

The Importance of Language

by Sophia Tutorial



WHAT'S COVERED

From the words you speak to the points and topics you articulate, language is the vehicle that helps your audience understand and agree with your statement or argument. In this lesson, you will learn why it is important to pay attention to the language you use in your speech. Specifically, this lesson will cover:

1. Word Choice
2. Delivery
3. Takeaway Message

1. Word Choice

Carefully select each individual word in your speech:

- Is it the best word you can use to convey your message or **meaning**?
- Is your phrasing easy to understand?
- Are you using descriptive **language**?
- Do you connect similar thoughts for your audience?
- Have you included points of contrast to illustrate broader points?

These are all important questions to consider as you select the words in your speech.

Even more important are the words you choose to leave out: Consider too, what you aren't saying.



TERMS TO KNOW

Meaning

The objects or concept that a word or phrase denotes, or that which a sentence says.

Language

A form of communication using words either spoken or gestured with the hands and structured with grammar, often with a writing system.

2. Delivery

It's not just a matter of the words you say, but how you deliver them. From gesture, force, and directness, to the pitch, tone and **inflection** of your voice, it's important to consider the complete package that you're delivering to your audience.

Speech contains nonverbal elements known as paralanguage, including voice quality, rate, pitch, volume, and speaking style, as well as prosodic features such as rhythm, intonation, and stress.

You should craft and practice these elements just as carefully as the words you include in your speech.



TERM TO KNOW

Inflection

A change in pitch or tone of voice.

3. Takeaway Message

At the end of the speech, ask yourself:

- How do you want your audience to walk away feeling?
- What do you want them to remember?
- Is there a particular call-to-action you want them to perform?
- Or, do you want a particular point to resonate with them for some time?

Thinking about the end result, or takeaway message, helps you choose how to word and deliver the speech for your audience.



SUMMARY

In this lesson, you learned that your **word choice** matters; you should carefully select each word you include in your speech. At the same time, consider the words that don't make the cut: What are you not saying in your speech? Your **delivery**, or how you communicate your words through phrasing, voice, gesture, and mannerism, is as important as the words themselves. Finally, you should consider your **takeaway message**, which is what you want your audience to do, think, or feel at the conclusion of your speech.

Source: Boundless. "The Importance of Language." Boundless Communications Boundless, 23 Apr. 2017. Retrieved 21 May. 2017 from <https://www.boundless.com/communications/textbooks/boundless-communications-textbook/wording-the-speech-11/understanding-language-57/the-importance-of-language-224-10503/>



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