay their workers more were also more motivated to invest in new technology, enhance their management techniques, better train workers, and better deliver their services, all of which lead to higher productivity and increased profits (Applebaum & Bernhardt, 2004). Focusing on areas of agreement will make the audience more receptive to your proposition, but they will still hold some reservations. Acknowledge those reservations and demonstrate that you have given them ample consideration. Cite credible evidence that supports your proposition in light of those reservations. Showing that you understand and respect their opposing position is the most important step toward encouraging a hostile audience to at least hear you out.

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15.7: Persuasive Strategies

ethos

In addition to understanding how your audience feels about the topic you are addressing, you will need to take steps to help them see you as credible and interesting. The audience's perception of you as a speaker is influential in determining whether or not they will choose to accept your proposition. Aristotle called this element of the speech **ethos**, "a Greek word that is closely related to our termsethical and ethnic" (Campbell & Huxman, 2009, p. 232). He taught speakers to establish credibility with the audience by appearing to have good moral character, common sense, and concern for the audience's well-being (Beebe & Beebe, 2003). Campbell & Huxman (2009) explain that ethos is not about conveying that you, as an individual, are a good person. It is about "mirror[ing] the characteristics idealized by [the] culture or group" (ethnic) (p.232), and demonstrating that you make good moral choices with regard to your relationship within the group (ethics).



While there are many things speakers can do to build their ethos throughout the speech, "assessments of ethos often reflect superficial first impressions," and these first impressions linger long after the speech has concluded (Zarefsky, 2005, p.14). This means that what you wear and how you behave, even before opening your mouth, can go far in shaping your ethos. Be sure to dress appropriately for the occasion and setting in which you speak. Also work to appear confident, but not arrogant, and be sure to maintain enthusiasm about your topic throughout the speech. Give great attention to the crafting of your opening sentences because they will set the tone for what your audience should expect of your personality as you proceed.

> I covered two presidents, LBJ and Nixon, who could no longer convince, persuade, or govern, once people had decided they had no credibility; but we seem to be more tolerant now of what I think we should not tolerate. ~ Helen Thomas

logos

Another way to enhance your ethos, and your chances of persuading the audience, is to use sound arguments. In a persuasive speech, the **argument** will focus on the reasons for supporting your specific purpose statement. This argumentative approach is what Aristotle referred to as **logos**, or the logical means of proving an argument (Braet, 1992).

When offering an argument you begin by making an assertion that requires a logical leap based on the available evidence (Campbell & Huxman, 2009). One of the most popular ways of understanding how this process works was developed by British philosopher Stephen Toulmin (Herrick, 2011). Toulmin explained that basic arguments tend to share three common elements: claim, data, and warrant. The **claim** is an assertion that you want the audience to accept. **Data** refers to the preliminary evidence on which the claim is based. For example, if I saw large gray clouds in the sky, I might make the claim that "it is going to rain

today." The gray clouds (data) are linked to rain (claim) by the **warrant**, an often unstated general connection, that large gray clouds tend to produce rain. The warrant is a connector that, if stated, would likely begin with "since" or "because." In our rain example, if we explicitly stated all three elements, the argument would go something like this: There are large gray clouds in the sky today (data). Since large gray clouds tend to produce rain (warrant), it is going to rain today (claim). However, in our regular encounters with argumentation, we tend to only offer the claim and (occasionally) the warrant.

To strengthen the basic argument, you will need **backing** for the claim. Backing provides foundational support for the claim (Herrick, 2011) by offering examples, statistics, testimony, or other information which further substantiates the argument. To substantiate the rain argument we have

just considered, you could explain that the color of a cloud is determined by how much light the water in the cloud is reflecting. A thin cloud has tiny drops of water and ice crystals which scatter light, making it appear white. Clouds appear gray when they are filled with large water droplets which are less able to reflect light (Brill, 2003).

> Logic is the beginning of wisdom, not the end. ~ Leonard Nimoy

Table 15.7.1 The Toulmin Model Basic Argument

Basic Argument	
data I had a hard time finding a place to park on campus today.	claim The school needs more parking spaces.
warrant If I can't find a place to park, there must be a shortage of spaces.	
Argument With Backing	
data Obesity is a serious problem in the U.S.	claim U.S. citizens should be encouraged to eat less processed foods.
warrant Processed foods contribute to obesity more than natural, or unprocessed, foods.	
backing "As a rule processed foods are more 'energy dense' than freshfoods: they contain less water and fiber but more added fat and sugar, which makes them both less filling and more fattening"(Pollan, 2007).	

The elements that Toulmin identified (see Table 16.1) may be arranged in a variety of ways to make the most logical argument. As you reason through your argument you may proceed inductively, deductively, or causally, toward your claim. **Inductive reasoning** moves from specific examples to a more general claim. For example, if you read online reviews of a restaurant chain called Walt's Wine & Dine and you noticed that someone reported feeling sick after eating at a Walt's, and another person reported that the Walt's they visited was understaffed, and another commented that the tables in the Walt's they ate at had crumbs left on them, you might conclude (or claim) that the restaurant chain is unsanitary. To test the validity of a general claim, Beebe and Beebe (2003) encourage speakers to consider whether there are "enough specific instances to support the conclusion," whether the specific instances are typical, and whether the instances are recent (p.384).



The opposite of inductive reasoning is deductive reasoning, moving from a general principle to a claim regarding a specific instance. In order to move from general to specific we tend to usesyllogisms. A syllogism begins with a major (or general) premise, then moves to a minor premise, then concludes with a specific claim. For example, if you know that all dogs bark (major premise), and your neighbor has a dog (minor premise), you could then conclude that your neighbor's dog barks (specific claim). To verify the accuracy of your specific claim, you must verify the truth and applicability of the major premise. What evidence do you have that all dogs bark? Is it possible that only most dogs bark? Next, you must also verify the accuracy of the minor premise. If the major premise is truly generalizable, and both premises are accurate, your specific claim should also be accurate.



Your reasoning may also proceed causally. **Causal reasoning** examines related events to determine which one caused the other. You may begin with a cause and attempt to determine its effect. For example, when the Deepwater Horizon drilling rig exploded in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010, scientists explained that because many animals in the Gulf were nesting and reproducing at the time, the spill could wipe out "an entire generation of hundreds of species" (Donovan, 2010, para. 2). Their argument reasoned that the spill (cause) would result in species loss (effect). Two years later, the causal reasoning might be reversed. If we were seeing species loss in the Gulf (effect), we could reason that it was a result of the oil spill (cause). Both of these claims rely on the evidence available at the time. To make the first claim, scientists not only offered evidence that animals were nesting and reproducing, but they also looked at the effects of an oil spill that occurred 21 years earlier in Alaska (Donovan, 2010). To make the second claim, scientists could examine dead animals washing up on the coast to determine whether their deaths were caused by oil.

pathos

While we have focused heavily on logical reasoning, we must also recognize the strong role that emotions play in the persuasive process. Aristotle called this element of the speech **pathos**. Pathos draws on the emotions, sympathies, and prejudices of the audience to appeal to their non-rational side (Beebe & Beebe 2003; Reike, Sillars, & Peterson, 2009). Human beings are constantly in some emotional state, which means that tapping into an audience's emotions can be vital to persuading them to accept your proposition (Dillard & Meijnders, 2002).

One of the most helpful strategies in appealing to your audience's emotions is to use clear examples that illustrate your point. Illustrations can be crafted verbally, nonverbally, or visually. To offer a verbal illustration, you could tell a compelling story. For example, when fundraising for breast cancer research, Nancy Brinker, creator of Susan G. Komen for the Cure, has plenty of compelling statistics and examples to offer. Yet, she regularly talks about her sister, explaining:



Susan G. Komen fought breast cancer with her heart, body and soul. Throughout her diagnosis, treatments, and endless days in the hospital, she spent her time thinking of ways to make life better for other women battling breast cancer instead of worrying about her own situation. That concern for others continued even as Susan neared the end of her fight (Komen National, n.d.).

Brinker promised her sister that she would continue her fight against breast cancer. This story compels donors to join her fight.

Speakers can also tap into emotions using nonverbal behaviors to model the desired emotion for their audience. In the summer of 2012, the U.S. House of Representatives debated holding the Attorney General in contempt for refusing to release documents concerning a controversial gun-tracking operation. Arguing for a contempt vote, South Carolina Representative Trey Gowdy did not simply state his claim, instead he raised his voice, slowed his pace, and used hand motions to convey anger with what he perceived as deception on the part of the Attorney General (Gowdy, 2012). His use of volume, tone, pace, and hand gestures enhanced the message and built anger in his audience.

> Speech is power: speech is to persuade, to convert, to compel. It is to bring another out of his bad sense into your good sense ~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

In addition to verbal and nonverbal illustrations, visual imagery can enhance the emotional appeal of a message. For example, we have all heard about the dangers of drugs, and there are multiple campaigns that attempt to prevent people from even trying them. However, many young adults experiment with drugs under the assumption that they are immune from the negative effects if they only use the drug recreationally. To counter this assumption regarding methamphe- tamines, the Montana Meth project combines controversial statements with graphic images on billboards to evoke fear of the drug (see www.methproject. org /ads/ print/ for some disturbing examples). Young adults may have heard repeated warnings that meth is addictive and that it has the potential to cause sores, rotten teeth, and extreme weight loss, but Montana Meth Project's visual display is more compelling because it turns the audience's stomach, making the message memorable. This image, combined with the slogan, "not even once," conveys the persuasive point without the need for other forms of evidence and rational argument.

Appeals to fear, like those in the Montana Meth Project ads, have proven effective in motivating people to change a variety of behaviors. However, speakers must be careful with their use of this emotion. Fear appeals tend to be more effective when they appeal to a high-level fear, such as death, and they are more effective when offered by speakers with a high level of perceived credibility (Beebe & Beebe, 2003). Fear appeals are also more persuasive when the speaker can convince the audience they have the ability to avert the threat. If audiences doubt their ability to avoid or minimize the threat, the appeal may backfire (Witte & Allen, 2000).

> I would rather try to persuade a man to go along, because once I have persuaded him, he will stick. If I scare him, he will stay just as long as he is scared, and then he is gone. ~ Dwight D. Eisenhower

David Brooks (2011) argues that, "emotions are not separate from reason, but they are the foundation of reason because they tell us what to value" (para. 2). Those values are at the core of fostering a credible ethos. All of Aristotle's strategies, ethos, logos, and pathos, are interdependent. The most persuasive speakers will combine these strategies to varying degrees based on their specific purpose and audience.

In addition to considering their topic and persuasive strategy, speakers must take care to ensure that their message is ethical. Persuasion is often confused with another kind of communication that has similar ends, but different methods—coercion. Like persuasion, **coercion** is a process whereby thoughts or behaviors are altered. But in coercive acts, deceptive or harmful methods propel the intended changes, not reason. Strong and Cook (1992) contrasted the two: "persuasion uses argument to compel power to give way to reason while coercion uses force to compel reason to give way to power" (p. 7). The "force" that Strong and Cook mention frequently manifests as promises for reward or punishment, but sometimes it arises as physical or emotional harm. Think of almost any international crime film you have seen, and you are likely to remember a scene where someone was compelled to out their compatriots by way of force. Jack Bauer, the protagonist in the American television series 24, became an infamous character by doing whatever it took to get captured criminals to talk. Although dramatic as an example, those scenes where someone is tortured in an effort to produce evidence offer a familiar reference when thinking about coercion. To avoid coercing an audience, speakers should use logical and emotional appeals responsibly.

> The pendulum of the mind alternates between sense and nonsense, not between right and wrong. ~ Carl Jung

Persuasive speakers must be careful to avoid using **fallacies** in their reasoning. Fallacies are errors in reasoning that occur when a speaker fails to use appropriate or applicable evidence for their argument. There are a wide variety of fallacies, and it is not possible to list them all here. However,

speakers should watch for four common categories of fallacies: "fallacies of faulty assumption," which occur when the speaker reasons based on a problematic assumption; "fallacies directed to the person," which occur when the speaker focuses on the attributes of an individual opponent rather than the relevant arguments; "fallacies of case presentation," which occur when the speaker mischaracterizes the issue; and "fallacies of suggestion," which occur when the speaker implies or suggests an argument without fully developing it (Herrick, 2011, p. 256). See the Table 16.2 on the following page for examples of each of these types of fallacies. To learn more about fallacies, see Chapter 6 by Russ (Critical Thinking and Reasoning), or see the supplemental handout found on the Persuasive Speaking chapter homepage (www.publicspeaking project.org/persuasive.html)



There are some positive steps you can take to avoid these pitfalls of persuasive speaking and ensure that you are presenting your message in the most ethical manner. We have already discussed some of these, such as offering credible evidence for your arguments and showing concern for the audience's well being. However, you should also offer a transparent goal for your speech. Even with a hostile audience, where you may wait until later in the speech to provide the specific purpose statement, you should be forthcoming about your specific purpose. In fact, be truthful with your audience throughout the speech.

Table 15.7.2 Examples of Fallacies Fallacies of Faulty Assumption

Causal Fallacy	It is cloudy outside, and I feel sick. Cloudy days make me sick. The school board voted to buy new picnic tables for the lunch room. Many students were out sick the following day. The students must be upset about the picnic tables.
Bandwagon Fallacy	Everyone takes out a loan to buy a car, so you should too. None of the cool kids wear helmets when they ride bikes. You should take yours off.
Begging the Question	Lion King is an excellent film because it has excellent animation. Marijuana is good for you because it is natural.
Fallacies Directed to the Person	
Ad Hominem	We should reject President Obama's health care legislation because it is socialism. We should ignore Donald Trump's opposition to tax hikes because he's just rich andselfish.
Poisoning the Well	Before the defense makes their closing statement, keep in mind that their client has not said one truthful word throughout the trial. My opponent is going to try to manipulate you into thinking her plan is better for the city.

Table 15.7.2 Examples of Fallacies Fallacies of Faulty Assumption	
Appeal to Flattery	First, I wanted to tell you that this is my favorite class. I tell all my friends how much I love it. I just think I deserve a better grade on my exam. You are such a generous person, I know you'll want to donate to this cause.
Fallacies of Case Presentation	
Non Sequitur	I don't plan to vote today because I am moving next week. You should clean your room because I am going to do the laundry.
Red Herring	I should not be fined for parking in a red zone when there are so many people out there committing real crimes like robbery and murder. War is wrong, but in times of crisis we should support the president.
Appeal to Misplaced Authority	This diet is the best one for people with my health condition, Oprah said so. I want to visit the Museum of Modern Art. My English professor says they have the best collection anywhere!
Fallacies of Suggestion	
Paralepsis	I'm not saying he cheated; he just did uncharacteristically well on that exam. If she wants to work for a crook, that's her business.
Either-Or	Either you're with us or against us. Love it or leave it.
Arrangement	I have so much to do today. I have to get my car fixed, finish a paper, take a nap, and pick my mom up from the airport. So many highly respected musicians will be there: Paul McCartney, Elton John, LMFAO, Billy Joel . . .

It is appropriate to use fictional scenarios to demonstrate your point, but tell the audience that is what you are doing. You can accomplish this by introducing fictional examples with the phrase, "hypothetically," or "imagine," to signal that you are making it up (Beebe & Beebe, 2003). Additionally, be sure to offer a mix of logical and emotional appeals. Blending these strategies insures that you have evidence to back up emotional claims, and that you are sensitive to the audiences' emotional reactions to your logical claims. Attending to both aspects will help you be more ethical and more persuasive.

> The most important persuasion tool you have in your entire arsenal is integrity. ~ Zig Ziglar

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15.8: Organizing Persuasive Messages

Once you have selected your topic, know who your audience is, and have settled on an end goal for your persuasive speech, you can begin drafting your speech. Outlines are organized according to the particular speech, and the following organizational patterns are used routinely for persuasive speeches.

Monroe's Motivated Sequence

Monroe's Motivated Sequence is an organizational pattern that attempts to convince the audience to respond to a need that is delineated in the speech (Monroe, 1949). Five separate steps characterize the Motivated Sequence organization style:

1. The attention step should get the audience's attention as well as describe your goals and preview the speech.

2. The need step should provide a description of the problem as well as the consequences that may result if the problem goes unresolved. In this step, the speaker should also alert audience members to their role in mitigating the issue.

3. The satisfaction step is used to outline your solutions to the problems you have previously outlined as well as deal with any objections that may arise.

4. In the visualization step, audience members are asked to visualize what will happen if your solutions are implemented and what will happen if they do not come to fruition. Visualizations should be rich with detail.

5. The action appeal step should be used to make a direct appeal for action. In this step, you should describe precisely how the audience should react to your speech and how they should carry out these actions. As the final step, you should also offer a concluding comment. See Figure 15.8.1 to see this method of arrangement illustrated.

Proposition: You (the audience) should volunteer or donate at the Morris County Animal Protection Agency.

I. Attention step
- A. When was the last time you saw a dog chained to a tree in a neighbor's yard, heard about a puppy mill in your town, or went into a pet store only to find dogs and cats for sale?
- B. I work with the Morris County Animal Protection Group and I would like to share some ways in which you can help prevent these travesties.
- C. First, I will describe some of the major problems in Morris County, and then I will tell you how you can get involved.

II. Need step: Many animals in Morris County are abused and neglected.
- A. There are too many stray animals that are neither spayed nor neutered, resulting in an overabundance of cats and dogs.
- B. These animals often cannot find enough food to survive and the local shelter cannot accommodate such high populations.
- C. The cost of local spay/neuter programs is too high for our agency to handle.

III. Satisfaction step: Raising $1 million for the Morris County Animal Protection Agency can effectively solve these problems.
- A. We could afford to spay or neuter most stray animals.
- B. Obtained animals could be fed and accommodated until a home can be secured for them.
- C. Additionally, we could subsidize spay/neuter costs for local citizens.

IV. Visualization step: Imagine what we can do for our animals with this money.
- A. What will it be like if we can carry out these actions?
- B. What will it be like if we cannot do these things?

V. Action appeal step: Donate to the Morris County Animal Protection Agency.
- A. If you want to help protect the many struggling stray animals in Morris County, make a donation to our organization.
- B. Your donation will make a real difference in the lives of our animals.
- C. We cannot effect real change for the animals of our county without each and every one of you.

Figure 15.8.1. Monroe's Motivated Sequence Sample Outline

direct method pattern

If your goal is to convince your audience to adopt a particular idea, you might prefer the direct method pattern as a way of organizing your speech. This pattern consists of a claim and a list of reasons to support it. Every piece of support in the speech directly supports the central claim you wish to make. As Jaffe (2004) points out, "It's a good pattern to use when listeners are apathetic or neutral, either mildly favoring or mildly opposing your claim" (p. 329). The outline for a speech on vegetarianism in Figure 15.8.2 provides three reasons that vegetarianism provides useful health benefits for people struggling with obesity.

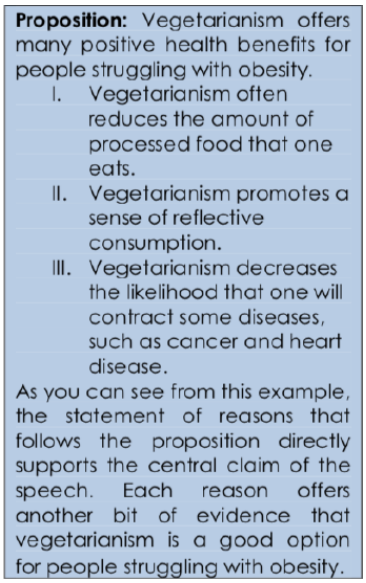


Figure 15.8.2. Direct Method Pattern Sample Outline

> History creates comprehensibility primarily by arranging facts meaningfully and only in a very limited sense by establishing strict causal connections. ~ Johan Huizinga

causal pattern

Similar to a problem-solution speech, which was covered in Chapter 8, a causal speech describes a general cause and a specific effect. In other words, a **causal pattern** first addresses some cause and then shares what effects resulted. A causal speech can be particularly effective when the speaker wants to convince their audience of the relationship between two things. With sound causal reasoning, a speech of this sort can be used to convince the audience of something they were previously opposed to believing.

As the example in Figure 15.8.3 illustrates, the basic components of the causal speech are the cause and the effect. Such an organizational style is useful when a speaker needs to share the results of a new program, discuss how one act led to another, or discuss the positive/negative outcomes of taking some action. Through this pattern, the speaker can convince audiences to adopt a new belief about a particular phenomenon.

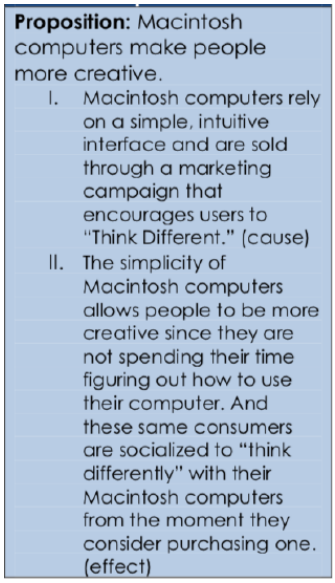


Figure 15.8.3. Causal Pattern Sample Outline

refutation pattern

Sometimes an occasion will arise when your audience is already opposed to your argument. In this case, a **refutation pattern** can be engaged to persuade audience members that your side of the argument is better or more accurate. In a refutation speech, the speaker must anticipate the audience's opposition, then bring attention to the tensions between the two sides, and finally refute them using evidential support. Refutation patterns are frequently seen in debates, where speakers are fundamentally opposed to one another's arguments. Refutation generally happens through a set of four steps: (1) signaling the argument to which you are responding, (2) stating your own argument, (3) providing justification or evidence for your side of the argument, and (4) summarizing your response. An advocate of reusing as opposed to recycling might present the argument in Figure 16.4 to respond to someone who believes recycling is the best way to individually work on environmental stewardship. As this example illustrates, a refutation speech should clearly delineate where the audience is perceived to stand on an issue, why their view is in disagreement with the speaker's, and why the audience should adopt the speaker's position. Moreover, the speaker should be sure to highlight the importance of the debate, which will clue the audience into why they should spend their time listening to a speaker who clearly disagrees with them. An example of this pattern can be found on the next page in Figure 15.8.4.

> Neither irony nor sarcasm is argument. ~ Samuel Butler

(Imagine that the speaker is giving the speech at a recycling convention)

Proposition: Reusing products is better than recycling them.

I. Although Thomas argued that recycling is the most important individual act of environmental stewardship, I would like to argue that reusing is an even better way to care for our environment. (signaling and stating)

II. Reusing has several advantages over recycling. (providing evidence)

A. Reusing reduces consumption.

B. Reusing extends the life of a product before it needs to be recycled.

C. It is cheaper to use reuse an item than to recycle it.

III. Given these advantages, it is more useful for people to reuse items when possible than it is to recycle them.

Figure 15.8.4. Sample Outline Refutation Pattern

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15.9: Conclusion



The primary goal of persuasive speaking is to influence an audience's beliefs or behaviors so that they can make necessary or positive change. Persuasive speaking is a vital skill in all areas of life, whether it is a political candidate convincing voters to elect them, an employee convincing the boss to give them a promotion, or a sales person convincing a consumer to buy a product, individuals must understand what persuasion is and how it functions.

When formulating a persuasive speech, remember to determine the type of question you seek to answer so that you can decide whether to offer a proposition of fact, a proposition of value, or a proposition of policy. Weave the topic and the proposition

together to create a compelling argument for your specific audience.

Knowing your audience can help when it comes to choosing the appropriate strategies for convincing them that you are a credible speaker. Once you have established your credibility, you can advance both logical and emotional appeals to move your audience toward the belief or behavior you hope they will adopt. As you weave these appeals together, be

sure to offer the most ethical arguments by avoiding fallacies and supporting emotional appeals with relevant evidence.

Once you have compiled the most relevant arguments and emotional appeals for a given audience, take care to organize your message effectively. Give thought to your persuasive goals and determine whether they can be best achieved through the use of Monroe's Motivated Sequence, a direct method pattern, a causal pattern, or a refutation pattern.



The combination of a confident and credible speaker with the right organization of logical and emotional appeals can go far in swaying an audience.

> It's better to get smart than to get mad. I try not to get so insulted that I will not take advantage of an opportunity to persuade people to change their minds.~ John H. Johnson

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16: CRITICAL THINKING AND REASONING

16.1: Introduction
16.2: Critical Thinking
16.3: Logic and the Role of Arguments
16.4: Understanding fallacies
16.5: Formal Fallacies
16.6: Informal Fallacies
16.7: Conclusion

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16.1: Introduction

Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Understand and explain the importance of critical thinking
2. Identify the core skills associated with critical thinking
3. Demonstrate the difference between deductive and inductive reasoning
4. Construct a logically sound and well-reasoned argument
5. Avoid the various fallacies that can arise through the misuse of logic
6. Apply chapter concepts in final questions and activities

As we meander through our daily routines, we are surrounded by numerous messages and people trying to get our attention and convince us to do something. We sign into our e-mail accounts and are bombarded with sales pitches to help us get rich quick or promise to fix all of our embarrassing physical problems. We drive to school and see billboards touting tantalizing restaurants or pitching local political candidates. We converse with our friends and family about current events like the crazy car thief who tried to avoid the police by driving down train tracks right into an oncoming train. Throughout all of these exchanges, we must constantly strive to make sense of the messages and determine which are true and which are not true, which are probable and which are improbable, which are intended and which are unintended. When we do this we practice **critical thinking**. We evaluate the **arguments** presented and determine if their logic is sound or if they rely on **fallacies** to build their case. In this chapter you will learn how to use critical thinking in all areas of your life, including preparing and presenting speeches. You will also learn how to construct a logical argument that avoids the pitfalls of fallacious thinking.

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16.2: Critical Thinking

Critical thinking has been defined in numerous ways. At its most basic, we can think of critical thinking as active thinking in which we evaluate and analyze information in order to determine the best course of action. We will look at more expansive definitions of critical thinking and its components in the following pages. Before we get there, though, let's consider a hypothetical example of critical thinking in action.

> We are approaching a new age of synthesis. Knowledge cannot be merely a degree or a skill... it demands a broader vision, capabilities in critical thinking and logical deduction, without which we cannot have constructive progress. ~ Li Ka Shing



Shonda was researching information for her upcoming persuasive speech. Her goal with the speech was to persuade her classmates to drink a glass of red wine every day. Her argument revolved around the health benefits one can derive from the antioxidants found in red wine. Shonda found an article reporting the results of a study conducted by a Dr. Gray. According to Dr. Gray's study, drinking four or more glasses of wine a day will help reduce the chances of heart attack, increase levels of good cholesterol, and help in reducing unwanted fat. Without conducting further research, Shonda changed her speech to persuade her classmates to drink four or more glasses of red wine per day. She used Dr. Gray's study as her primary support. Shonda presented her speech in class to waves of applause and support from her classmates. She was shocked when, a few weeks later, she received a grade of "D". Shonda's teacher had also found Dr. Gray's study and learned it was sponsored by a multi- national distributor of wine. In fact, the study in question was published in a trade journal targeted to wine and alcohol retailers. If Shonda had taken a few extra minutes to critically examine the study, she may have been able to avoid the dreaded "D."

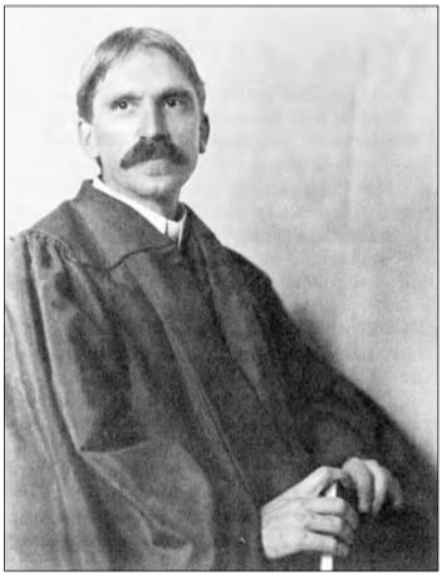
Shonda's story is just one of many ways that critical thinking impacts our lives. Throughout this chapter we will consider the importance of critical thinking in all areas of communication, especially public speaking. We will first take a more in-depth look at what critical thinking is – and isn't.

Before we get too far into the specifics of what critical thinking is and how we can do it, it's important to clear up a common misconception. Even though the phrase critical thinking uses the word "critical," it is not a negative thing. Being critical is not the same thing as criticizing. When we criticize something, we point out the flaws and errors in it, exercising a negative value judgment on it. Our goal with criticizing is less about understanding than about negatively evaluating. It's important to remember that critical thinking is not just criticizing. While the process may involve examining flaws and errors, it is much more.

critical thinking defined

Just what is critical thinking then? To help us understand, let's consider a common definition of critical thinking. The philosopher John Dewey, often considered the father of modern day critical thinking, defines critical thinking as:

"Active, persistent, careful consideration of a belief or supposed form of knowledge in light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends" (Dewey, 1933, p. 9).



The first key component of Dewey's definition is that critical thinking is *active*. Critical thinking must be done by choice. As we continue to delve deeper into the various facets of critical thinking, we will learn how to engage as critical thinkers.

Probably one of the most concise and easiest to understand definitions is that offered by Barry Beyer: "Critical thinking... means making reasoned judgments" (Beyer, 1995, p. 8). In other words, we don't just jump to a conclusion or a judgment. We rationalize and justify our conclusions. A second primary component of critical thinking, then, involves questioning. As critical thinkers, we need to question everything that confronts us. Equally important, we need to question ourselves and ask how our own biases or assumptions influence how we judge something.

In the following sections we will explore how to do critical thinking more in depth. As you read through this material, reflect back on Dewey's and Beyer's definitions of critical thinking.

critical thinking traits and skills

Critical thinkers tend to exhibit certain traits that are common to them. These traits are summarized in Table 6.1 (adapted from Facione, 1990, p. 6):

Recall that critical thinking is an active mode of thinking. Instead of just receiving messages and accepting them as is, we consider what they are saying. We ask if messages are well-supported. We determine if their logic is sound or slightly flawed. In other words, we act on the messages before we take action based on them. When we enact critical thinking on a message, we engage a variety of skills including: listening, analysis, evaluation, inference and interpretation or explanation, and self- regulation (adapted from Facione, 1990, p. 6)

Next, we will examine each of these skills and their role in critical thinking in greater detail. As you read through the explanation of and examples for each skill, think about how it works in conjunction with the others. It's important to note that while our discussion of the skills is presented in a linear manner, in practice our use of each skill is not so straightforward. We may exercise different skills simultaneously or jump forward and backward.



Without an open-minded mind, you can never be a great success. ~ Martha Stewart

listening

In order to understand listening, we must first understand the difference between ***listening*** and ***hearing***. At its most basic, hearing refers to the *physiological process* of receiving sounds, while listening refers to the *psychological process* of interpreting or making sense of those sounds.

Every minute of every day we are surrounded by hundreds of different noises and sounds. If we were to try to make sense of each different sound we would probably spend our day just doing this. While we may hear all of the noises, we filter out many of them. They pass through our lives without further notice. Certain noises, however, jump to the forefront of our consciousness. As we listen to them, we make sense of these sounds. We do this every day without necessarily thinking about the process. Like many other bodily functions, it happens without our willing it to happen.

Critical thinking requires that we consciously listen to messages. We must focus on what is being said – and not said. We must strive not to be distracted by other outside noises or the internal noise of our own preconceived ideas. For the moment we only need to take in the message.

Listening becomes especially difficult when the message contains highly charged information. Think about what happens when you try to discuss a controversial issue such as abortion. As the other person speaks, you may have every good intention of listening to the entire argument.

However, when the person says something you feel strongly about you start formulating a counter-argument in your head. The end result is that both sides end up talking past each other without ever really listening to what the other says.

Table 16.2.1 Traits of Critical Thinkers

Open-Mindedness	Critical thinkers are open and receptive to all ideas and arguments, even those with which they may disagree. Critical thinkers reserve judgment on a message until they have examined the claims, logic, reasoning, and evidence used. Critical thinkers are fair-minded and understand that a message is not inherently wrong or flawed if it differs from their own thoughts. Critical thinkers remain open to the possibility of changing their view on an issue when logic and evidence supports doing so.
Analytic Nature	Critical thinkers are interested in understanding what is happening in a message. Critical thinkers ask questions of the message, breaking it into its individual components and examining each in turn. Critical thinkers dissect these components looking for sound logic and reasoning.
Systematic by Method	Critical thinkers avoid jumping to conclusions. Critical thinkers take the time to systematically examine a message. Critical thinkers apply accepted criteria or conditions to their analyzes.

Table 16.2.1 Traits of Critical Thinkers	
Inquisitive	Critical thinkers are curious by nature. Critical thinkers ask questions of what is going on around them and in a message. Critical thinkers want to know more and take action to learn more.
Judicious	Critical thinkers are prudent in acting and making judgments.Critical thinkers are sensible in their actions. That is, they don'tjust jump on the bandwagon of common thought because it looks good or everyone else is doing it.
Truth-Seeking	Critical thinkers exercise an ethical foundation based in Ethos searching for the truth. Critical thinkers understand that even the wisest people may be wrong at times.
Confident in Reasoning	Critical thinkers have faith in the power of logic and sound reasoning. Critical thinkers understand that it is in everyone'sbest interest to encourage and develop sound logic. More importantly, critical thinkers value the power of letting others draw their own conclusions.

analysis

Once we have listened to a message, we can begin to analyze it. In practice we often begin analyzing messages while still listening to them. When we analyze something, we consider it in greater detail, separating out the main components of the message. In a sense, we are acting like a surgeon on the message, carving out all of the different elements and laying them out for further consideration and possible action.



Americans today are some of the unhealthiest people on Earth. It seems like not a week goes by without some news story relating how we are the fattest country in the world. In addition to being overweight, we suffer from a number of other health problems. When I was conducting research for my speech, I read somewhere that heart attacks are the number one killer of men and the number two killer of women. Think about that. My uncle had a heart attack and had to be rushed to the hospital. They hooked him up to a bunch of different machines to keep him alive. We all thought he was going to die. He's ok now, but he has to take a bunch of pills every day and eat a special diet. Plus he had to pay thousands of dollars in medical bills. Wouldn't you like to know how to prevent this from happening to you?

Let's return to Shonda's persuasive speech to see analysis in action. As part of the needs section of her speech, Shonda makes the following remarks:

If we were to analyze this part of Shonda's speech (see Table 16.2.2), we could begin by looking at the claims she makes. We could then look at the evidence she presents in support of these claims. Having parsed out the various elements, we are then ready to evaluate them and by extension the message as a whole.

Table 16.2.2 Analysis of Shonda's Speech

Claims	Evidence
◈ Americans are unhealthy	
◈ America is the fattest country	◈ Some news stories about America as the fattest country
◈ Americans suffer from many health problems	◈ Research about heart attacks
◈ Heart attacks are the number one killer of men	◈ Story of her uncle's heart attack
◈ Heart attacks are the number two killer of women	

evaluation

When we evaluate something we continue the process of analysis by assessing the various claims and arguments for validity. One way we evaluate a message is to ask questions about what is being said and who is saying it. The following is a list of typical questions we may ask, along with an evaluation of the ideas in Shonda's speech.

Is the speaker credible?

Yes. While Shonda may not be an expert per se on the issue of health benefits related to wine, she has made herself a mini-expert through conducting research.

Does the statement ring true or false based on common sense?

It sounds kind of fishy. Four or more glasses of wine in one sitting doesn't seem right. In fact, it seems like it might be bordering on binge drinking.

Does the logic employed hold up to scrutiny?

Based on the little bit of Shonda's speech we see here, her logic does seem to be sound. As we will see later on, she actually commits a few fallacies.

What questions or objections are raised by the message?

In addition to the possibility of Shonda's proposal being binge drinking, it also raises the possibility of creating alcoholism or causing other long term health problems.

How will further information affect the message?

More information will probably contradict her claims. In fact, most medical research in this area contradicts the claim that drinking 4 or more glasses of wine a day is a good thing.

Will further information strengthen or weaken the claims?

Most likely Shonda's claims will be weakened.

What questions or objections are raised by the claims?

In addition to the objections we've already discussed, there is also the problem of the credibility of Shonda's expert "doctor."

A wise man proportions his belief to the evidence. ~ David Hume

inference and interpretation or explanation

The next step in critically examining a message is to interpret or explain the conclusions that we draw from it. At this phase we consider the evidence and the claims together. In effect we are reassembling the components that we parsed out during analysis. We are continuing our evaluation by looking at the evidence, alternatives, and possible conclusions.

Before we draw any inferences or attempt any explanations, we should look at the evidence provided. When we consider evidence we must first determine what, if any, kind of support is provided. Of the evidence we then ask:

1. Is the evidence sound?
2. Does the evidence say what the speaker says it does?
3. Does contradictory evidence exist?
4. Is the evidence from a valid credible source?

Even though these are set up as yes or no questions, you'll probably find in practice that your answers are a bit more complex. For example, let's say you're writing a speech on why we should wear our seatbelts at all times while driving. You've researched the topic and found solid, credible information setting forth the numerous reasons why wearing a seatbelt can help save your life and decrease the number of injuries experienced during a motor vehicle accident. Certainly, there exists contradictory evidence arguing seat belts can cause more injuries. For example, if you're in an accident where your car is partially submerged in water, wearing a seatbelt may impede your ability to quickly exit the vehicle. Does the fact that this evidence exists negate your claims? Probably not, but you need to be thorough in evaluating and considering how you use your evidence.



"Imply" or "Infer"?

For two relatively small words, imply and infer seem to generate an inordinately large amount of confusion. Understanding the difference between the two and knowing when to use the right one is not only a useful skill, but it also makes you sound a lot smarter!

Let's begin with imply. Imply means to suggest or convey an idea. A speaker or a piece of writing implies things. For example, in Shonda's speech, she implies it is better to drink more red wine. In other words, she never directly says that we need to drink more red wine, but she clearly hints at it when she suggests that drinking four or more glasses a day will provide us with health benefits.

Now let's consider infer. Infer means that something in a speaker's words or a piece of writing helps us to draw a conclusion outside of his/her words. We infer a conclusion. Returning to Shonda's speech, we can infer she would want us to drink more red wine rather than less. She never comes right out and says this. However, by considering her overall message, we can draw this conclusion.

- Another way to think of the difference between imply and infer is:
- A speaker (or writer for that matter) implies.
- The audience infers.

Therefore, it would be incorrect to say that Shonda infers we should drink more rather than less wine. She implies this. To help you differentiate between the two, remember that an inference is something that comes from outside the spoken or written text.

A man who does not think for himself does not think at all. ~ Oscar Wilde

self-regulation

The final step in critically examining a message is actually a skill we should exercise throughout the entire process. With self-regulation, we consider our pre-existing thoughts on the subject and any biases we may have. We examine how what we think on an issue may have influenced the way we understand (or think we understand) the message and any conclusions we have drawn. Just as contradictory evidence doesn't automatically negate our claims or invalidate our arguments, our biases don't necessarily make our conclusions wrong. The goal of practicing self- regulation is not to disavow or deny our opinions. The goal is to create distance between our opinions and the messages we evaluate.



the value of critical thinking

In public speaking, the value of being a critical thinker cannot be overstressed. Critical thinking helps us to determine the truth or validity of arguments. However, it also helps us to formulate strong arguments for our speeches. Exercising critical thinking at all steps of the speech writing and delivering process can help us avoid situations like Shonda found herself in. Critical thinking is not a magical panacea that will make us super speakers. However, it is another tool that we can add to our speech toolbox.

As we will learn in the following pages, we construct arguments based on logic. Understanding the ways logic can be used and possibly misused is a vital skill. To help stress the importance of it, the Foundation for Critical Thinking has set forth universal standards of reasoning. These standards can be found in Table 16.2.3.

When the mind is thinking, it is talking to itself. ~ Plato

Table 16.2.3: Universal Standards of Reasoning

All reasoning has a purpose.
All reasoning is an attempt to figure something out, to settle some question, to solve some problem.
All reasoning is based on assumptions.
All reasoning is done from some point of view.
All reasoning is based on data, information, and evidence.
All reasoning is expressed through, and shaped by, concepts and ideas.
All reasoning contains inferences or interpretations by which we draw conclusions and give meaning to data.
All reasoning leads somewhere or has implications and consequences.

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16.3: Logic and the Role of Arguments

We use logic every day. Even if we have never formally studied logical reasoning and fallacies, we can often tell when a person's statement doesn't sound right. Think about the claims we see in many advertisements today – Buy product X, and you will be beautiful/thin/happy or have the carefree life depicted in the advertisement. With very little critical thought, we know intuitively that simply buying a product will not magically change our lives. Even if we can't identify the specific fallacy at work in the argument (non causa in this case), we know there is some flaw in the argument.



By studying logic and fallacies we can learn to formulate stronger and more cohesive arguments, avoiding problems like that mentioned above. The study of logic has a long history. We can trace the roots of modern logical study back to Aristotle in ancient Greece. Aristotle's simple definition of logic as the means by which we come to know anything still provides a concise understanding of logic (Aristotle, 1989). Of the classical pillars of a core liberal arts education of logic, grammar, and rhetoric, logic has developed as a fairly independent branch of philosophical studies. We use logic everyday when we construct statements, argue our point of view, and in myriad other ways. Understanding how logic is used will help us communicate more efficiently and effectively.

defining arguments

When we think and speak logically, we pull together statements that combine reasoning with evidence to support an assertion, arguments. A logical argument should not be confused with the type of argument you have with your sister or brother or any other person. When you argue with your sibling, you participate in a conflict in which you disagree about something. You may, however, use a logical argument in the midst of the argument with your sibling. Consider this example:

> *Brother and sister, Sydney and Harrison are arguing about whose turn it is to clean their bathroom. Harrison tells Sydney she should do it because she is a girl and girls are better at cleaning. Sydney responds that being a girl has nothing to do with whose turn it is. She reminds Harrison that according to their work chart, they are responsible for cleaning the bathroom on alternate weeks. She tells him she cleaned the bathroom last week; therefore, it is his turn this week. Harrison, still unconvinced, refuses to take responsibility for the chore. Sydney then points to the work chart and shows him where it specifically says it is his turn this week. Defeated, Harrison digs out the cleaning supplies.*

Throughout their bathroom argument, both Harrison and Sydney use logical arguments to advance their point. You may ask why Sydney is successful and Harrison is not. This is a good question. Let's critically think about each of their arguments to see why one fails and one succeeds.

Let's start with Harrison's argument. We can summarize it into three points:

1. Girls are better at cleaning bathrooms than boys.
2. Sydney is a girl.
3. Therefore, Sydney should clean the bathroom.

Harrison's argument here is a form of deductive reasoning, specifically a syllogism. We will consider syllogisms in a few minutes. For our purposes here, let's just focus on why Harrison's argument fails to persuade Sydney. Assuming for the moment that we agree with Harrison's first two premises, then it would seem that his argument makes sense. We know that Sydney is a girl, so the second premise is true. This leaves the first premise that girls are better at cleaning bathrooms than boys. This is the exact point where Harrison's argument goes astray. The only way his entire argument will work is if we agree with the assumption girls are better at cleaning bathrooms than boys.

Let's now look at Sydney's argument and why it works. Her argument can be summarized as follows:

1. The bathroom responsibilities alternate weekly according to the work chart.
2. Sydney cleaned the bathroom last week.
3. The chart indicates it is Harrison's turn to clean the bathroom this week.
4. Therefore, Harrison should clean the bathroom.

Sydney's argument here is a form of inductive reasoning. We will look at inductive reasoning in depth below. For now, let's look at why Sydney's argument succeeds where Harrison's fails. Unlike Harrison's argument, which rests on assumption for its truth claims, Sydney's argument rests on evidence. We can define evidence as anything used to support the validity of an assertion. Evidence includes: testimony, scientific findings, statistics, physical objects, and many others. Sydney uses two primary pieces of evidence: the work chart and her statement that she cleaned the bathroom last week. Because Harrison has no contradictory evidence, he can't logically refute Sydney's assertion and is therefore stuck with scrubbing the toilet.





defining deduction

Deductive reasoning refers to an argument in which the truth of its premises guarantees the truth of its conclusions. Think back to Harrison's argument for Sydney cleaning the bathroom. In order for his final claim to be valid, we must accept the truth of his claims that girls are better at cleaning bathrooms than boys. The key focus in deductive arguments is that it must be impossible for the premises to be true and the conclusion to be false. The classic example is:

All men are mortal.
Socrates is a man.
Therefore, Socrates is mortal.

We can look at each of these statements individually and see each is true in its own right. It is virtually impossible for the first two propositions to be true and the conclusion to be false. Any argument which fails to meet this standard commits a logical error or

fallacy. Even if we might accept the arguments as good and the conclusion as possible, the argument fails as a form of deductive reasoning.

> A few observations and much reasoning lead to error; many observations and a little reasoning to truth. ~ Alexis Carrel

Another way to think of deductive reasoning is to think of it as moving from a general premise to a specific premise. The basic line of reasoning looks like this:



This form of deductive reasoning is called a syllogism. A syllogism need not have only three components to its argument, but it must have at least three. We have Aristotle to thank for identifying the syllogism and making the study of logic much easier. The focus on syllogisms dominated the field of philosophy for thousands of years. In fact, it wasn't until the early nineteenth century that we began to see the discussion of other types of logic and other forms of logical reasoning. It is easy to fall prey to missteps in reasoning when we focus on syllogisms and deductive reasoning. Let's return to Harrison's argument and see what happens.

> Logic: The art of thinking and reasoning in strict accordance with the limitations and incapacities of the human misunderstanding. ~ Ambrose Bierce

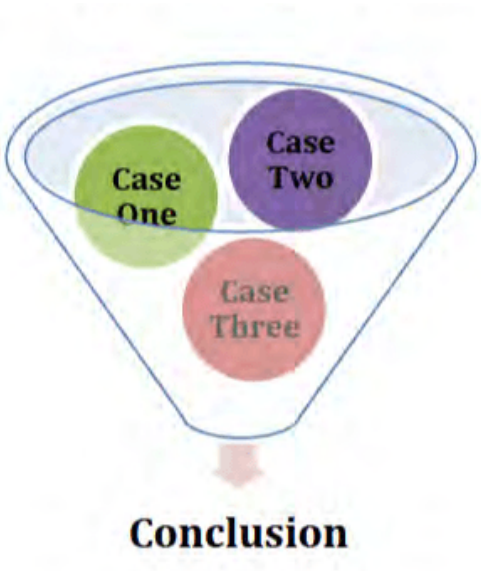


Considered in this manner, it should be clear how the strength of the conclusion depends upon us accepting as true the first two statements. This need for truth sets up deductive reasoning as a very rigid form of reasoning. If either one of the fast two

premises isn't true, then the entire argument fails. Let's turn to recent world events for another example: In the debates over whether the United States should take military action in Iraq, this was the basic line of reasoning used to justify an invasion. This logic was sufficient for the United States to invade Iraq; however, as we have since learned, this line of reasoning also shows how quickly logic can go bad. We subsequently learned that the "experts" weren't quite so confident, and their "evidence" wasn't quite as concrete as originally represented.

defining induction

Inductive reasoning is often thought of as the opposite of deductive reasoning; however, this approach is not wholly accurate. Inductive reasoning does move from the specific to the general. However, this fact alone does not make it the opposite of deductive reasoning. An argument which fails in its deductive reasoning may still stand inductively. Unlike deductive reasoning, there is no standard format inductive arguments must take, making them more flexible. We can define an inductive argument as one in which the truth of its propositions lends support to the conclusion. The difference here in deduction is the truth of the propositions establishes with absolute certainty the truth of the conclusion. When we analyze an inductive argument, we do not focus on the truth of its premises. Instead we analyze inductive arguments for their strength or soundness.



Another significant difference between deduction and induction is inductive arguments do not have a standard format. Let's return to Sydney's argument to see how induction develops in action:

1. Bathroom cleaning responsibilities alternate weekly according to the work chart.
2. Sydney cleaned the bathroom last week.
3. The chart indicates it is Harrison's turn to clean the bathroom this week.
4. Therefore, Harrison should clean the bathroom.

What Sydney does here is build to her conclusion that Harrison should clean the bathroom. She begins by stating the general house rule of alternate weeks for cleaning. She then adds in evidence before concluding her argument. While her argument is strong, we don't know if it is true. There could be other factors Sydney has left out. Sydney may have agreed to take Harrison's week of bathroom cleaning in exchange for him doing another one of her chores. Or there may be some extenuating circumstances preventing Harrison from bathroom cleaning this week.

> You should carefully study the Art of Reasoning, as it is what most people are very deficient in, and I know few things more disagreeable than to argue, or even converse with a man who has no idea of inductive and deductive philosophy.
> ~ William John Wills

Let's return to the world stage for another example. After the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center, we heard variations of the following arguments:

1. The terrorists were Muslim (or Arab or Middle Eastern).

2. The terrorists hated America.
3. Therefore, all Muslims (or Arabs or Middle Easterners) hate America.

Clearly, we can see the problem in this line of reasoning. Beyond being a scary example of hyperbolic rhetoric, we can all probably think of at least one counter example to disprove the conclusion. However, individual passions and biases caused many otherwise rational people to say these things in the weeks following the attacks. This example also clearly illustrates how easy it is to get tripped up in your use of logic and the importance of practicing self-regulation.



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16.4: Understanding fallacies

When we form arguments or examine others' arguments, we need to be cognizant of possible fallacies. A fallacy can be defined as a flaw or error in reasoning. At its most basic, a logical fallacy refers to a defect in the reasoning of an argument that causes the conclusion(s) to be invalid, unsound, or weak. The existence of a fallacy in a deductive argument makes the entire argument invalid. The existence of a fallacy in an inductive argument weakens the argument but does not invalidate it.

It is important to study fallacies so you can avoid them in the arguments you make. Studying fallacies also provides you with a foundation for evaluating and critiquing other arguments as well. Once you start studying and thinking about fallacies, you'll find they are everywhere. You could say that we live in a fallacious world!

The study of fallacies can be dated back to the start of the study of logic. In ancient Greece, Aristotle classified fallacies into two categories – linguistic and non-linguistic. Within these two categories, he identified 13 individual fallacies. Through time we have reclassified fallacies using various typologies and criteria. For our purposes, we will focus on formal and informal fallacies.



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16.5: Formal Fallacies

A formal fallacy exists because of an error in the structure of the argument. In other words, the conclusion doesn't follow from the premises. All formal fallacies are specific types of non sequiturs, or arguments in which the conclusions do not follow from the premises. Formal fallacies are identified by critically examining the structure of the argument exclusive of the individual statements. As you read through the following types of formal fallacies and examples, this definition will become more clear.

bad reasons fallacy (argumentum ad logicam)

In this fallacy, the conclusion is assumed to be bad because the arguments are bad. In practice, a premise of the argument is bad and therefore the conclusion is bad or invalid. This fallacy is seen often in debate or argumentation. We summarize the fallacy as: He gave bad reasons for his argument; therefore, his argument is bad. Consider the following claim:



The new employee is too quiet and has no sense of style. We should fire him.

The problem here should be obvious. To be a good employee does not require a certain look or the ability to put together interesting outfits. (Just look around your campus or workplace and you'll probably see how true this is.) As such, the reasons for concluding the new faculty member should be fired are bad. We commit a fallacy if the conclusion to fire him is also bad or wrong. While the given reasons don't necessarily support the conclusion, there may be others that do.

> Bad reasoning as well as good reasoning is possible; and this fact is the foundation of the practical side of logic. ~ Charles Sanders Peirce

masked man fallacy (intensional fallacy)

The masked man fallacy involves a substitution of parties. If the two things we substitute are identical, then the argument is valid:

Rosamond Smith wrote the book Nemesis.

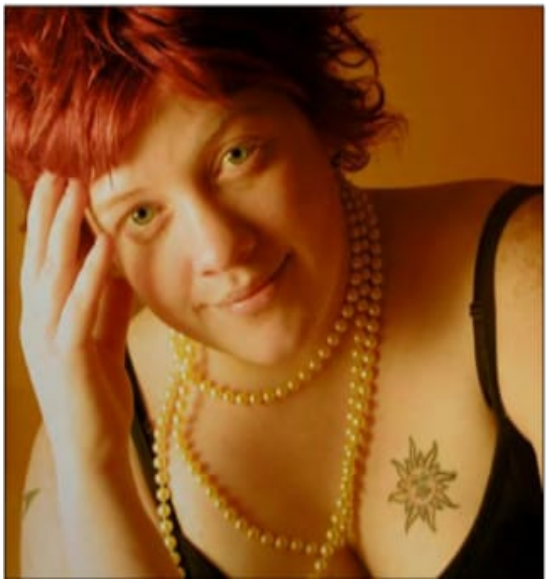
Rosamond Smith is an alias for Joyce Carol Oates.

Joyce Carol Oates wrote the book Nemesis.

This argument is valid because Rosamond Smith is in fact an alias for Joyce Carol Oates, so there is no flaw in the structure of the argument. Consider the following example:

Chris told police that a red- haired woman stole her car. Ginny is a red-haired woman. Therefore, Chris told police that Ginny stole her car.

The fallacy in this example occurs between the second premise and the conclusion. Looking at each premise individually, we can see that each is true. However, simply because each premise is true doesn't mean the conclusion is necessarily true. Even if Ginny did steal Chris's car, this fact doesn't make the conclusion true. The existence of this fact cannot be presumed to change what Chris told the police.



fallacy of quantitative logic

Fallacies of quantitative logic revolve around the grammatical structure of the proposition. The focus is on the use of some sort of quantifying word such as "all" or "some." Consider this example:

All philosophers are wise.

We can show the flaw in this statement by simply finding a counter- example. And since the fact of being wise is abstract, how do we truly know if one is wise or not? Consider how the statement changes with the use of a different quantifier:

Some philosophers are wise.

This statement is stronger because it allows for the possibility there are counter-examples. However, the error arises from the fact that it is not a known quantity. We must infer from the statement that some philosophers are not wise.

Let's look at another example:

All conservatives are Republicans.
Therefore, all Republicans are conservatives.

Without thinking too hard you can probably think of one counter-example. Let's try one more:

Some doctors are not MDs. Therefore, some MDs are not doctors.

While the first premise is true (there are other types of doctors), the second is clearly not true.



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16.6: Informal Fallacies

An informal fallacy occurs because of an error in reasoning. Unlike formal fallacies which are identified through examining the structure of the argument, informal fallacies are identified through analysis of the content of the premises. In this group of fallacies, the premises fail to provide adequate reasons for believing the truth of the conclusion. There are numerous different types of informal fallacies. In the following, we consider some of the more common types.

accident (sweeping generalization)

A fallacy by accident occurs when a generally true statement is applied to a specific case that is somehow unusual or exceptional. The fallacy looks like this:

Xs are normally Ys. Z is an (ab- normal) X. Therefore, Z is an Y.

Let's look at a specific example to see how this fallacy can easily occur:

Dogs are good pets.
Coyotes are dogs.
Therefore, coyotes are good pets.



The fallacy here should be clear. I love dogs and coyotes, but I don't know that I would want a coyote for a pet. The fallacy in this case could be easily fixed with the use of a simple qualifier such as the word "some." If we changed the first premise to read "Some dogs make good pets," then we can see how even if the second premise is true it doesn't automatically lead to the stated conclusion. The basic problem here is that a sometimes true statement is assumed to be universally true.

> I do personal attacks only on people who specialize in personal attacks. ~ Al Franken

genetic fallacy (ad hominem)

The ad hominem fallacy occurs when we shift our focus from the premises and conclusions of the argument and focus instead on the individual making the argument. An easy way to remember this fallacy is to think of it as the personal attack fallacy. It is the weak form of arguing that many of us employed on our elementary school playgrounds such as this exchange:

Bill: I think we should go back to class now.

Jane: I don't think we need to worry about it.

Bill: Well, the bell rang a few minutes ago. We're going to be late.

Jane: Well, you're a big jerk and don't know anything, so we don't have to go back to class.

If we examine this exchange we can see that Bill's arguments are sound and supported by what appears to be good evidence. However, Jane ignores these and focuses on Bill's supposed character – he's a big jerk. The fallacy happens when we connect the truth of a proposition to the person asserting it.



Let's consider a more serious example that we see in many political campaigns. We can map out the fallacy as follows:

My opponent has trait X. Therefore, she is not qualified to do the job.

The focus here is on the individual's trait, even when the trait in question has nothing to do with the job. We saw this fallacy in play in the early days of the 2012 U.S. presidential campaign:

We will never get out of debt if we allow a Democrat to remain as president.

The focus here has nothing to do with any individual candidate's skills, experience, or abilities. The focus is solely on their political affiliation.

There is no greater impediment to the advancement of knowledge than the ambiguity of words. ~ Thomas Reid

ambiguity (equivocation)

Fallacies caused by ambiguity occur, not surprisingly, when some ambiguous term is used in the argument. An ambiguous term is one that has more than one meaning. The structure of the argument may be clear, and there may be solid evidence supporting the propositions. The problem arises from having nothing solid on which to base our conclusion. We saw this fallacy in play during the Clinton/Lewinsky investigations. If you recall, when questioned about his relationship with Monica Lewinsky, President Clinton responded that he never had "sexual relations" with that woman. The phrase "sexual relations" can include a whole range of sexual behaviors.

Let's look at a more recent example:

We won't be safe until we win the war on terrorism.



Can you spot the ambiguity? Actually there are two: safe and terrorism. What is safe to one person is much less so to another. Likewise, behaviors that appear terrorist-like to one person are simply impassioned acts to another.

> An appeal to the reason of the people has never been known to fail in the long run. ~ James Russell Lowell

fallacies of appeal

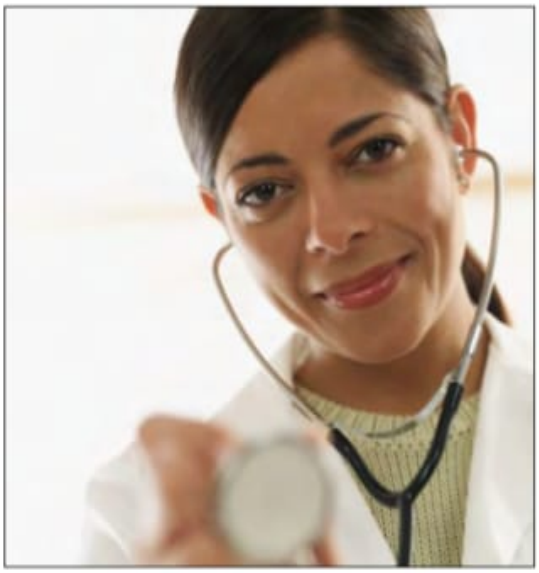
This type of fallacy is actually a group of fallacies. At its most basic, the truth of the argument rests on reference to some outside source or force. We will consider four of the most popular appeal fallacies – appeals to authority, emotion, ignorance, and pity.

appeal to authority (ad vericundiam)

When we appeal to authority we claim the truth of a proposition is guaranteed because of the opinion of a famous person. Appeals to authority look like this:

Authority figure X says Y. Therefore, Y is true.

We see this fallacy in play regularly in commercials or other advertisements featuring a doctor, lawyer, or other professional. Think about, for example, ads for the latest weight loss supplement. A doctor will discuss the science of the supplement. At times she will mention that she used the supplement and successfully lost weight. Even though we do learn something about the specifics of the supplement, the focus is on the doctor and her implied authoritative knowledge. We are to infer that the supplement will work because the doctor says it will work.



The fallacy in this type of reasoning occurs when we confuse the truth of the proposition with the person stating it. Instead of considering the strength of the argument and any evidence associated with it, we focus solely on the individual.

It can be easy to fall into the trap of this fallacy. For many of your speeches, you will be asked to research the issue at hand and present supporting evidence. This is a prime place for the fallacy to occur. While it is important to support your arguments with outside research, it is also important to critically evaluate all aspects of the information. Remember the example of Shonda's speech that opened this chapter? Her blind reliance on the research of Dr. Gray is an example of the appeal to authority fallacy.

> Anyone who conducts an argument by appealing to authority is not using his intelligence; he is just using his memory.
> ~ Leonardo da Vinci

appeal to emotion

This fallacy occurs with the use of highly emotive or charged language. The force of the fallacy lies in its ability to motivate the audience to accept the truth of the proposition based solely on their visceral response to the words used. In a sense, the audience is manipulated or forced into accepting the truth of the stated conclusions. Consider the following example:

Any campus member who thinks clearly should agree that Dr. Lenick is a flaming, radical, feminist, liberal. Dr. Lenick has made it clear she believes that equal rights should be granted to everyone without regard to the traditions and history of this campus or this country. Therefore, Dr. Lenick is a bad teacher and should be fired immediately.



The thrust of this argument revolves around two interrelated components – Dr. Lenick's advocacy of equal rights for all and her alleged disregard for tradition and history. The emotional appeal rests in the phrase "flaming, radical, feminist, liberal" – words that indicate ideological beliefs, usually beliefs that are strongly held by both sides. Additionally, hot button words like these tend to evoke a visceral response rather than a logical, reasoned response.

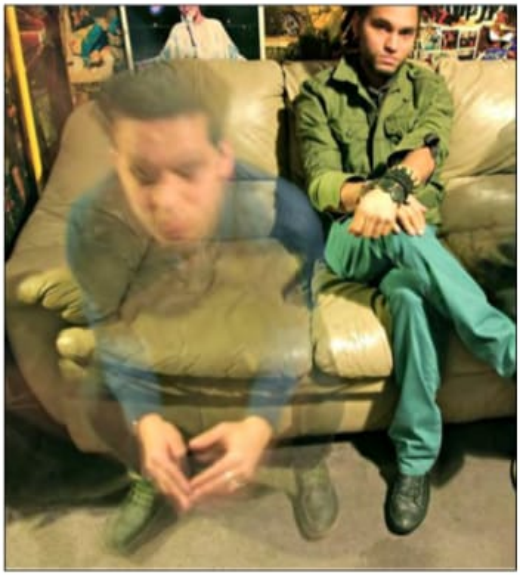
> The highest form of ignorance is when you reject something you don't know anything about. ~ Wayne Dyer

appeal to Ignorance (argumentum ad ignorantiam)

When we appeal to ignorance, we argue that the proposition must be accepted unless someone can prove otherwise. The argument rests not on any evidence but on a lack of evidence. We are to believe the truth of the argument because no one has disproven it. Let's look at an example to see how appeals to ignorance can develop:

People have been seeing ghosts for hundreds of years. No one has been able to prove definitively that ghosts don't exist. Therefore, ghosts are real.

Though rather simplistic, this example makes clear the thrust of this fallacy. The focus is not on supporting evidence, but on a blatant lack of evidence. While ghosts may exist, we don't know for sure they do – or don't for that matter. As such, we could also argue that because we can't prove that ghosts are real they must not exist.

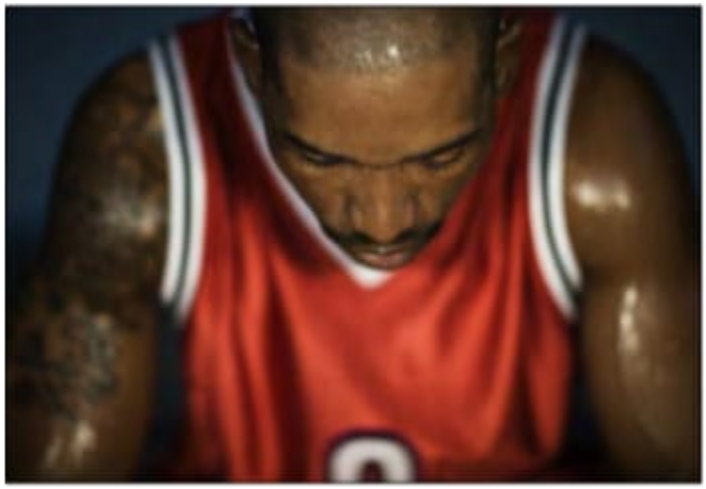


appeal to pity (argumentium ad misericordium)

Appeals to pity are another form of pulling on the emotions of the audience. In the appeal to pity, the argument attempts to win acceptance by pointing out the unfortunate consequences that will fall upon the speaker. In effect, the goal is to make us feel sorry for the speaker and ignore contradictory evidence. This form of fallacy is used often by students. Consider this message a professor recently received at the end of the semester:

I know I have not done all the work for the semester and have been absent a lot. However, I am the key point guard for the basketball team. If I get any grade lower than a C, I will not be able to play basketball next semester. If I don't play, the team will lose. Will you please make sure that you give me at least a C for my final grade?

The student here acknowledges he does not deserve a grade of C or higher. He has missed assignments, failed the midterm, and accrued a number of absences. His argument asks the professor to ignore these facts, though, and focus on the fact that without him the team would lose. In other words, he hopes the professor will feel sorry for him and ignore the evidence.



begging the question (petitio principii)

A begging the question fallacy is a form of circular reasoning that occurs when the conclusion of the argument is used as one of the premises of the argument. Arguments composed in this way will only be considered sound or strong by those who already accept their conclusion.

Dilbert: And we know mass creates gravity because more dense planets have more gravity.

Dogbert: How do we know which planets are more dense?

Dilbert: They have more gravity.

To see how begging the question develops as a fallacy, let's turn to standard arguments in the abortion debate. One of the common arguments made by those who oppose legalized abortion is the following:

Murder is morally wrong.

Abortion is murder.

Therefore, abortion is morally wrong.

Most people would agree with the first premise that murder is morally wrong. The problem, then rests in the second premise. Not all individuals would agree that abortion is murder. However, as presented, the premise creates a presumption it is valid in all cases.

Those who advocate for legalized abortion are not immune from this fallacy. One of their standard arguments is:

The Constitution guarantees Americans the right to control their bodies.

Abortion is a choice affecting women's bodies.

Therefore, abortion is a constitutional right.

Like the previous example, the second premise generates a potential stopping point. While the choice to have or not have an abortion does clearly impact a woman's body, many individuals would argue this impact is not a deciding issue.



black-or-white Fallacy (bifurcation)

This fallacy is also known as an Either/or fallacy or False Dichotomy. The thrust of the fallacy occurs when we are only given the choice between two possible alternatives, when in fact more than two exist.

Returning to the abortion debates, we can see a form of this fallacy in play by simply looking at the way each side refers to itself. Those who oppose legalized abortion are Pro-Life. The implication here is that if you are for abortion then you are against life. The fallacy in this case is easy to figure out – there are many facets of life, not just abortion. Those who favor legalized abortion are Pro-Choice. The implication here is that if you are against abortion, then you are against choices. Again, the reasoning is faulty.

> There is no black-and-white situation. It's all part of life. Highs, lows, middles. ~ Van Morrison

Let's look at another hot button topic to see how this fallacy develops in action. In recent years many family advocacy groups have argued that, what they call, the "liberal media" has caused the rapid moral decline of America. They usually ask questions like: Do you support families or moral depravity? This question ignores the whole range of choices between the two extremes.

composition

This fallacy occurs when we assume that if all the parts have a given quality, then the whole of the parts will have it as well. We jump to a conclusion without concrete evidence. We see this fallacy at work in the following example:

All of the basketball team's players are fast runners, high jumpers, and winners. Therefore, the team is a winner.

The problem here is the individuals must work together to make the team a winner. This might very well happen, but it might not.

To make this fallacy more clear, let's look at a humorous, though not so appetizing example:



I like smoothies for breakfast because I can drink them on the run. My favorite breakfast foods are scrambled eggs, fresh fruit, bagels with cream cheese, soy sausage links, cottage cheese, oatmeal, cold pizza, and triple espressos. Therefore, I would like a breakfast smoothie made of scrambled eggs, fresh fruit, bagels with cream cheese, soy sausage links, cottage cheese, oatmeal, cold pizza, and triple espressos.

If you're not feeling too nauseated to keep reading, you should be able to see the composition fallacy here. While each of these breakfast items may be appetizing individually, they become much less so when dropped into a blender and pureed together.

division

The opposite of the composition fallacy, a division fallacy occurs when we think the parts of the whole contain the same quality as the whole. Let's turn to another food-based example to see how this fallacy occurs:

Blueberry muffins taste good. Therefore, the individual ingredients comprising blueberry muffins also taste good.



On the surface, this argument may not appear to be problematic. However, think about the individual ingredients: blueberries, raw eggs, flour, sugar, salt, baking soda, oil, and vanilla. Of these, blueberries are the only items that generally taste good on their own. I don't know about you, but sitting down to a bowl of baking soda doesn't sound too appetizing.

Here's one more example to make the fallacy clearer:

Women in general make less money than men. Therefore, Brenda Barnes, CEO of the Sara Lee company, makes less money than the male delivery drivers who work for the company.

Common sense will tell you the CEO of a company makes more money than the hourly delivery drivers. Additionally, a few quick minutes of research will confirm this inference.

false cause (non causa, pro causa)

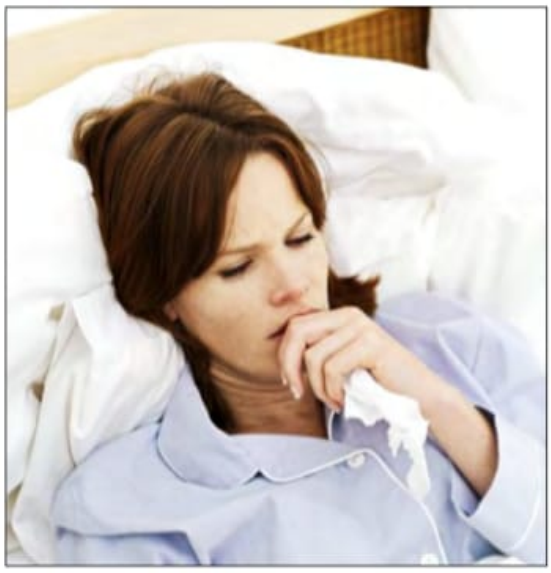
Sometimes called a Questionable Cause fallacy, this occurs when there exists a flawed causal connection between events. The fallacy is not just a bad inference about connection between cause and effect, but one that violates the cannons of reasoning about causation. We see two primary types of this fallacy:

Accidental or coincidental connection occurs when we assume a connection where one might or might not exist. We say event C caused event E when we have no clear proof. Here's an example:

Yesterday Jen went out in the rain and got soaked. The next day she was in bed with the flu. Therefore, the rain caused her to get sick.

Most of us probably grew up hearing statements like this without ever realizing we were being exposed to a logical fallacy in action. Flu is caused by exposure to a virus, not to bad weather.

The other type of causal fallacy occurs with a general causation between types of events. For example, we know that drinking excessive amounts of alcohol leads to alcoholism and cirrhosis of the liver. However, not every individual who drinks excessively develops either of these diseases. In other words, there is a possibility the disease will occur as a result of excessive drinking, but it is not an absolute.



red herring (Irrelevant thesis)

This fallacy occurs when we introduce an irrelevant issue into the argument. The phrase “red herring” comes from the supposed fox hunting practice of dragging a dried smoke herring across the trail so as to throw off the hound from the scent. In logical reasoning, the red herring fallacy works in much the same way. No, this doesn’t mean you make the argument while smelling like an old fish. What it does mean is that we attempt to distract the audience by introducing some irrelevant point, such as this:

Each year thousands of people die in car accident across the country. Why should we worry about endangered animals?

This argument is trying to get us to focus on dead people instead of animals. While car accidents and the deaths resulting from them are a serious issue, this fact does not lessen the importance of worrying about endangered animals. The two issues are not equated with each other.



Political campaigns are a fertile ground for growing red herring fallacies. If you think back to the 2004 Presidential campaign you will find a number of red herrings. For example, at one point we were inundated with ads reminding us that John Kerry’s wife was heir to the Heinz ketchup fortune. The implication was that by extension John Kerry was a rich elitist incapable of understanding the plight of working class and middle class individuals.

slippery slope

This fallacy occurs when we assume one action will initiate a chain of events culminating in an undesirable event later. It makes it seem like the final event, the bottom of the slope, is an inevitability. Arguments falling prey to the slippery slope fallacy ignore the fact there are probably a number of other things that can happen between the initial event and the bottom of the slope.

We hear examples of the slippery slope fallacy all around us:

If we teach sex education in school, then students will have more sex. If students have more sex, we will have a rash of unplanned pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases. Students will be forced to drop out of school and will never have the chance to succeed in life.

Clearly, just learning about sex doesn't automatically mean that you will engage in sex. Even more unlikely is the fact that merely learning about sex will force you to drop out of school.

strawman

This fallacy occurs when the actual argument appears to be refuted, but in reality a related point is addressed. The individual using a strawman argument will appear to be refuting the original point made but will actually be arguing a point not made in the original. The best strawman arguments will argue the new point to a conclusion that appears solid; however, because their point is not the original point, it is still a fallacy.

Examples of the strawman fallacy are everywhere and can appear to be quite persuasive:

President Obama cannot truly have American interests in mind because he's not truly American but Muslim.

Statements similar to this were quite prevalent during the 2008 Presidential election and still appear on occasion. The assumption here is that if a person

follows Islam and identifies as Muslim they clearly can't be American or interested in America. While there are many potential flaws in this argument as presented, for our purpose the most obvious is that there are many Americans who are Muslim and who are quite interested and concerned about America.



false analogy

When we use analogies in our reasoning, we are comparing things. A fallacy of weak analogy occurs when there exists a poor connection between examples. Structurally, the fallacy looks like this:

A and B are similar.

A has characteristic X.

Therefore, B has characteristic X.

This fallacy often occurs when we try to compare two things that on the surface appear similar. For example:

Humans and animals are both living, breathing beings. Humans have civil rights. Therefore, animals have civil rights.

The problem in this argument is that while humans and animals are alike in their living and breathing status, there are numerous other ways they differ. We commit a fallacy when we infer that based on this initial similarity, they are similar in all other ways as well.

The other day while looking at houses, I heard another version of this argument from a real estate agent. The house I was looking at was an older house needing some TLC. I asked how old the roof was and the real estate agent responded:

I don't know for sure, but it's either 10 or 20 years old. You know, though, I put a roof on a house similar to this when I was younger and we haven't had to worry about it. It's been over 20 years now.

Ignoring for the moment that there's a big difference between a 10-year-old roof and a 20-year-old roof, the real estate agent mistakenly assumes that his roof and the roof of the TLC house are the same. They both provide a covering for the home, but that's about where their similarities end.

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16.7: Conclusion

In this chapter we have examined what critical thinking is and how it involves more than simply being critical. Understanding critical thinking helps in formulating and studying arguments. We see arguments every day in advertising, use arguments to persuade others, and we use them to benefit us. The overview of fallacies showed not all arguments are valid or even logical. Always critically think and examine any argument you confront, and remember that if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is a fallacious argument.

We practice critical thinking on a daily basis, often without any extra effort. Now that you know a bit more about how to do these things better, you should find that you can put together more persuasive arguments that avoid the pitfalls of fallacious thinking. More importantly, when you hear a statement such as, “You should drink at least four glasses of wine per day,” you’ll know that something isn’t right. And if you do hear a statement like this, you will be prepared to think critically about the statement, and will be in a position to make a more educated decision about the information.

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17: Media Literacy

learning objectives

- Define media literacy, and explain why it is relevant to today's world.
- Discuss the role of individual responsibility and accountability when responding to pop culture.
- List the five key questions that can be asked about any media message.

In Gutenberg's age and the subsequent modern era, literacy—the ability to read and write—was a concern not only of educators but also of politicians, social reformers, and philosophers. A literate population, many reasoned, would be able to seek out information, stay informed about the news of the day, communicate with others, and make informed decisions in many spheres of life. Because of this, the reasoning went, literate people made better citizens, parents, and workers. In the 20th century, as literacy rates grew around the globe, there was a new sense that merely being able to read and write was not enough. In a world dominated by media, individuals needed to be able to understand, sort through and analyze the information they were bombarded with every day. In the second half of the 20th century, a name was finally put to this skill of being able to decode and process the messages and symbols transmitted via media: media literacy. According to the nonprofit National Association for Media Literacy Education (NAMLE), a person who is media literate is able to access, analyze, evaluate, and communicate information. Put another way by John Culkin, a pioneering advocate for media literacy education, "the new mass media—film, radio, TV—are new languages, their grammar as yet unknown."Kate Moody, "John Culkin, SJ: The Man Who Invented Media Literacy: 1928–1993," Center for Media Literacy, www.medialit.org/reading_room/article408.html (accessed July 15, 2010). Media literacy seeks to give media consumers the ability to understand this new language.

Why Be Media Literate?

Culkin called the pervasiveness of media "the unnoticed fact of our present," noting that media information was as omnipresent and easy to overlook as the air we breathe (and, he noted, "some would add that it is just as polluted"). Our exposure to media starts early—a study by the Kaiser Family Foundation found that 68 percent of children aged two and younger spend an average of two hours in front of a screen (either computer or television) each day, while children under six spend as much time in front of a screen as they do playing outside. As previously noted, U.S. teenagers are spending an average of 7.5 hours with media daily, nearly as long as they spend in school. Media literacy isn't merely a skill for young people, however. Today, Americans of all ages get much of their information from various media sources. One crucial role of media literacy education is to enable all of us to skeptically examine the often-conflicting media messages we receive every day.

Advertising

Many of the hours people spend with media are with commercial-sponsored content. The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) estimated that children aged 2 to 11 saw, on average, 25,629 television commercials a year, or more than 10,700 minutes of ads. Adults saw 52,469 ads, or about 15.5 days worth of television advertising.Debra Holt, Pauline Ippolito, Debra Desrochers, and Christopher Kelley, "Children's Exposure to TV Advertising in 1977 and 2004," Federal Trade Commission Bureau of Economics Staff Report, June 1, 2007. Children (and adults) are bombarded with contradictory messages—newspaper articles about the obesity epidemic are side by side with ads touting soda, candy, and fast food. The American Academy of Pediatrics maintains that advertising directed at children under eight is "inherently deceptive" and exploitative because young children cannot tell the difference between programs and commercials.Donald Shifrin, "Perspectives on Marketing, Self-Regulation and Childhood Obesity," Remarks given at Federal Trade Commission Workshop July 14–15, 2005, Washington, DC.

Advertising raises other issues as well. It often uses techniques of psychological pressure to influence decision making. Ads might appeal to vanity, insecurity, prejudice, fear, or the desire for adventure. This is not always a negative thing—antismoking public service announcements may rely on disgusting images of blackened lungs to shock viewers. Nonetheless, media literacy attempts to teach people to be informed and guarded consumers, and to evaluate claims with a critical eye. Do "four out of five doctors" really endorse the product?

Bias, Spin, and Misinformation

Advertisements may have the explicit goal of selling a product or idea, but they're not the only kind of media message with an agenda. A politician may hope to persuade potential voters that she has their best interests at heart. An ostensibly objective journalist may allow his or her own political leanings to subtly slant articles. Magazine writers might avoid criticizing companies that advertise heavily in their pages. Broadcast news reporters may sensationalize stories in order to boost ratings—and advertising rates.

An important part of media literacy is remembering that mass communication messages are created by individuals, each with a set of values, assumptions, and priorities. Accepting media messages at face value could lead to head-spinning confusion, thanks to all the contradictory information that's out there. For example, in 2010, a highly contested governor's race in New Mexico led to conflicting ads from both candidates, Diane Denish and Susana Martinez. Each claimed that the other agreed to policies that benefited sex offenders. According to the media watchdog site Factcheck.org, the Denish team's ad "shows a pre-teen girl—seemingly about 9 years old—going down a playground slide in slow-motion, while ominous music plays in the background and an announcer discusses two sex crime cases. It ends with an empty swing, as the announcer says: 'Today we don't know where these sex offenders are lurking, because Susana Martinez didn't do her job.'" The opposing ad proclaims that "a department in Denish's cabinet gave sanctuary to criminal illegals [*sic*], like child molester Juan Gonzalez." Both claims are highly inflammatory, play on fear, and distort the reality behind each situation. Media literacy attempts to give people the skills to look critically at these and other media messages—to sift through various claims, and to make sense of the often-conflicting information we face every day.

The Center for Media Literacy's Five Core Concepts

1. All media messages are constructed.
2. Media messages are constructed using a creative language with its own rules.
3. Different people experience the same media message differently.
4. Media have embedded values and points of view.
5. Most media messages are organized to gain profit and/or power.http://www.medialit.org

New Skills for a New World

In the past, one goal of education was to provide students with the information deemed necessary to successfully engage with the world. Students memorized multiplication tables, state capitals, famous poems, and notable dates. In today's world, however, vast amounts of information are available at the click of a mouse. Even before the advent of the Internet, noted communications scholar David Berlo foresaw the consequences of expanding information technology: "Most of what we have called formal education has been intended to imprint on the human mind all of the information that we might need for a lifetime." Changes in technology necessitate changes in how we learn, Berlo noted, and these days "education needs to be geared toward the handling of data rather than the accumulation of data."David Shaw, "A Plea for Media Literacy in our Nation's Schools," *Los Angeles Times*, November 30, 2003.

Online technology surely has changed how we learn. For example, Wikipedia, a hugely popular Internet encyclopedia, is at the center of a debate on the proper use of online sources. In 2007, Middlebury College banned the use of Wikipedia as a source in history papers and exams. One of the school's librarians noted that the online encyclopedia "symbolizes the best and worst of the Internet. It's the best because everyone gets his/her say and can state their views. It's the worst because people who use it uncritically take for truth what is only opinion."Meredith Byers, "Controversy over use of Wikipedia in academic papers arrives at Smith," *Smith College Sophian*, News section, March 8, 2007. Or as comedian and satirist Stephen Colbert put it, "any user can change any entry, and if enough other users agree with them, it becomes true." In 2007, CIA computers were used to make edits on the site's article about the President of Iran. The Vatican allegedly doctored the entry for Irish activist and Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams. A computer registered to the U.S. Democratic Party changed the site's page for Rush Limbaugh to proclaim that he was "racist" and a "bigot."Jonathan Fildes, "Wikipedia 'shows CIA page edits.'" *BBC News*, Science and Technology section, August 15, 2007. Media literacy teaches today's students how to sort through the Internet's cloud of data, ferret out reliable sources, and be aware of bias and unreliable sources.

Individual Accountability and Popular Culture

Ultimately, media literacy teaches that messages and images are constructed with various aims in mind and that each individual has the responsibility to evaluate and interpret these media messages. Mass communication may be created and disseminated by individuals, businesses, governments, or organizations, but they are always received by an individual, even if that individual is sitting in a crowded theater. Education, life experience, and a host of other factors allow each person to interpret constructed media in different ways; there is no “right answer,” or one way to read the media. But media literacy skills help us to function better in our media-rich environment, enabling us to be better democratic citizens, smarter shoppers, and more skeptical media consumers. As a means to this end, NAMLE has come up with a list of five questions to ask when analyzing media messages:

1. Who created this message?
2. What creative techniques are used to attract my attention?
3. How might different people understand this message differently?
4. What values, lifestyles, and points of view are represented in, or omitted from, this message?
5. Why is this message being sent?Center for Media Literacy, MediaLitKit, www.medialit.org/pdf/mlk/14A_CCKQposter.pdf (accessed July 15, 2010).

With these questions as a starting point, we can ensure that we’re staying informed about where our information comes from, and why—important steps in any media literacy education.

Key Takeaways

- Media literacy, or the ability to decode and process media messages, is especially key in today’s media-saturated society. Media surrounds contemporary Americans to an unprecedented degree, and from an early age. Because media messages are constructed with particular aims in mind, a media literate individual will interpret them with a critical eye. Advertisements, bias, spin, and misinformation are all things to look out for.
- Individual responsibility is crucial for media literacy because, while media messages may be produced by individuals, companies, governments, or organizations, they are always received and decoded by individuals.
- The following are NAMLE’s five questions that can be asked about any media message:
  1. Who created this message?
  2. What creative techniques are used to attract my attention?
  3. How might different people understand this message differently?
  4. What values, lifestyles, and points of view are represented in, or omitted from, this message?
  5. Why is this message being sent?

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17.1: Mass Media and Its Messages

learning objectives

- Explain the different ways mass media affects culture.
- Analyze cultural messages that the media send.
- Explain the ways new media have affected culture.

When media consumers think of media messages, they may think of televised public service announcements or political advertisements. These obvious examples provide a venue for the transfer of a message through a medium, whether that message is a plea for fire safety or the statement of a political position. But what about more abstract political advertisements that simply show the logo of a candidate and a few simple words? Media messages can range from overt statements to vague expressions of cultural values.

Disagreements over the content of media messages certainly exist. Consider the common allegations of political bias against various news organizations. Accusations of hidden messages or agenda-driven content have always been an issue in the media, but as the presence of media grows, the debate concerning media messages increases. This dialogue is an important one; after all, mass media have long been used to persuade. Many modern persuasive techniques stem from the use of media as a propaganda tool. The role of propaganda and persuasion in the mass media is a good place to start when considering various types of media effects.

Propaganda and Persuasion

Encyclopedia Britannica defines propaganda simply as the "manipulation of information to influence public opinion."*Britannica Concise Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Propaganda." This definition works well for this discussion because the study and use of propaganda has had an enormous influence on the role of persuasion in modern mass media. In his book *The Creation of the Media*, Paul Starr argues that the United States, as a liberal democracy, has favored employing an independent press as a public guardian, thus putting the media in an inherently political position.Paul Starr, *Creation of the Media* (New York: Basic Books, 2004), 394–395. The United States—in contrast to other nations where media are held in check—has encouraged an independent commercial press and thus given the powers of propaganda and persuasion to the public.Paul Starr, *Creation of the Media* (New York: Basic Books, 2004), 394–395.

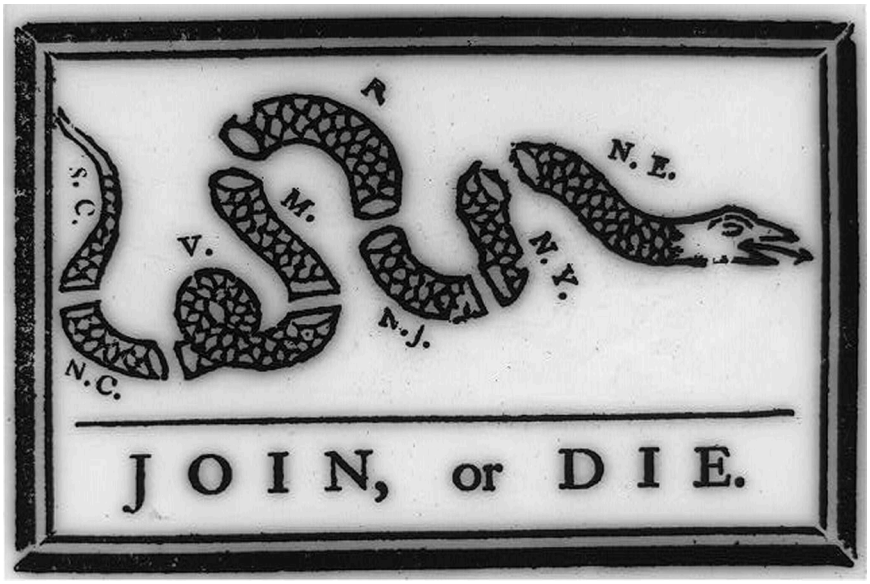


Figure 2.2 Benjamin Franklin used a powerful image of a severed snake to emphasize the importance of the colonies joining together during the American Revolution.

Like any type of communication, propaganda is not inherently good or bad. Whether propaganda has a positive or negative effect on society and culture depends on the motivations of those who use it and the understandings of those who receive it. People promoting movements as wide-ranging as Christianity, the American Revolution, and the communist revolutions of the 20th century have all used propaganda to disseminate their messages.Garth S. Jowett and Victoria O'Donnell, *Propaganda and Persuasion* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2006), 60–61. Newspapers and pamphlets that glorified the sacrifices at Lexington and Concord and trumpeted the victories of George Washington's army greatly aided the American Revolution. For example, Benjamin Franklin's famous illustration of a severed snake with the caption "Join, or Die" serves as an early testament to the power and use of print propaganda.Garth S. Jowett and Victoria O'Donnell, *Propaganda and Persuasion* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2006), 80–81.

As you will learn in Chapter 4, the penny press made newspapers accessible to a mass audience and became a force for social cohesion during the 1830s.Garth S. Jowett and Victoria O'Donnell, *Propaganda and Persuasion* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2006), 95–96. Magazines adopted a similar format later in the 19th century, and print media's political and social power rose. In an infamous example of the new power of print media, some newspapers encouraged the Spanish-American War of 1898 by fabricating stories of Spanish atrocities and sabotage.Garth S. Jowett and Victoria O'Donnell, *Propaganda and Persuasion* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2006), 103–104. For example, after the USS *Maine* sunk off the coast of Havana, Cuba, some newspapers blamed the Spanish—even though there was no evidence—fueling the public's desire for war with Spain.

The present-day, pejorative connotation of propaganda recalls the utilization of mass media by World War I–era governments to motivate the citizenry of many countries to go to war. Some media outlets characterized that war as a global fight between Anglo civilization and Prussian barbarianism. Although some of those fighting the war had little understanding of the political motivations behind it, wartime propaganda convinced them to enlist.Mark Crispin Miller, introduction to *Propaganda*, by Edward Bernays (Brooklyn, NY: IG Publishing, 2005), 11. As you will read in Chapter 12, World War I legitimized the advertising profession in the minds of government and corporate leaders because its techniques were useful in patriotic propaganda campaigns. Corporations quickly adapted to this development and created an advertising boom in the 1920s by using World War I propaganda techniques to sell products.Mark Crispin Miller, introduction to *Propaganda*, by Edward Bernays (Brooklyn, NY: IG Publishing, 2005), 12.

In modern society, the persuasive power of the mass media is well known. In the years after 9/11, there were multiple reports of the death of Osama bin Laden; people desperately wanted to believe he was killed. In reality, he was killed in 2011. Governments, corporations, nonprofit organizations, and political campaigns rely on both new and old media to create messages and to send them to the general public. During and since the 2008 Presidential election, there has been constant scrutiny over Barack Obama's birthplace and citizenship; the reports are discredited, but the questions resurface. The comparatively unregulated nature of U.S. media has made, for better or worse, a society in which the tools of public persuasion are available to everyone.

Media Effects and Behavior

Although the mass media send messages created specifically for public consumption, they also convey messages that are not properly defined as propaganda or persuasion. Some argue that these messages influence behavior, especially the behavior of young people.Alexandra Beatty, "Studying Media Effects on Children and Youth: Improving Methods and Measures, Workshop Summary," March 2–3, 2006, The National Academies Press, http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=11706; "Media Influence on Youth," Crisis Connection, www.crisisconnectioninc.org/t...e_on_youth.htm. Violent, sexual, and compulsive behaviors have been linked to media consumption and thus raise important questions about the effects of media on culture.

Violence and the Media

On April 20, 1999, students Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold entered their Denver-area high school, Columbine High School, armed with semiautomatic weapons and explosives. Over the next few hours, the pair killed 12 classmates and one faculty member before committing suicide.Gina Lamb, "Columbine High School," Times Topics, *New York Times*, April 17, 2008, http://topics.nytimes.com/topics/reference/timestopics/organizations/c/columbine_high_school/index.html. The tragedy and its aftermath captured national attention, and in the weeks following the Columbine High School shootings, politicians and pundits worked to assign blame. Their targets ranged from the makers of the first-person shooter video game *Doom* to the Hollywood studios responsible for *The Matrix*.Tom Brook, "Is Hollywood to Blame?" *BBC News*, April 23, 1999, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/special_report/1999/03/99/tom_brook/326529.stm.

However, in the years since the massacre, research has revealed that the perpetrators were actually attempting a terrorist bombing rather than a first-person shooter style rampage.Greg Toppo, "10 Years Later, the Real Story Behind Columbine," *USA*

Today, April 13, 2009, http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2009-04-13-columbine-myths_N.htm. But did violent video games so desensitize the two teenagers to violence that they could contemplate such a plan? Did movies that glorify violent solutions create a culture that would encourage people to consider such methods? Because modern culture is so immersed in media, the issue becomes a particularly complex one, and it can be difficult to understand the types of effects that violent media produce.

A number of studies have verified certain connections between violent video games and violent behavior in young people. For example, studies have found that some young people who play violent video games reported angry thoughts and aggressive feelings immediately after playing. Other studies, such as one conducted by Dr. Chris A. Anderson and colleagues, point to correlations between the amount of time spent playing violent video games and increased incidence of aggression.Craig A. Anderson and others, "The Influence of Media Violence on Youth," *Psychological Science in the Public Interest* 4, no. 3 (2003): 81–110. However, these studies do not prove that video games cause violence. Video game defenders argue that violent people can be drawn to violent games, and they point to lower overall incidence of youth violence in recent years compared to past decades.Jill U. Adams, "Effects of Violent Video Games," *Los Angeles Times*, May 3, 2010, http://articles.latimes.com/2010/may/03/health/la-he-closer-20100503. Other researchers admit that individuals prone to violent acts are indeed drawn to violent media; however, they claim that by keeping these individuals in a movie theater or at home, violent media have actually contributed to a reduction in violent social acts.Peter Goodman, "Violent Films May Cut Real Crime, Study Finds," *New York Times*, January 7, 2008, http://www.nytimes.com/2008/01/07/technology/07iht-violence.4.9058958.html.



Figure 2.3 The 1999 Columbine High School shooting led to greater debate and criticism over violent video games. Source: Used with permission from Getty Images.

Whether violent media actually cause violence remains unknown, but unquestionably these forms of media send an emotional message to which individuals respond. Media messages are not limited to overt statements; they can also use emotions, such as fear, love, happiness, and depression. These emotional reactions partially account for the intense power of media in our culture.

Sex and the Media

In many types of media, sexual content—and its strong emotional message—can be prolific. A recent study by researchers at the University of North Carolina titled "Sexy Media Matter: Exposure to Sexual Content in Music, Movies, Television, and Magazines Predicts Black and White Adolescents' Sexual Behavior" found that young people with heavy exposure to sexually themed media ranging from music to movies are twice as likely to engage in early sexual behavior as young people with light exposure. Although the study does not prove a conclusive link between sexual behavior and sexually oriented media, researchers concluded that media acted as an influential source of information about sex for these youth groups.Kathleen Doheny, "Mass Media May Prompt Kids to Try Sex: Study," *Health Scout*, April 3, 2006, www.healthscout.com/news/1/531862/main.html. Researcher Jane Brown thinks part of the reason children watch sexual content is related to puberty and their desire to learn about sex. While many parents are hesitant to discuss sex with their children, the media can act like a "super peer," providing information in movies, television, music, and magazines.Kathleen Doheny, "Mass Media May Prompt Kids to Try Sex: Study," *Health Scout*, April 3, 2006, www.healthscout.com/news/1/531862/main.html. Reality series, such as *Teen Mom* and *16 and Pregnant*, are prevalent on the popular MTV station. We will explore in greater detail the impact of sexual content in the media in Chapter 14.

Cultural Messages and the Media

The media sends messages that reinforce cultural values. These values are perhaps most visible in celebrities and the roles that they adopt. Actors such as Jake Gyllenhaal and Scarlett Johansson have come to represent aspects of masculinity and femininity that have been adopted into mainstream culture in the last 10 years. In recent years, baseball player Derek Jeter appeared in television, film, magazines, and advertising campaigns as a model of athleticism and willpower. Singers such as Bono of U2 have represented a sense of freedom and rebellion against mainstream culture.

Although many consider celebrity culture superficial and a poor reflection of a country's values, not all celebrities are simply entertainers. Civil rights leaders, social reformers, and other famous public figures have come to represent important cultural accomplishments and advancements through their representations in the media. When images of Abraham Lincoln or Lady Gaga appear in the media, they resonate with cultural and historical themes greatly separated from mere fame.

Celebrities can also reinforce cultural stereotypes that marginalize certain groups. Television and magazines from the mid-20th century often portrayed women in a submissive, domestic role, both reflecting and reinforcing the cultural limitations imposed on women at the time. Advertising icons developed during the early 20th century, such as Aunt Jemima and the Cream of Wheat chef, similarly reflected and reinforced a submissive, domestic servant role for African Americans. Other famous stereotypes—such as the Lone Ranger's Native American sidekick, Tonto, or Mickey Rooney's Mr. Yunioshi role in *Breakfast at Tiffany's*—also reinforced American preconceptions about ethnic predispositions and capabilities.



Figure 2.4 Tonto from *The Lone Ranger* reinforced cultural stereotypes about Native Americans. Do you think this type of characterization would be acceptable in modern television? Source: Used with permission from Getty Images.

Whether actual or fictional, celebrities and their assumed roles send a number of different messages about cultural values. They can promote courageous truth telling, hide and prolong social problems, or provide a concrete example of an abstract cultural value.

New Media and Society

New media—the Internet and other digital forms of communication—have had large effects on society. This communication and information revolution has created a great deal of anguish about digital literacy and other issues that inevitably accompany such a social change. In his book on technology and communication, *A Better Pencil*, Dennis Baron discusses this issue:

For Plato, only speech, not writing, can produce the kind of back-and-forth—the dialogue—that's needed to get at the truth … the text, orphaned by its author once it's on the page, cannot defend itself against misreading…. These are strong arguments, but even in Plato's day they had been rendered moot by the success of the written word. Although the literacy rate in classical Greece was well below 10 percent, writing had become an important feature of the culture. People had learned to trust and use certain kinds of writing—legal texts, public inscriptions, business documents, personal letters, and even literature—and as they

did so, they realized that writing, on closer examination, turned out to be neither more nor less reliable or ambiguous than the spoken word, and it was just as real.Dennis Baron, *A Better Pencil: Readers, Writers, and the Digital Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 5.

Baron makes the point that all communication revolutions have created upheavals and have changed the standards of literacy and communication. This historical perspective gives a positive interpretation to some otherwise ominous developments in communication and culture.

Information

The Internet has made an incredible amount of new information available to the general public. Both this wealth of information and the ways people process it are having an enormous effect on culture. New perceptions of information have emerged as access to it grows. Older-media consumption habits required in-depth processing of information through a particular form of media. For example, consumers read, watched, or viewed a news report in its entirety, typically within the context of a news publication or program. Fiction appeared in book or magazine form.

Today, information is easier to access, thus more likely to traverse several forms of media. An individual may read an article on a news website and then forward part of it to a friend. That person in turn describes it to a coworker without having seen the original context. The ready availability of information through search engines may explain how a clearly satirical *Onion* article on the Harry Potter phenomenon came to be taken as fact. Increasingly, media outlets cater to this habit of searching for specific bits of information devoid of context. Information that will attract the most attention is often featured at the expense of more important stories. At one point on March 11, 2010, for example, *The Washington Post* website's most popular story was "Maintaining a Sex Life."Michiko Kakutani, "Texts Without Context," *New York Times*, March 17, 2010, http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/21/books/21mash.html.

Another important development in the media's approach to information is its increasing subjectivity. Some analysts have used the term cyberbalkanization to describe the way media consumers filter information. Balkanization is an allusion to the political fragmentation of Eastern Europe's Balkan states following World War I, when the Ottoman Empire disintegrated into a number of ethnic and political fragments. Customized news feeds allow individuals to receive only the kinds of news and information they want and thus block out sources that report unwanted stories or perspectives. Many cultural critics have pointed to this kind of information filtering as the source of increasing political division and resulting loss of civic discourse. When media consumers hear only the information they want to, the common ground of public discourse that stems from general agreement on certain principles inevitably grows smaller.Michiko Kakutani, "Texts Without Context," *New York Times*, March 17, 2010, http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/21/books/21mash.html.

Literacy

On one hand, the growth of the Internet as the primary information source exposes the public to increased levels of text, thereby increasing overall literacy. Indeed, written text is essential to the Internet: Web content is overwhelmingly text-based, and successful participation in Internet culture through the use of blogs, forums, or a personal website requires a degree of textual literacy that is not necessary for engagement in television, music, or movies.

Critics of Internet literacy, however, describe the majority of forum and blog posts as subliterate and argue that the Internet has replaced the printed newspapers and books that actually raised the standards of literacy. One nuanced look at the Internet's effect on the way a culture processes and perceives information states that literacy will not simply increase or decrease but will change qualitatively.Suzanne Choney, "Internet Making Our Brains Different, Not Dumb," *MSNBC*, Feb. 19, 2010, http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/35464896/ns/technology_and_science-tech_and_gadgets/. Perhaps the standards for literacy will shift to an emphasis on simplicity and directness, for example, rather than on elaborate uses of language.

News



Figure 2.5 President Barack Obama fired General Stanley McChrystal after a controversial *Rolling Stone* story in which McChrystal spoke poorly of the Obama administration was leaked on the Internet.

Certainly, the Internet has affected the way that cultures consume news. The public expects to receive information quickly, and news outlets respond rapidly to breaking stories. On Monday, June 21, 2010, for example, a spokesperson for *Rolling Stone* magazine first released quotes from a story featuring General Stanley McChrystal publicly criticizing members of the Obama administration on matters of foreign policy. By that evening, the story had become national news despite the fact *Rolling Stone* didn't even post it to its website until Tuesday morning—some time after several news outlets had already posted the entire story on their own sites. Later that same day, McChrystal issued a public apology, and on Wednesday flew to Washington where President Barack Obama fired him. The printed *Rolling Stone* issue featuring the article hit newsstands Friday, two days after McChrystal had been replaced.Jim Timpane, "New Media Too Speedy to Outflank," *Philly.com*, June 24, 2010, http://www.philly.com/philly/entertainment/20100624_New_media_too_speedy_to_outflank.html.

Convergence Culture

As we have seen, the term *convergence* can hold several different meanings. In *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*, Henry Jenkins offers a useful definition of convergence as it applies to new media:

"By convergence, I mean the flow of content across multiple media platforms, the cooperation between multiple media industries, and the migratory behavior of media audiences who will go almost anywhere in search of the kinds of entertainment experiences they want."Henry Jenkins, *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide* (New York: New York University Press, 2006), 2.

A self-produced video on the YouTube website that gains enormous popularity and thus receives the attention of a news outlet is a good example of this migration of both content and audiences. Consider this flow: The video appears and gains notoriety, so a news outlet broadcasts a story about the video, which in turn increases its popularity on YouTube. This migration works in a number of ways. Humorous or poignant excerpts from television or radio broadcasts are often posted on social media sites and blogs, where they gain popularity and are seen by more people than had seen the original broadcast.

Thanks to new media, consumers now view all types of media as participatory. For example, the massively popular talent show *American Idol* combines an older-media format—television—with modern media consumption patterns by allowing the home audience to vote for a favorite contestant. However, *American Idol* segments regularly appear on YouTube and other websites, where people who may never have seen the show comment on and dissect them. Phone companies report a regular increase in phone traffic following the show, presumably caused by viewers calling in to cast their votes or simply to discuss the program with friends and family. As a result, more people are exposed to the themes, principles, and culture of *American Idol* than the number of people who actually watch the show.Henry Jenkins, *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide* (New York: New York University Press, 2006), 83.

New media have encouraged greater personal participation in media as a whole. Although the long-term cultural consequences of this shift cannot yet be assessed, the development is undeniably a novel one. As audiences become more adept at navigating media, this trend will undoubtedly increase.

Bert Is Evil



Figure 2.6

In 2001, high school student Dino Ignacio created a collage of *Sesame Street* character Bert with terrorist Osama bin Laden as part of a series for his website. Called “Bert Is Evil,” the series featured the puppet engaged in a variety of illicit activities. A Bangladesh-based publisher looking for images of bin Laden found the collage on the Internet and used it in an anti-American protest poster, presumably without knowledge of who Bert was. This ended up in a CNN report on anti-American protests, and public outrage over the use of Bert made Ignacio’s original site a much-imitated cult phenomenon.

The voyage of this collage from a high school student’s website to an anti-American protest poster in the Middle East to a cable television news network and finally back to the Internet provides a good illustration of the ways in which content migrates across media platforms in the modern era. As the collage crossed geographic and cultural boundaries, it grew on both corporate and grassroots media. While this is not the norm for media content, the fact that such a phenomenon is possible illustrates the new directions in which media is headed.Henry Jenkins, *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide* (New York: New York University Press, 2006), 1–2.

Key Takeaways

- Propaganda and persuasion have long been a part of the interactions between media and culture.
- Most studies on media and behavior do not establish direct links between the two but do reveal important correlations among media, violence, and sexual behavior.
- Through the media, celebrities have come to signify important cultural values and tendencies, and they transmit specific cultural messages.
- New digital forms of media have revolutionized the way people access and consume media content. Rather than simply replacing old media, however, new forms of media encourage participatory media consumption and content migration.

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18: SPECIAL OCCASION SPEAKING

18.1: Introduction
18.2: Background of Special Occasion Speaking
18.3: Types of Special Occasion Speeches
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18.1: Introduction

Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Define and give an example of epideictic oratory
2. Explain the main purpose of special occasion speaking
3. Identify the eight main types of special occasion speeches and the key components of each of these speeches.
4. Understand the basic guidelines for delivering special occasion speeches
5. Prepare and present the various types of special occasion speeches

There are moments in our professional lives when we are called to bring people together in community, celebrate proud moments, remember individuals who have left us, and show important others how much we appreciate them. These opportunities call for the development and delivery of ceremonial or special occasion speeches. These speeches allow us to congratulate, toast, celebrate, and say goodbye in creative and eloquent ways. Ceremonial speaking enables us to reinforce our group identities, to show admiration and respect, and to inspire others. The ability to give a special occasion speech is a skill that will prove valuable over the course of your entire professional and personal life.

In the first part of this chapter, you will learn the utility and relevance of ceremonial speaking in a variety of contexts—professional, social, and personal. Next, a description, explanation and example of each of the various types of ceremonial speeches are presented. Finally, you will be introduced to guidelines for developing and delivering effective ceremonial speeches.

The more you praise and celebrate your life, the more there is in life to celebrate.~ Oprah

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18.2: Background of Special Occasion Speaking

epideictic oratory

Many organizational contexts offer opportunities for special occasion and ceremonial speaking. These organizational functions help establishments mark important occurrences, celebrate successes, remember key figures, and commemorate those who are no longer with the organization. Furthermore, special events help an organization define itself as well as help establish and maintain a corporate identity— for organizational members, clients and key stakeholders. Special occasion speaking has also been calledepideictic oratory, which is used to praise or blame, condemn or commend, and celebrate and give thanks (Osborn & Osborn, 1994). For instance, President George W. Bush used epideictic oratory when he addressed the United States after September 11, 2011, condemning the terrorist attacks. Epideictic oratory is also used anytime we are called to mourn the loss of a loved one at a funeral, congratulate a recipient of an award, or toast a special occasion, such as a wedding or anniversary.



purpose of special occasion speeches

In your personal and professional life, you will likely have the opportunity to give at least one ceremonial speech to celebrate an event or contribute to a company's corporate image. Regardless of the occasion, epideictic or ceremonial speaking calls for language that is arousing, clear, and inspiring. In addition, Osborn and Osborn (1994) suggest that language use and delivery style should serve to magnify and identify. Magnificationmeans giving benefit to the audience, amplifying emotion, and exceeding expectations. This technique involves promoting positivity and goodwill among the people gathered for the occasion as well as helping to build the audience's feelings toward the person honored or the reason for the occasion.Identification involves creating familiarity and closeness. Special occasion speaking, among other things, helps build community, and a speaker's language and delivery style can serve to enhance feelings of togetherness.

> Let us celebrate the occasion with wine and sweet words. ~ Plautus

A special occasion or ceremonial speech, regardless of the level of formality, should have a purpose that is clear to the speaker and the audience members. A ceremonial speech can do a variety of things, such as celebrate an event, commemorate a person, entertain an audience, or inspire people (O'Hair, Stewart, & Rubenstein, 2001). Each type of ceremonial speaking occasion has its unique considerations, and each speech needs to be adapted to the audience, the honored person(s), the social context, and the event. This section covers several types of ceremonial speeches: speech of introduction, toast and roast, award presentation, acceptance speech, keynote address, commencement address, commemorative speech or tribute, and after-dinner speech.



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18.3: Types of Special Occasion Speeches

speech of introduction

A **speech of introduction** introduces the main speaker at an event and inspires the audience to listen to that speaker (O'Hair & Stewart, 1999). Any speech of introduction needs to be brief. After all, the person making the introduction should not be the focus of attention. The introductory speech usually has three components: (a) provide a brief backdrop or background of the main speaker, (b) introduce the speaker's topic, and (c) an invitation from the audience to warmly welcome the speaker. Here is an example of a speech of introduction:

The person giving our keynote address is someone we all know and admire. Not only is Dr. Brian Garcia an alum of our university and department, but he has gone on to make major contributions to our field. As one of our nation's foremost experts in end-of-life care and communication, Dr. Garcia has written over 50 journal articles and book chapters on this field. We are privileged today to hear him speak on hospice care and the Hispanic population. Please join me in welcoming Dr. Brian Garcia.

As the previous example illustrates, the speech of introduction is relatively brief. But the brevity might depend on how familiar the audience is with the speaker's topic (Adler & Elmhorst, 2010). If the topic is not well-known, you might need to take a few minutes toward the end of the speech to elaborate more on the topic. Also, it is important to enhance the speaker's credibility. In the previous example, the person introducing Dr. Garcia reminds the audience that he is an alum of the university (establishes common ground) and that he is a distinguished academic and writer.

If you are introducing a speaker, be sure to do your homework and find out as much as you can about this person; the last thing you want to do is give inaccurate information as you're introducing him or her! See if you can meet the person ahead of time, whether it is in person or over the phone. You'll also want to be culturally sensitive (Adler & Elmhorst, 2010). For instance, many people outside the United States prefer to be called by their titles, such as "Professor." Also, be aware of any gender bias that might influence how you introduce the person, such as calling a man "Dr." or "Mr." while referring to a woman of similar status by her first name.



toast

A **toast** is a brief tribute to a person or event (O'Hair & Stewart, 1999). A toast also allows the speaker to acknowledge accomplishments and express best wishes for the future (Adler & Elmhorst, 2010). Besides being brief (about 30 to 60 seconds), a toast is a speech delivered at a well- chosen time, which is when everyone is present, such as when guests are seated for a dinner or when everyone has a drink in hand.

Many people are nervous at the thought of giving a toast. Therefore, some preparation and practice can help make the event more enjoyable and memorable. Anyone called upon to give a toast should prepare ahead of time. Having in mind one or two things that set the person or event apart is an effective strategy, as well as keeping a positive tone and staying brief. It is advised that you practice in front of a mirror or in front of a friend to become more comfortable with the toast.

We lift our glasses to Ms. Becky McPherson, who has devoted 20 years to our organization. Not only have we benefited from her tireless hours building this company, but there is no way to measure how much she has touched each of our lives. So, it is Becky McPherson that we humbly toast this evening.

If you are tapped to deliver a toast, take some things into consideration to avoid any awkward or cringe-worthy moments. For instance, be sober when delivering the toast. Alcohol makes one sluggish and less inhibited; you do not want people to remember you for the way you slurred during the speech or for anything inappropriate you might have said. Also, when it doubt, leave it out. In other words, if you are debating about whether to share a humorous story, it is best not to share it at all. There is the chance that some members of your audience might not find it funny or tasteful. Finally, while a toast should be prepared, try your best to come across as spontaneous. A toast should not appear to be memorized; neither should you deliver a toast from a manuscript. Plan your key points, but use your impromptu skills to deliver the words in a conversational, informal manner.

roast

A roast is a particular kind of toast that is humorous and pokes fun at the

honored person in a friendly way. A roast might be given for someone who is moving away or has achieved noteworthy success in her or his lifetime. It is generally considered a high honor to be roasted, and in most cases a roast is reserved for individuals who have achieved respect and a noteworthy reputation. One such individual is President George W. Bush, who was roasted by Stephen Colbert during the 2006 White House Correspondents' Dinner. Within this excerpt is Colbert's jab at Vice President Dick Cheney:



Wow! Wow, what an honor! The White House Correspondents' dinner. To actually—to sit here at the same table with my hero, George W. Bush, to be this close to the man. I feel like I'm dreaming. Somebody pinch me. You know what? I'm a pretty sound sleeper; that may not be enough. Somebody shoot me in the face. Is he really not here tonight? Damn it! The one guy who could have helped. (Kurtzman, 2012).

A roast can contain tributes, admiration, comedic insults, and outlandish stories that are true or untrue. There is usually a roastmaster— someone who serves as master of ceremonies—and other individuals can take part in the roasting. It is often the case that those involved in the roasting might expect to bear the brunt of a few of the jokes.

The recipient or person being honored deserves careful consideration. While a roast is intended to honor a person, the speaker should know for certain that the roastee is someone who can take a joke and show good humor when receiving humorous

criticism. Regardless of the jokes and comedic insults used, the ultimate goal is to pay tribute to the person being honored, and a roaster should never lose sight of that objective. One also should be aware of effective and appropriate uses of humor in such a context, and more about humor will be discussed later in this chapter.

> I like to praise and reward loudly, to blame quietly. ~ Catherine the Great

speech to present an award

Presenting an award warrants a **presentational speech**, during which a speaker presents a person with an award or prize. The primary purpose of this speech is to give recognition to the recipient and his or her accomplishments pertaining to that specific award. While presentational speeches might vary in length and content, they all should contain a few key elements. First, the person presenting the award should not only highlight the merits of the award recipient, but also point out the purpose and significance of the award being given (O'Hair & Stewart, 1999). Another element of the presentation is to personalize the speech to make the award and event more meaningful for the recipient and the audience. Here is an example of a presentational speech:

Our next award is the Outstanding Graduate Research Award, which goes to the graduate student who has made the most significant contribution to our department. The recipient of this award certainly deserves this honor because he does today what others do not in order to achieve tomorrow what others will not. Therefore, I proudly present this year's Outstanding Graduate Research Award to Jeremiah Polk.

Adler and Elmhorst (2010) provide some additional guidelines for the best presentational speeches. First, make sure the recipient's name comes at the appropriate time. If the recipient is known to everyone, then the name should be mentioned right away. If the announcement is a surprise, then it is better to hold off mentioning the recipient's name until the end, which you saw in the previous example. Also, let the audience know how the recipient met—and even surpassed—the criteria for the award. You should also make sure the focus of attention is on the recipient, not on the one presenting the award. Finally, to facilitate a smooth transfer of the award to the recipient, the presenter might want to hold the award in his or her left hand while using the right to shake the recipient's hand.



acceptance speech

The presentation of an award is usually followed by an acceptance speech, which the recipient delivers upon immediate receipt of the award. This speech gives the recipient an opportunity to show appreciation for the award as well as humility and grace (O'Hair & Stewart, 1999). Such a speech should be prepared ahead of time, if possible. In the preparation process, the recipient will have a general idea of who to thank, which should not be overlooked during such an event. Here is Jeremiah Polk's acceptance speech:

Thank you very much for presenting me with the Outstanding Graduate Research Award. I want to thank the professors on the award committee for selecting me, and the other faculty for their encouragement and support. I especially thank Dr. Jane Griffin

for her mentorship and belief in my abilities as a graduate student and an aspiring researcher. I will remember this honor and strive to be deserving of it as I complete my doctoral program. Again, thank you all for this incredible honor.

The previous example has a particular organizational structure (Adler & Elmhorst, 2010). First, the recipient expresses his sincere appreciation. If the award was unexpected, then he might also express a sincere level of surprise. Second, he acknowledges those who contributed to or made the award possible. He also thanks other people who have had an impact on his success. Third, he indicates how the award will make a difference in the future (i.e., it will make him work harder as he continues with his academic program). Finally, the recipient closes his speech by expressing thanks again.

> Each day offers us the gift of being a special occasion if we can simply learn that as well as giving, it is blessed to receive with grace and a grateful heart. ~ Sarah Ban Breathnach

keynote address

The keynote address is a speech that represents the essential or common theme of a convention, conference, or other large gathering. Most conferences, expositions, or conventions are usually organized around a central idea, and the keynote address is what summarizes the central message revolving around the general theme. For example, organizers of a conference with the theme "Looking Forward—Looking Back" might want the keynote speaker to celebrate the history of that organization, recount its past accomplishments, predict future directions of the organization, and invite audience members to embrace the future mission and vision. Similar to this sample structure, most keynote speeches contain common elements.



The person giving the keynote address is usually a person who has earned a national or international reputation within his or her professional field. Such a person would likely be invited to speak because of her or his expertise or particular claim to fame, which would be alluded to in the speech. In addition, the keynote speaker is wise to be mindful of the conference theme and to incorporate that theme into the speech. Regardless of the conference theme, the typical speech might allude to such topics as organizational growth, team building, goals and aspirations, leadership, change, or achievements (Speech Topics Helps, Advice & Ideas, 2005). Some of these themes are evident in Dr. Neal Lane's (1996) keynote address during the 50_{th} anniversary celebration of Cornell University's School of Applied and Engineering Physics:

When we look across science and engineering, we can see . . . stories and subplots developing, both in terms of the excitement they generate and in terms of their potential impact on society. These don't always generate banner headlines about little green men or microbes. But they nevertheless hold the potential to revolutionize how we remedy social ills and spark economic growth. In fact, there is wide agreement that we are entering an era where science, engineering, and technology will exert greater influence on daily life than at any time in human history.



commemorative speech and tribute

The commencement speech—which is a type of keynote speech—is given to mark the occasion of a school's graduation ceremony during which diplomas are awarded to graduating students. The commencement speech is celebratory in nature in that it marks an important milestone in the graduates' lives. At the same time it can be a call to action for its audience (Fly Little Bird, 2007). Many commencement audiences may appreciate a speech that is relatively brief and to the point, and many speakers provide practical, yet memorable, advice. For instance, Billie Jean King once said, "Find a mentor and be a mentor. Give back. And when people tell you not to believe in your dreams, and they say, "Why?" say, "Why not?" (Wisdom Engine, 2006).

This type of speech is usually given by a person who is well-known in the community or by someone who has achieved national or international recognition for her or his contributions to society. The speaker might be a politician, an alumnus from the institution, a famous speaker, or other noteworthy figure. The speaker might be chosen by the school administration or by the graduating students themselves.

On one level, a commencement speech can bring attention to certain social or political issues of the day, such as HIV/AIDS, economic inequality, or education. Additionally, such speeches typically lay out paths the audience can take beyond their educational years (e.g., giving one's time, taking on important causes), as well as what specific tools for change are needed for an individual to make an impact (e.g., use of the Internet, acquiring and disseminating information). Finally, commencement speeches often touch on aspects that contribute to a good life; such examples might include finding one's passion, showing compassion to others, and appreciating diversity. In general, the commencement speech emphasizes celebration and looking ahead toward the future. Lisa Kudrow, in her 2010 address to the graduating class at Vassar College, encourages her audience to look to the future with a purpose of finding oneself:



I did actually hear from a little more than two of you that, because I went here, you wanted to know about my experiences after graduating and I understand that because the twenties are that time in your life when (this is not a joke) you're really getting acquainted with your own adult self and seeing how you respond to self-doubt when there's so much seemingly at stake. So, let me reassure you. It's not supposed to be easy, but it doesn't have to be torture. You're supposed to have moments of uncertainty about which path to take because the 20's are full of crossroads.

commemorative speech and tribute

Commemorative speeches and tributes are speeches that pay special accolades to an occasion, extraordinary person, event, idea, or monument. The purpose or scope of this speech is to reflect the emotions felt by the audience as well as underscore the reasons for the speaking event. Delivering a tribute and commemorative speech involves careful attention to language. These speeches are intended to inspire the audience, and the use of the richness of language should serve to evoke the appropriate emotions within the audience as well as the honored person(s).

> One way to evaluate your own reputation is to think about what would be said of you at your eulogy. ~ Brian Koslow

Tributes and commemorative speeches have certain characteristics. First, they are short and eloquent (Letteri, 1997). In most cases, this speech should be one to five minutes long, which means the words should be chosen carefully and efficiently for impact. Second, these speeches are written to anticipate the emotional needs of the audience. There is a difference between the need to be festive and the need to grieve, and the speech should contain language that conveys the appropriate feelings. Rather than focus on a great deal of information about the person, event, or thing being honored, the speech should make reference to the emotions of the audience and respect those emotions— whether directly or indirectly. When the speaking occasion is honoring a person, the speech's content should contain a balance between the professional and personal accomplishments of the honoree. While the speech should emphasize the person's professional work, his or her personal activities (e.g., family life, community involvement) also warrant attention. Russell Crowe demonstrates this balance as he commemorates the late Steven Irwin, the television personality famously known as the Crocodile Hunter:

Good morning everybody. Firstly, to Terri and all of Steve's family, from my family to yours, our deepest sympathies and condolences. I think this memorial should be a joyful one, and not mournful one. We, after all, have to keep in mind who we are here to celebrate, and what he would have preferred. I hope somebody will speak today of the specifics of what Steve achieved as a conservationist, but all I can do today is talk directly to my friend, my mate, Steven. Your passing has suspended reality for all of us. It was way too soon, and completely unfair on all accounts. I know as humble as you always were, that you would still be pleased to know that the world sends its love and that people all over this planet have been grieving. We've all lost a friend, we've lost a champion, and we're gonna take some time adjust to that. I'm in New York, mate - the big city - and you have been headline news on CNN for a week. There are not many zookeepers who would command that attention, mate. And all that means is that you got your message across. You got the word out there. And you were heard. And you will be remembered (Famous Speeches and Speech Topics, 2008).



after-dinner speech

The after-dinner speech is a unique kind of special occasion speech. An after-dinner speech has as its general purpose to entertain, and yet informs an audience about one or more particular issues. These dual roles can make the after-dinner speech a challenge, but with skill and practice, a well-received speech. Mark Twain made this type of speech very popular in his day, speaking at many dinner events. These dinners were very lengthy, and were followed by several hours of humorous speeches (Patout, 1978). Such events still occur today, and are often scheduled before, during, or after a professional or civic meeting (O'Hair et al., 2001) where a meal might be served.

> Against the assault of laughter nothing can stand. ~ Mark Twain

A well-prepared, rehearsed, and delivered after-dinner speech can make a significant mark on the audience and occasion, all the while using humor to make a serious point. The best speeches are usually tailored to the audience and occasion, have a thesis statement or idea, include claims that have support, and of course, incorporate humor. When used well in an after-dinner speech, humor can teach, entertain, and perhaps change the way people look at an issue. Used poorly, however, humor can hurt your message beyond repair and diminish your credibility. Due to the nature of humor in public speaking, there are several issues to keep in mind. First, the topic or theme of the speech should relate to the occasion of the event. Relevant speeches include references to the event's purpose or cause and perhaps some key people involved:

I am grateful for the opportunity to address you all this evening. When I asked your conference planner how long my speech should be, she said, "You can speak as long as you want, but the rest of us will be leaving around nine." . . . Before I say anything more, I have been asked by the facilities manager to remind you that the sign in the men's restroom saying "Wet Floor" should serve as a warning, not an instruction . . .

Indeed, after-dinner speeches are intended to be funny, but avoid turning the event into a stand-up comedy routine. A stand-up routine is merely a string of jokes that are more speaker- centered rather than audience-centered (Hamilton, 2002). On the contrary, an after-dinner speech has clear organization, a polished delivery, and a clearly articulated theme. Without a clear organizational pattern, the audience will have difficulty understanding the serious point made with the speech.

A common mistake some after- dinner speakers make is to come across as a comedian, taking on styles and mannerisms that are not natural. After- dinner speakers should avoid styles and forms of delivery that are not their own and with which they do not feel comfortable. In other words, the speech and humor used should be consistent with the speaker's persona.

> Follow the path of the unsafe, independent thinker. Expose your ideas to the danger of controversy. Speak your mind and fear less the label of "crackpot" than the stigma of conformity. ~ Thomas John Watson, Sr.

There is the possibility that the speech will touch on serious or controversial issues. After all, the after- dinner speech sets a social agenda (O'Hair et al., 2001), often conveying a speaker's stance on an issue. Skilled after-dinner speakers understand this, and

they are observant of the audience's comfort levels. If the theme or occasion is a very somber one, such as commemorating the lost lives of the Civil Rights movement, the speaker should keep her or his humorous remarks modest so as not to seriously offend (Hamilton, 2002). Even when the purpose of the speech is more heavily weighted on agenda setting rather than entertainment, it should still be a celebration of the occasion.

In keeping with an audience's comfort level, an after-dinner speech should fit their mood and expectations. If the audience is in the mood to have fun or to be entertained, then the after- dinner speech might be well received. The mood or attitude of the audience will influence how they receive or respond to your jokes. If the speech isn't well-matched to the audience, even your best-told and most clever jokes will fall flat.

> Brevity is the soul of wit. ~ William Shakespeare



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18.4: General Guidelines for Special Occasion Speeches

keep it short

With careful planning and a certain amount of practice, you can certainly deliver a ceremonial speech that will make a memorable impact. These guidelines might help make the planning and rehearsal process a little easier for you. First, if it's possible, keep the speech short (Perlman, 1997). More important than your speech is the occasion that you're commemorating; you don't want to overshadow the event that others have gathered to celebrate. For instance, if you are introducing a keynote speaker or presenting an award, avoid going into a "shopping list" of all the honoree's accomplishments. In some cases they might be too numerous to list. Also consider how familiar your audience is with the honoree or recipient; he or she might be so well known that it might not be the best use of the audience's time to recite a litany of the recipient's accomplishments. Even longer speeches (e.g., commencement or keynote) shouldn't be too long as audience members will not appreciate having to hear an address that seems to go on for a long time. In general, keep the current occasion in mind and focus primarily on the award or recognition that motivated the occasion.

acknowledge the obvious

Another thing to keep in mind is to "finesse the obvious" (Perlman, 1997). One might take this advice to mean to not to insult the intelligence of the audience. In some cases, the audience will be very familiar with the main speaker or recipient—who might be a well-known alumnus, actor, or politician; however, it would be insulting not to acknowledge what makes such a person noteworthy. Therefore, you might say something like, "As we all know . . ." or "It goes without saying that . . ." in order to point out the apparent when acknowledging well-known achievements that shouldn't go unnoticed.

stay positive

Regardless of the occasion or speech, stay positive, even if it is to commemorate a sad occasion or remember the loss of an individual. Perlman (1997) suggests taking every opportunity to compliment the speaker. Humorous anecdotes are generally okay if they're positive. This guideline also applies to roasts. Even if you are able to insert a few embarrassing anecdotes, the best roasts start and end on a positive note.

> A well-developed sense of humor is the pole that adds balance to your steps as you walk the tightrope of life. ~ William Arthur Ward

Table 18.4.1 Common Types of Verbal Humor

Anecdote:	⮚ Interesting stories told to help the speaker make a point
Aside:	⮚ A statement added as an after-thought, appearing as though the speaker said something that reminded him or her of the aside
Banter:	⮚ Good-natured teasing done back-and-forth with another person, sometimes with an audience member
Blendword	⮚ The combination of two words to make a new word;e.g. "murse" for "man" and "purse"
Blunder	⮚ Witty way of making a mistake or verbal faux pas
Conundrum	⮚ A word puzzle that has a pun for an answer; e.g. cows wearing bells because their horns do not work
Freudian Slip	⮚ A humorous statement that appears to comespontaneously, but really reflects the speaker'ssubconscious
Hyperbole	⮚ Excessive exaggeration
Irony	⮚ Words or statements used to reflect the complete opposite of their original meaning
Joke	⮚ A short anecdote that has a funny twist at the end
Parody	⮚ A humorous version of another writing or speech

Table 18.4.1 Common Types of Verbal Humor	
Recovery	⚠ The appearance of a blunder that the speaker quickly corrects, in an attempt to save himself or herself
Repartee	⚠ Clever or witty retorts, often in the form of insults
Satire	⚠ Humor that is critical, or makes fun of something
Situational Humor	⚠ Humor that comes from the speaker's own personalexperiences
Understatement	⚠ Intentionally down-sizing something to make it appear smaller or less severe

use humor carefully

The topic of humor itself warrants careful discussion. Humor can find its way into almost any special occasion speech, and it's a good way to keep the audience interested in your speech— when used effectively (Hamilton, 2002). Humor is more than just telling jokes—it is really about supplementing your message as well as really driving your point home, so to speak. Humor can be appealing to both speaker and audience because it creates a sense of immediacy and psychological closeness. It also facilitates a common bond between speaker and audience, which helps the audience identify even more with the topic and content of the speech.

If you decide to use humor, you should make this decision carefully. While everyone has the potential to be funny and to use humor in an effective way, some occasions lend themselves to humor more than others. Furthermore, some speakers may doubt their abilities to pull off humor in certain situations or with specific audiences. If you're asking yourself, "Should I use humor?" you should consider whether the situation lends itself to some humor or laughter, if you might undermine your own credibility, or if you even have the comfort level of the timing to pull off the humor attempt (Audrieth, 1998). People who naturally the see the humor in situations and can look at life in a humorous light will likely be able to use humor effectively in a public speech. This ability can prove to be a tremendous asset to a public speaker. However, it takes a good deal more than just some natural ability to be effective. As Audrieth advises, "If deep, deep down, you know that you are a klutz when it comes to delivering the punch line, if you can't seem to get jokes right, then consider carefully your decision to use humor."

> The face is the mirror of the mind, and eyes without speaking confess the secrets of the heart. ~ St. Jerome

When learning to use humor, speakers should understand the importance of nonverbal delivery (Hamilton, 2002). For one thing, do not give off the impression that you expect laughter or smiling in response to any particular remark. If you deliver a clever line and stand there with an expectant smile, you are going to feel and look foolish if no one responds. Furthermore, some audience members may find it less arrogant or more endearing if you can deliver a punch line without looking like you expect a response. Nonverbal delivery also involves a sense of comic timing. Being able to deliver funny lines without having to adjust your overall delivery is a skill that is highly valued. Timing also means not having to step in and out of a humorous line. In other words, try not to show a difference in tone between the funny and not-so- funny segments of your speech. When incorporating these strategies, remember that you will get better withpractice. Even the best humorists practice their speeches to polish their delivery.

Of course, nonverbal humor should not stand alone. An after-dinner speaker should have a good understanding and command of various verbal humor forms (Encyclopaedia Britannica Online, 2007) and plays on words. The idea here is that the verbal and nonverbal cues supplement each other to convey the most appropriate humor, and using humor as a verbal strategy can convey what visual humor usually cannot. For instance, it may be difficult or impossible to convey irony or contradiction through nonverbal cues alone. Using language to point out ironies and contradictory situations in life can remind listeners of what makes us human (Eisenberg, Goodall, & Tretheway, 2007), as well as make a serious point in a subtle way. Additional forms of verbal strategies include puns, hyperboles, anecdotes, and others that can tell a story or use language to convey humor images. Some of the more popular forms can be found in Table 18.4.1.

> I'm not funny. What I am is brave. ~ Lucille Ball



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18.5: Conclusion

Special occasion speaking encompasses a number of different speeches that require particular attention to an occasion, event, or person. Such speeches are intended to inspire audiences, celebrate an event, commemorate a person, and/or entertain. Special occasion speeches should reflect the mood of the audience and the occasion that brings people together. This chapter discussed speeches of introduction, toasts and roasts, presentational speeches, keynote addresses, commencement speeches, commemorative speeches and tributes, and after-dinner speeches. After-dinner speeches in particular are arguably the most challenging because they require planning, organization, and timing on the part of the speaker. But with some general guidelines—keeping it short, finessing the obvious, staying positive, and using appropriate forms of humor, the special occasion speech will have a lasting impact on the audience and the occasion.



There are two things that are more difficult than making an after- dinner speech: climbing a wall which is leaning toward you and kissing a girl who is leaning away from you. ~ Winston Churchill

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