

Delivering the Speech

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WHAT'S COVERED

In this lesson, you will learn some tips for delivering your speech effectively. Specifically, this lesson will cover:

1. Delivering Your Speech
2. Dress to Impress
3. Watch Your Body Language
4. Articulate and Enunciate
5. Have a Backup Plan
6. One More Thing

1. Delivering Your Speech



The big day has arrived: It's time to present your speech!

Besides remaining calm and speaking clearly and at a loud enough volume, here are the most important things to consider as you present your speech.

2. Dress to Impress

The way you look as you give your speech is almost as important as the words coming out of your mouth. It's imperative to know the dress code for the event at which you're speaking.

🔗 **EXAMPLE** If you're the best man at your best friend's wedding, you will probably be wearing a tux. Unless of course it's a beach wedding, when flip flops and shorts could be totally appropriate.

In a business setting, men should wear a button-down shirt and dress pants and shoes; depending on how formal the business setting, this may also include a suit jacket and tie. Women should wear a dress, dress

pants or skirt with a button-down top, blazer, blouse or nice sweater. Shoes can be heels or flats and should be appropriate to your setting.

For men and women, it's also helpful to consider how long your speech is and if you're expected to stand for the duration of your speech when determining appropriate yet comfortable footwear.

3. Watch Your Body Language

In the same vein that how you look is almost as important as what you say, how you stand can be just as important as your words. Humans pick up subtle cues with regard to emotion through non-verbal communications in **body language**.

When delivering your speech, you want to make sure you have a confident, open stance to convey your confidence. Standing hunched over or with your arms crossed will close off your body to your audience, thereby shutting them out.

Similarly, make eye contact with your audience. Sometimes this makes speakers nervous, but it's an important technique to really connect with your audience. If the idea of making direct contact makes you uncomfortable, you can always scan your view around the room looking just above your audience's heads; it achieves the same connective effect.

Finally, if you can move around, do. It builds visual interest for your audience and also helps you to work out jitters if you have them. You might be confined behind a podium or lectern, in which case your largest range of motion may be restricted to hand gestures and your gaze around the room. If you can walk out from behind a podium and across a stage, take the opportunity. Just don't wander, watch where you step, and try not to make your audience motion sick by walking back and forth too much.



TERM TO KNOW

Body Language

Body language is a form of mental and physical ability of human non-verbal communication. It consists of body posture, gestures, facial expressions, and eye movements. Humans send and interpret such signals almost entirely subconsciously.

4. Articulate and Enunciate

Speak your words clearly. Don't rush your sentences or let the ends of your sentences drop in volume. You've worked this hard to write and prepare your speech— you want to make sure your audience understands what you have to say.

Avoid saying "um," "uh," or "like" (when it doesn't belong in a sentence). These are usually nervous habits that take time to break. If you feel an "um" coming on, simply pause for a brief moment before moving past it.

Additionally, don't be afraid of silence when you're making a dramatic or compelling point. And sometimes, be prepared for your audience to interrupt you with clapping or laughing. You might need to stop a sentence to let the audience do its thing while you resume as it dies down.

5. Have a Backup Plan

If you have supplementary materials such as visual aids or a PowerPoint presentation, have a backup plan in place in case some piece of equipment doesn't work.

You may want to have printouts just in case a computer or projector doesn't work.

Similarly, if you've memorized your speech or may be reading from a teleprompter, have a printed copy of your speech or an outline of your speech on hand just in case you get a case of stage fright or equipment fails.

6. One More Thing

Before you walk off that stage or sit back down in your seat, always thank your audience!



SUMMARY

In this lesson, you learned about **delivering your speech**. Make sure you **dress to impress**. While some speeches may be delivered in a casual setting, you want to make sure you're wearing clothing appropriate to the dress code of your event. **Be aware of your body language**. A closed body position (arms crossed, shoulders hunched) and lack of eye contact will make it extremely difficult for your audience to engage with you. Engage your audience by making eye contact with them. If making eye contact wigs you out, you can always look just above their heads to give the same effect. Stand up straight, remember to breathe, and **articulate and enunciate**. Limit your "um"s, "uh"s, and "like"s. Use whole phrases and avoid slang or profanity. **Have a backup plan** in case equipment fails for components such as visual aids, PowerPoint presentations, or tele-prompters. Finally, always remember to **thank your audience!**

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