

THE PROFESSIONAL  
**SPEAKER**

Advanced Communication Series



**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

A keynote speaker establishes a rapport with the audience in order to galvanize them. Match your delivery style to the tenor of the event, whether it's celebratory, serious, or somewhere in-between. Project your confidence and authority to arouse your audience's interest. Use dramatization to make abstract ideas tangible and inspire listeners to apply your ideas to their lives.

**OBJECTIVES:**

- ▶ Identify the basic differences between keynote speeches and other kinds of speeches.
- ▶ Learn how to evaluate audience feeling and establish emotional rapport.
- ▶ Learn and use the professional techniques necessary for a successful keynote presentation.
- ▶ Develop a speech style and delivery that effectively inspires and moves the audience to adopt your views as a collective reaffirmation of its own.

**Time:** 15–20 minutes – longer if club program allows

**To inspire an audience requires that you express its collective beliefs, values, and sentiments.**

# THE KEYNOTE ADDRESS

## WHAT IS A KEYNOTE ADDRESS?

The keynote address is an inspirational speech that sets the mood for an event by generating enthusiasm for its purpose. Since the goal of the keynote address is to inspire, it must be approached in a manner that makes it significantly different than other kinds of speeches.

This type of address must be appropriate for the group or organization. Based on careful analysis, your knowledge of the audience is important to the creation of your speech and its acceptance by the particular group. Knowing well in advance the following elements about your audience will allow you to focus your subject and tailor what you're going to say, including specific references about the group, organization, or event:

- ▶ The purpose of the organization and the gathering
- ▶ Whether it's made up of both/either men or women
- ▶ How many people will attend
- ▶ Their average age, background, occupations, education, religion
- ▶ Their special interests
- ▶ Why they have come to the event
- ▶ Their knowledge about the topic
- ▶ Their general attitudes
- ▶ What message you anticipate they wish to take away with them.

In the role of keynote speaker, you must communicate to the members of your audience that you are united with them by bonds of sympathy, common experience, and understanding. Your presentation should convey a personal presence of dignity and a preoccupation with excellence of style. Your use of appropriate humor is important to the success of a keynote speech – providing a lightness of spirit is among your audience's expectations. To inspire an audience requires that you express its collective beliefs, values, and sentiments.

## MEETING AUDIENCE EXPECTATIONS

In preparing the keynote address, you need to determine the spirit and mood of the particular occasion. Planning your speech, organizing your thoughts, and structuring them is not unlike the process for other kinds of speeches. Although you are acting as

a spokesperson, you must still meet the listeners' expectations and engage their interest through originality of content and platform style.

Expressing the general feelings of the audience begins with your opening words. Your immediate goal is to establish rapport. You have an excellent opportunity to set this up by responding to your host and the person who introduced you to the audience (see *Connecting With the Audience*, page 39). Never forget to thank the person who presented you. Use this opportunity to condition the audience to you and your presentation. The objective of the first words you speak is to inspire the audience to want to listen to you. Anything that you say to identify a common bond between you or your topic and the audience will work wonders in establishing rapport or mutual good feeling. Your approach might be humorous or serious, depending on the occasion.

Following your acknowledgment of the introduction, the opening of your speech should leave no doubt as to what you're going to say. Wake your listeners up by making them interested in your subject and by showing them its timeliness and relevance to them. Your opening should have one or more of the following four characteristics:

1. It arouses suspense, intrigues listeners, and engages their undivided interest.
2. It orients the audience to what will be covered.
3. It directs the attention of the audience to the chief purpose or idea.
4. It reveals who you are as a person.

The guiding principle in your opening is the need to support your idea or subject. Don't use material that doesn't relate to the rest of your speech in some way. For example, don't use stories or illustrations that have nothing to do with the point you want to get across. Your opening should convey your attitude, your conviction, and the reason for your position to the audience.

### **UPLIFT AND GIVE THE AUDIENCE MEANING**

As a keynote speaker, you achieve an inspirational effect by supporting the values of the audience. You interpret for them their own beliefs. Because extensive diversity and factionalism exist throughout the world, what may inspire one particular group will not necessarily appeal to another. In fact, others may intellectually withdraw or be totally reactionary.

When you deliver a keynote address, your presentation must be dynamic and enthusiastic. It must also move quickly. A professional speaker will usually fill a 25-minute presentation with 10 two-minute stories, anecdotes, or other forms of supporting materials.

Phrase your talk in your listeners' terms and in light of their interests – not yours. To assure clarity, be sure to define any terms that may be vague or confusing. Put life and interest into your definitions. Describe your subject in an audiovisual likeness. Create vivid word pictures the same way a novelist does when describing a scene or action. Build a mental scenario that the members of the audience can see in their own minds; this will stimulate strong audience feeling for your cause.

Whenever you present an abstract concept or thought, follow it immediately by dramatizing or providing specific, concrete examples, these come in a variety of forms: quotations, illustrations, personal experience, facts, statistics, jokes, anecdotes, testimonials, analogies, and humorous or profound incidents. For the sake of clarity, always try to illustrate a statistic so the audience will understand its meaning. One very effective technique is to use a comparison followed by a contrast.

You need to determine the spirit and mood of the particular occasion, meet listeners' expectations, and engage their interest through original content and platform style.

Provide your listeners with a logical approach to understanding your message. In addition to focusing their thoughts on the subject and the occasion, you should structure your content with a pattern such as any of the following:

- ▶ Compare past and present with a possible conjecture about the future.
- ▶ Contrast a before-and-after situation.
- ▶ Approach the topic from alternative viewpoints of life's stages: childhood, adolescence, adulthood, old age.
- ▶ Address a problem and offer a solution.
- ▶ Compare advantages and disadvantages.
- ▶ Consider political, economic, or social aspects of the topic.

For a clear understanding of your ideas, the audience needs warning signs and signals in your speech – transitions that move you from one point to the next. Transitions create a unity in your speech, tying it all together while holding the interest of your audience. The continual use of short, simple sentences makes a speech choppy and dull. The relationship between words, groups of words, and paragraphs is shown by connective words and phrases. You can turn these into dynamic expressions that grab the audience because the phrasing is so unexpected. Take the following examples: "Here's a point that should tie a knot in your memory;" "At this crossroads we must take a clear-eyed look at;" or "In order to hedge our horoscope in this area."

A pause is a kind of transition, as is moving from one area of the platform to another. Other effective transitional techniques are summarizing or refocusing on a main idea and asking the audience for a show of hands. You also can use transitions to serve as a change of pace. This technique is especially effective in moving from humorous material into your serious or important message.

### **FIT YOUR STYLE TO THE OCCASION**

You would not deliver a eulogy at a funeral in the same manner that you would speak at a political campaign dinner or as the keynoter at the opening of a convention. The former occasion calls for a dignified and, in some cases, lofty style. This style also would apply to other formal situations such as commemorative occasions and graduation ceremonies. The bearing and appearance of the speaker, the seriousness of his or her tone, and the formality of delivery reflect the importance of the occasion, and the listeners' impressions and response will be based on those cues.

The mood and tone of the occasion may be informal, encouraging high spirits and good humor. If that's the case, your speaking style also should be less formal. The important factor is to meet the fundamental expectations of the audience.

In all good speaking, the following characteristics determine the effectiveness of the keynote address:

- ▶ Thought and content
- ▶ Nature of the speaker
- ▶ Conformity to the audience
- ▶ Influence of the audience

Your goal as a keynote speaker is to excel in your style of delivery and use of language, strong dynamic gestures and dramatic modulation and phrasing. Through your inspirational message, you become an embodiment, a medium, for the expression of the audience emotion.

You can accentuate feelings and encourage stronger identification through the use of such phrases as "we all understand," "as we have experienced together," and "as we all know."

Confusion, doubt, and uncertainty have no place in the keynote address. Affirmations of achievement, faith, and values are rooted in deeply established convictions that are well-known and universally accepted.

**Your goal as a keynote speaker is to excel in your style of delivery and use of language, strong dynamic gestures, and dramatic modulation and phrasing.**

### **GIVE THEM SOMETHING TO REMEMBER**

The goal of your conclusion is to mobilize the sympathy and understanding of your listeners, to win them over to your side, and to get them to support your convictions about what you've just told them. It is the climax or destination where you hope to leave your audience, so it's vital that you wind up on a strong note of appeal. This is where your speech has to produce results. Your conclusion should tie in with your opening and should leave no doubt about what you want your listeners to do with the information you've given them.

### **YOUR ASSIGNMENT**

Prepare, rehearse, and deliver a 15- to 20-minute keynote address.\* Arrange with the Toastmaster of the meeting to announce to the club members what audience group or organization they represent. Your speech should reflect the audience feeling and emotional rapport associated with that specific audience. Use the professional techniques discussed in the preceding material. Your style and delivery should be dynamic and should inspire the audience. Shower your listeners with your enthusiasm and move them to adopt your views as a collective reaffirmation of their own.

\*Option of longer presentation if club program allows.

## EVALUATION GUIDE FOR **THE KEYNOTE ADDRESS**

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluator \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Note to the Evaluator:** The purpose of this project was for the speaker to prepare, rehearse and deliver a 15- to 20-minute keynote address (option of longer presentation if program allows). The speaker should arrange with the Toastmaster of the meeting to announce to the club members what audience group or organization they represent. The speech should reflect audience feeling and emotional rapport associated with that specific audience. The style and delivery should be dynamic and should inspire the audience. In addition to your verbal evaluation, please write answers to the questions below.

- ▶ What did the speaker say and do to arouse audience interest following the introduction?
  
- ▶ Did the speaker communicate to the listeners that he or she was united with them by bonds of sympathy, common experience, and understanding?
  
- ▶ How did the speaker project confidence and authority (voice, language, platform presence)?
  
- ▶ Was the speaker's language and style inspirational? Describe how.
  
- ▶ Did the inspirational tone interpret or reinterpret existing feelings in the audience? Ask the audience. Did the speaker express audience emotion?
  
- ▶ Did the speaker use appropriate humor to create a lightness of spirit in meeting audience expectations?
  
- ▶ Did the speaker use word pictures and dynamic examples?
  
- ▶ Did the speaker give the audience a final thought to take away after the speech? What was it? What manner of closing was used to convey it?
  
- ▶ What positive suggestions can you offer to assist the speaker in improving his or her performance?

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

People enjoy hearing stories, and humorous stories top most people's lists. Audiences connect best with tales that have a universal theme or message and a clear storyline. Humor increases the allure of the anecdote. Include exaggeration, understatement, twisted definitions, puns, parody, and misdirection in your speech to create a pleasant diversion for your audience.

**OBJECTIVES:**

- ▶ Entertain the audience through the use of humor drawn from personal experience and from other material that you have personalized.
- ▶ Deliver the speech in a way that makes the humor effective.
- ▶ Establish personal rapport with your audience for maximum impact.

**Time:** 15–20 minutes – longer if club program allows

▶ Your purpose in giving a humorous presentation is to engage the audience in an interesting diversion.

## SPEAKING TO ENTERTAIN

Most professional speakers lace humor into every talk they make. The speaker who can make an audience laugh will be in demand. Entertainment is a universal human need, more in demand today than ever before. Entertaining is not easy. The most effective humorous speakers are those who think funny or perceive the humor of almost any behavior or situation. Humor makes many appeals from the belly laugh to the well-concealed smile. It may involve warm and sympathetic laughter, or it may hurt a victim through ridicule. The purpose of humor is to delight an audience through the presentation of ideas in the spirit of fun.

Your purpose in giving a humorous presentation is not primarily to provide the audience with insight and deep understanding, but to engage them in an interesting diversion. This does not imply that the speech must be devoid of meaning. Instead, the meaning should not be the major focus of the speech.

### HAVE A GOOD TIME

Since you want your audience to have a good time, you should act as if you're enjoying yourself right along with them. This should not appear to be forced or artificial, or you will lose the impact. Be optimistic and good-natured. Avoid focusing on trouble except to poke fun at it. The audience is not interested in argument or persuasion, and they will endure very few academic facts. Your listeners want to have fun, and they expect you to lead them in the merrymaking.

### WHAT MAKES IT FUNNY?

Humor includes some type of unexpected twist that pleasantly surprises the audience. It has been described as a train of thought that is derailed, leaving the audience with greater satisfaction than if it had reached its destination.

Humor can be broadly divided into jokes and stories. A joke is often a brief conversation between two or three people, climaxing in a punch line, or it can consist solely of the punch line itself, called a one-liner. The one-liner joke is an essential element of contemporary comedy. The one-liner moves with a snap and a sizzle that creates a sense of instant spontaneity lacking in anecdotes and stories. The stand-up television comic often delivers a string of one-liners to amuse the audience. They are funny, but a speaker can rarely go beyond five minutes with a string of unrelated jokes before the audience becomes bored.

As a professional speaker you will be more compelling to any audience if you use many humorous stories with an occasional one-liner thrown in to maintain rhythm and momentum. Stories and incidents are usually longer than jokes and include more

background detail. They also include a punch line, but unlike the joke, a story can build one segment upon another – each with its own punch line – until the audience is exhausted from laughing. A story can include jokes if they fit into the subject of the story and help propel it toward its high point. You can strengthen your message by using humor to reinforce it.

Whether you're telling jokes or stories, the ingredients you use will fall into several basic types. Experiment with each of these to find where your special talent lies:

- ▶ **Exaggeration** (His hair was so oily, the oil company wanted to start pumping for petroleum.)
- ▶ **Understatement** (The father, upon seeing his smashed car, asks the son who had borrowed it, "Have you ever heard about retroactive birth control?")
- ▶ **Twisted definitions** (The title Distinguished Professor is something they hand out at small colleges in lieu of cash.)
- ▶ **Puns** (The geometry student's test on circles was easy as pi.)
- ▶ **Parody** (He likes to have his cake and eat yours, too.)
- ▶ **Misunderstandings** (The doctor told a football recruit to strip to the waist. So he dropped his pants.)

### CREATE YOUR OWN MATERIAL

In creating and presenting humor, it's not a matter of simply thinking up or finding jokes and somehow trying to fit them into your presentation. In fact, it's the other way around. You have to first develop your message, a clear story line and the basic narrative or dialogue, then look for humorous punctuation or flow of your presentation.

As a professional speaker who uses humor regularly, you can create original material or at least adapt others' material to your own style and subject. When you hear a good story or find one in a joke book, the first thing to do is separate the theme from the peg, or the context in which the theme is presented. The theme is usually fixed, while the peg can be varied to fit the needs of your particular talk. For example, a story theme might be "losing at gambling" with pegs ranging from your Uncle Herman playing roulette to how you lost a million on the stock market. When you search for material, you are looking for a particular theme to make your point. The peg used in the story as you heard it need not be the same as when you tell it.

Having redesigned the story to fit your own purpose, practice telling the story and test it on your friends. Check particularly for listener interest, good timing, conciseness, and how it fits with your style. Create good transitions into and out of the story.

Always check carefully to make sure you will not offend any members of your audience with your humor. When in doubt, leave it out! Most professional speakers do not include inappropriate humor in their speeches. A speaker is responsible to his or her audience, and the quality of humor should reflect that responsibility. A "clean" professional who is really good will be in demand. Know your audience. Your goal, in most cases, is to unite an audience.

The following are standard sources of material for professional speakers:

- ▶ **Your personal experiences.** Things happen to all of us that are interesting and amusing, or can be made so with some modification. However, it is usually best to avoid stories about your family unless they are unusually funny.
- ▶ **Your general reading.** This is an excellent source of quotes and ideas. You need to read widely and constantly to keep the flow of material coming in. Buy joke books and browse through them (be sure to experiment with the wording of each joke for your most effective use).



▶ **Listening to people.** People are interested in people, so keep your ears open at parties, on the street, at church, and in the supermarket. These are rich sources for quotable original material.

▶ **Following news and trends.** The best material is current material because the foundation is already present in people's minds. Keep up with the current events, fads, and fashions.

Begin immediately to carry a pen and pocket notebook with you and use them. Write down the conversations, stories, jokes, and incidents you would like to use. Sort the good from the bad, and add clippings from newspapers and magazines to complete your collection. Develop a filing system by topic that relates to your needs as a speaker.

There are four points to keep in mind when you search for suitable material to use in your talks:

1. You should be able to understand it. If the point of a story or illustration is not immediately obvious to you, drop it.
2. You also should appreciate it. The story or joke should fit in with your outlook on life – one you might have thought of yourself. If it does not fit your personality, it probably will not go over well when you deliver it.
3. You should be able to manage the difficulties of presenting it. Some material requires a detailed progression of events or lengthy development in order to create its impact. Such selections cannot be cut down without losing the point. Avoid this type of material unless you have the skill and speaking time necessary to present it well.
4. You should find it funny. If you genuinely believe it is funny, you can "sell" it to the audience. If you don't your listeners won't buy it.

### **REHEARSE YOUR DELIVERY AND TIMING**

In a humorous speech, delivery can make or break the best material in the world. Plan in advance how you will deliver the material, and then practice it so thoroughly that all clumsiness and false starts are eliminated. Proper timing is the key – and it, too, must be practiced to perfection.

Remember that anytime you get up to speak to a group, you are giving a performance, and in professional speaking this is especially true.

Here are some basic points about telling a joke or a story:

- ▶ Speak as rapidly as possible, but so that you are clearly understood.
- ▶ Repeat or emphasize key words so no one will miss the point (this was the function of the straight man in vaudeville).
- ▶ Tell each joke and story from memory; never read it.
- ▶ Make sure the stories and jokes are relevant to your speech purpose.
- ▶ Personalize the stories and make them believable. Rather than saying, "I heard about a man who went . . .," say, "I went . . .," or, "I have it on good authority that . . ."
- ▶ Keep the ingredient of surprise by weaving the story into the context of your speech, then springing the punch line without notice.
- ▶ Poke fun at yourself rather than making yourself the hero of a funny story. The audience will love you for not taking yourself too seriously.
- ▶ Keep your stories short. Long ones slow the pace of the humor and are deadly if the audience has heard them before. Select fast-paced material you are relatively certain nobody has heard before.

- ▶ Occasionally a joke may require a change of pace at the punch line to distinctly separate it from the story. A rapid-fire story is sometimes enhanced by a slower punch line. A casual tale may be improved by a frantically spoken climax or even a pause, usually lasting only a fraction of a second. This “sets up” the audience for the reward it has been expecting.

### DRAMATIZE AND VOCALIZE

The key to a successful humorous talk is audience enjoyment. Your goal is that your listeners have a good time. Your attitude, voice, and body language should establish this atmosphere from the moment you are introduced. Be enthusiastic about your material and enjoy yourself along with the audience.

Your attitude, voice, and body language should establish an atmosphere of enjoyment from the moment you are introduced.

What your listeners see is just as important as what they hear in any kind of speech. A humorous speech is not particularly funny if you just stand frozen behind the lectern, unless it is for an effect that relates specifically to what you’re saying. Similarly you should use vocal variety – pitch, rate, volume – to keep the audience entertained as you speak.

For example, when you are telling a story, you will need to put your whole body into the story. If used effectively, your gestures and body movements will almost tell the story in pantomime. When you add the words with dramatic variations in your voice as you talk, the result is a powerful presentation.

### UNVEIL THE HUMOR

- ▶ **Opening.** Your opening should provoke an immediate response from the audience, setting the mood for the talk. In effect, an entertaining speech is one that hovers around the initial point of arousing the audience’s attention and interest. Plunge into this mood at the very beginning and stay there. Most professionals prefer to have the audience laughing within 15 seconds of introduction.
- ▶ **Body.** When your primary objective is to entertain, your speech does not have to be rigidly organized into points with supporting evidence and transitions. Make the body of the speech a sequence of little build-ups to a climax or punch line. Don’t worry about planned breathing spaces or slow-downs. Enough of them occur naturally. The construction may be loose and casual, but it should never be careless. Keep the momentum going all the way to the end.
- ▶ **Conclusion.** The conclusion should be brief, sudden and definite. Save some of your best material for last. Your conclusion should not be an anticlimax. Avoid leaving the impression that you have suddenly run out of material. That is why your speech has been organized with direction toward this particular end instead of a series of unrelated stories. The audience should feel that your intention has been accomplished and you have reached a natural stopping point. Your closing should be dynamic and memorable and should follow from seeds you have planted in the body of the speech. You may want to leave them laughing. On the other hand, changing pace and tagging your serious message on the tail of a humorous anecdote can also be very effective.

### YOUR ASSIGNMENT

Prepare, rehearse, and deliver a 15- to 20-minute entertaining speech. Your purpose is to help the audience have fun. The talk should have a theme and illustrate your concern with sequence, simplicity, vividness, and unexpected twists, and its organization should be readily apparent.

Relate personal experiences that you recall vividly, and use quotes, illustrations, stories, poems, and examples from sources other than your personal experience that are redesigned to fit your topic and personality. Make effective use of body language and vocal variety. If you wish, assume that your Toastmasters club members represent some specific group, and practice your ability to relate your talk to their purpose and interests (be sure to advise the Toastmaster of the meeting of this fact).

## EVALUATION GUIDE FOR **SPEAKING TO ENTERTAIN**

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluator \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Note to the Evaluator:** The purpose of this project was for the speaker to prepare, rehearse, and deliver a 15- to 20-minute entertaining speech with the objective of helping the audience have fun (option of longer presentation if program allows). The presentation should illustrate concern with sequence, simplicity, vividness, and unexpected twists, and its organization should be readily apparent. However, in a humorous speech, it is possible that structure will be nonexistent. In addition to your verbal evaluation, please write answers to the questions below.

- ▶ How was the opening handled? Was it effective? If not, why?
  
- ▶ Briefly describe the organization (basic outline) of the speech as you perceived it.
  
- ▶ What indicated to you that the audience was entertained?
  
- ▶ What techniques did the speaker use that were especially effective? Were there any that did not work? Why not?
  
- ▶ What techniques did the speaker use in the body of the speech to establish and maintain humorous tone and rhythm?
  
- ▶ How was the closing handled? Was it effective? If not, why?
  
- ▶ What would you say is the speaker's strongest asset in entertaining an audience?
  
- ▶ What positive suggestions can you offer to assist the speaker in improving his or her performance?

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

Make learning fun! Display your showmanship to teach your audience sales concepts and techniques. Use humor and recount dramatic success stories in your speech to embody abstract ideas and technical information. Share your insights about how to create an eager customer.

**OBJECTIVES:**

- ▶ Tell a sales audience how to sell a product by using a planned presentation.
- ▶ Inform a sales training audience about the human experience of the buyer-seller relationship.
- ▶ Use entertaining stories and dynamic examples of sales situations.
- ▶ Inspire salespeople to want to succeed in selling.

**Time:** 15–20 minutes – longer if club program allows

**Humor and interesting dramatic success stories are important ingredients in a sales training presentation.**

## THE SALES TRAINING SPEECH

One of the most common professional speaking situations is the sales and marketing training meeting or sales rally. This is where you are invited in by a company or corporation to provide insights and inspiration on what it takes today to market and sell products and services. Sales training is a large and active field. An important requirement in this kind of speaking is that you know something about selling. In fact, you are supposed to be the expert so you should have some background and experience in the sales and marketing field. If you don't, a seasoned pro in the audience will probably detect it and expose you.

A sales talk is a means of conveying ideas and information about buyer and seller relationships in the sales situation. Your goals are to motivate and teach. Although many elements of informative speaking are involved, certain concepts are unique to the sales training presentation. By drawing on your own experiences and those of others, making them your own, you will be teaching your listeners about sales concepts and techniques and inspiring them to success. Your purpose in this kind of presentation is to tell them how to create an eager customer. Humor and interesting dramatic success stories are important ingredients in a sales training presentation. Visual aids and humor will also assist in communicating abstract and technical information.

Although you will be lecturing or teaching the steps in this project to your audience of salespeople, you should involve your audience as much as possible whenever you have the opportunity. It's important to make the learning fun as well as informative, so put showmanship and entertainment into your presentation, but adhere to the following principles on the use of showmanship:

- ▶ **Make it unique.** The effectiveness of what you do depends wholly on the impact it makes on the audience, which, in turn, depends on the element of surprise.
- ▶ **Keep it simple.** Don't try to overwhelm your audience by sheer volume of material and props.
- ▶ **Maintain your own unique speaking style.** Develop your own style. Avoid imitating other successful speakers. Use variety and picturesque language to show your enthusiasm. Project an air of warm familiarity to demonstrate that you have faced and overcome the same situations and obstacles as the audience. This means you have valuable information worth sharing.

Be different and you will be noticed. Your style comes from who you are and what you've done. Be confident but not arrogant. Avoid inside jokes and

don't embarrass anyone. Create your own way of making contact with your audience so those people immediately become your friends and your rapport with them is solid.

- ▶ **Use speaking patterns or formats to structure your presentation.** Compare past and present information or selling. The high-pressure, hard-sell techniques of the past have given way to the contemporary psychology of buying and selling.

Consider using one of the following three patterns:

- Contrast a before-and-after situation. For example, tell a story of how a salesperson who did not have a planned presentation lost the sale the first time, then came back prepared and succeeded in making the sale.
- State a problem and offer a solution. What do you do when a purchasing agent has kept you waiting for two hours and then tells you you can have five minutes of his time?"
- Compare advantages and disadvantages, such as the advantages attracting the customer to your sales environment as opposed to the disadvantage of cold calls.

### **DRAMATIZE THE BUYER-SELLER RELATIONSHIP**

An effective opening should be dynamic, personable, and lead into a provocative statement, such as, "I'm going to show you how to first qualify a buyer and then have total control of your prospect or customer by using a problem-solving approach to selling," or, "We're going to explore the key concepts of the selling process, concepts that deal primarily with people."

One of the key problems for salespeople is their self-image. Help them to understand and apply the concept of professionalism. Extol their value and importance in our free-enterprise system. Emphasize and illustrate by citing examples of how selling is the foundation of that system from homemakers to presidents, because everybody is involved in selling of one kind or another. It might be a product or an idea, but the process of persuasion is there. So salespeople are of vital importance to society.

Instill in their minds that a selling career can be a highly professional activity. In today's business world, effective salespeople are more crucial than ever before to their companies' profitability. Their effectiveness can significantly impact – for better or worse – the bottom line.

Today, salespeople are increasingly assuming a high profile as representatives of their organizations. It's not uncommon for them to deal at higher

levels with their customers' decision-makers who can best understand and appreciate the long-term benefits of buying a product or service.

Define professionalism for them. Being professional is knowing why something went wrong in the sales situation and what to do about it. Your sales training speech should then proceed from this premise. Tell them that their objective is to be aware of what is happening when selling and dealing with people, to be aware of what it is they are saying and doing. Emphasize that they are in the business of dealing with people and that the selling process occurs through the prospect, not the salesperson.

### **GIVE THEM A FIVE-STEP FORMULA**

1. **Find out the prospect's needs.** What information will he/she need and how will he/she obtain it? Tell your audience that selling is not talking someone into doing something he or she doesn't want to do – that people love to buy. The idea is to show their customers how their image will be enhanced to themselves and to others when they buy your product or service. Establish yourself and your product or service as a self-image builder.

Exude enthusiasm through vocal variety, picturesque language, and a warm, exciting intimate manner in relating to your listeners.

Explain how they can discover the prospect's needs, feelings, and problems through questioning, establishing, and listening. Effective selling is an interview process in which the seller must first establish a connection or association to create an understanding. This interview accomplishes the following:

- Gains information
- Clarifies problems and their causes
- Discovers how the seller's solution can solve these problems

2. **Gain the confidence of the prospect.** Tell your sales training audience that people will buy a product because they feel the salesperson understands them. Caution them not to be insincere in attempting to flatter a customer. A compliment should be sincere, specific, and should relate to something of real interest to the person. By asking fact-finding questions, the salesperson will gain objective kinds of information and build a sense of trust and confidence with the customer. The simple act of taking notes on what the seller is saying shows concern.

The salesperson should follow with questions that probe personal feelings, attitudes, and emotions, then guide the customer to the product as a solution to the problem. Make the customer aware of the differences between the way things are and how they can be.

During the questioning process, the salesperson should listen for feelings, as well as thoughts and behavior, and be responsive to the prospect's needs by contributing to his or her knowledge and growth. The objective is to help people make mature decisions and take fully realized actions.

If a salesperson believes that selling is a conflict, then his/her value judgment will be reflected in his/her attitude and behavior toward a prospect or client. The prospect will respond as an opponent because he or she will come across negative in tone, hostile, and exploitive. Effective selling is not a conflict. It is accomplished with the prospect, not at him or her. This is the positive problem-solving approach.

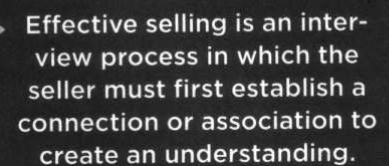
3. **Sell a solution.** Give your listeners the acronym DRAMA by which they can remember the ways to convince the prospect of the advantages of their solution.

- **Demonstrate.** People buy solutions to their problems, so explain the importance of presenting and visualizing their product as a solution.

Provide an example or anecdote of how they can put their customer in the picture. Point out that when the prospect mentally owns the product or service, a seller can more effectively convince him or her to own it in reality.

- **Recommend.** Point out that the seller's role is to play himself or herself. He or she is establishing a relationship with another person who needs solutions they can recommend. The goal is to help the prospect feel good by asking for help. That approach assists the prospect in building self-image.

For example, "I have a problem and perhaps you could help me solve it. It concerns a program to finance a child's college education by the time he or she turns 18. We're both concerned about a quality education for our children, but paying for it is something else. Wouldn't it make you feel good to have your son's (daughter's) college education paid for in



Effective selling is an interview process in which the seller must first establish a connection or association to create an understanding.

advance and with no hardship? It's really a matter of planning and looking ahead, don't you think?"

- **Arithmetic.** Advise your sales training audience on the discreet use of words such as spend, buy, and pay. Tell your listeners to talk about the investment and cost advantages. "Have you planned for this investment?" Remind them that people buy emotionally and make decisions intellectually, and that the reasons they give for someone to buy should be the buyer's reasons, not the seller's.
- **Measure.** Explain that once they have the attention of their prospect, the next step is to generate interest in the service or product being sold. The prospective buyer is really only interested in what the service or product can do for him or her. Tell them to sell benefits, not features. The difference between a feature and a measurable benefit is the difference between the product they're selling and any advantage or value associated with that product. Features have to do with things. Advantages have to do with people.

Their goal is to prove that the benefits will do what they claim. How will their product or service prevent the customer from experiencing such negative things as pain, discomfort, loss of esteem, or embarrassment? How will it provide positive measurable benefits like success, recognition, pleasure and approval, and benefits that outweigh the cost?

Explain the importance of relating the customer's situation to other similar situations and of describing how they helped others gain positive results and avoid negative ones. This is how they can create a buying climate, by allowing the buyer to be their equal so he or she will be willing to listen and to participate.

- **Assure.** A prospect will not accept the product as a solution until he or she is satisfied with the seller's answer to three questions: (1) Will it work? (2) Is it the best available? (3) Will it be the best in the future?

A satisfied need does not motivate someone to want to buy. The prospect is motivated when an existing need is threatened. Your listeners must understand that the motivation to buy begins with a feeling or emotion, and that to help another person solve a problem, they have to understand how he or she feels. The way to communicate empathy is by asking questions, listening, and guiding a person in the process of discovery. This approach is the basis for understanding and human relations, helping people to like themselves better.

Provide a story or an example of how in a selling situation it's not that people are afraid to buy; they're afraid of being sold and making a mistake. If the seller is insincere, the prospect will detect it immediately and will not want to buy. The seller must dispel the win-lose attitude and turn it into a win-win situation by mutually solving the problem.

4. **Anticipate objections.** Clarify for your listeners that most objections are essentially questions that they can help the prospect discover just what question he or she is asking by explaining and guiding, not arguing and pushing.

Using stories, humor, and concrete examples, illustrate for your listeners how to be prepared for objections by putting themselves in the position of the prospect in advance. They should have answers that clarify and turn objections into advantages.

Urge them to tactfully challenge objections, but not ridicule the prospect. They should use phrases like, "As we all know," "You agree that" and, "I can understand how you feel."

Explain how the simple question "Why?" often will uncover the real objection. Objections can frequently be interpreted as buying signals and guides to the prospect's thinking, and if they can



satisfactorily explain away the objections, they will have a buying customer. Urge them to allow their customer to feel he or she has made the decision to buy.

5. **Make the Close.** Stress that the close is the goal of their presentation and that they need a strong desire to close. They must constantly pay for it.

Clarify for them how the entire presentation is, in fact, a closing process. Here's an example: "You are helping the prospect solve a problem by providing a solution. You assume the prospect will buy. In that sense, you are functioning in the role of a counselor as you clarify the prospect's thinking and resolve his or her conflicts. Your close permeates the entire presentation. However, you finalize the close only when the prospect is ready, after he or she understands the saving involved and the benefits he or she will enjoy. You testify on both sides of the issue so the prospect can judge for himself or herself. In other words, you ACT (Assume, Clarify, Testify)."

Explain to your audience the five major ways to make a CLOSE:

- **Comparison** – Ask the prospect to make a minor decision as to model, color, manner of installation, or scheduling of services.
- **Loss** – Ask the prospect to buy now. Stress that if the prospect buys now, he or she will receive benefits that will no longer be available later. Motivate the buyer through fear or loss should he or she delay.
- **Opinion** – Ask the prospect to express his or her opinion as to the fact of the benefits he or she will enjoy. "In your opinion, don't you agree this will make your job easier?"
- **Story** – A story is often the greatest vehicle to provide understanding because people tend to be persuaded by the action of others who have benefited by making the purchase.
- **Example** – Explain or illustrate a specific result of buying the product or service. Refer to another person or group which has benefited.

## GIVE THEM GUIDELINES

Your objective is to inspire your audience of salespeople to want to sell by causing the customer to recognize the value of what they're selling. Emphasize how they can facilitate this process by showing respect for their service or merchandise, and by looking, talking, and projecting a sense of quality in every aspect of their own presentation.

Tell the sales training audience to drape services or products with as many pleasant associations as possible. Provide examples of how to create word pictures that have the appeal of sound and that paint images in the minds of customers. Describe the selling process as a drama of human interaction. Visualize the meanings by using strong action verbs and colorful nouns and adjectives. For example, "Don't sell the steak, sell the sizzle." "Dazzle your customer with an illusion, like the snap of a shoeshine boy's rag. You know how he snaps and whips that thing back and forth over the shoe like it's something alive? It doesn't even touch your shoe, but you feel like you're getting a better shine."

Project your enthusiasm and conviction as a role-model for your listeners. Even be evangelistic in tone and rhythm if that is your style. Tell them to set short-term and long-range goals for themselves. Modulate your voice and use dramatic pauses. The repetition of significant images is highly effective in helping you. Weave a spell over your audience.

Through your own example, you are teaching your listeners about selling techniques and how to create their own planned sales presentation.

Remember that during your sales training speech, through your own example, you are teaching your listeners about selling techniques and how to create their own planned sales presentation. Use visuals to make the intangible tangible, and let members of the audience into the act by providing opportunities for role-playing. Use charts and signs large enough to be easily seen and interpreted.

### **YOUR ASSIGNMENT**

Prepare and deliver a 15- to 20-minute sales training presentation.\* Your goal is to teach your audience about sales concepts and techniques that will inspire its members to success. Use visual aids, humor, and dramatic success stories to help illustrate your points. Put showmanship and entertainment into your presentation. Give your listeners guidelines they can apply in developing their own planned sales presentation.

\*Option of longer presentation if program allows.

## EVALUATION GUIDE FOR **THE SALES TRAINING SPEECH**

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluator \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Note to the Evaluator:** The purpose of this project was for the speaker to prepare and deliver a 15- to 20-minute sales training presentation (option of longer presentation if program allows). His or her goal was to teach members of the audience about sales concepts and techniques that would inspire them to success. The speaker was to put showmanship and entertainment into the presentation, while giving the audience guidelines they could apply in their own sales presentations. In addition to your verbal evaluation, please write answers to the questions below.

- ▶ What was unique about the speaker's use of showmanship? How could it be improved?
  
- ▶ Was the speaker's opening effective? Why? If not, why not?
  
- ▶ Did the speaker give the audience a system for selling? What was it called?
  
- ▶ How did the speaker involve the audience? What techniques were used?
  
- ▶ In what way did the speaker illustrate the buyer-seller relationship?
  
- ▶ In what way did the speaker illustrate how to handle buyers' objections?
  
- ▶ Was the speaker's close effective? If not, why not?
  
- ▶ Did the listeners feel they benefited from hearing the speaker? Ask them.
  
- ▶ Did the speaker inspire the audience to go out and succeed in selling? Ask them.
  
- ▶ What positive suggestions can you offer for improvements of the speaker's presentation?

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

Successful seminars begin with clearly stated objectives so, at the end of the seminar, the audience is able to quantify exactly what they have learned. Remember that seminar attendees have challenges and they're counting on you to help them discover the information they need to create solutions. Personify the skills and knowledge you teach because you are the audience's role model.

**OBJECTIVES:**

- ▶ Plan and present a seminar with specific learning objectives.
- ▶ Relate to the audience by using a seminar presentation style.
- ▶ Use seminar presentation techniques to promote group participation, learning and personal growth.

**Time:** 20-40 minutes

# THE PROFESSIONAL SEMINAR

As a professional speaker, invariably you will be asked to conduct a seminar in your area of expertise, whether it is effective listening, time management, customer service, sales and marketing, organizational development, problems of management, motivation or any number of technical and conceptual areas.

Adult education is assuming increasing importance in the functions of modern society. As a consequence there has been a marked increase of group meetings both within and outside organizations with the primary purpose of adult learning. Of a nonacademic nature, such meetings are called seminars. They are designed and led by a facilitator who assists the group in achieving learning objectives through the application of various seminar presentation techniques.

Keep in mind that your audience consists of adults who have decisions to make and problems to solve – that's why they are attending your seminar. They have an immediate need for information. So your material must be relevant to their needs and expectations.

You must realize that the members of your audience consider their time very valuable. It is your major responsibility to provide a quality presentation containing pertinent information in a reasonable amount of time. So a good professional seminar will be both problem-centered and entertaining, as well as concerned with personal gain and success for the members of the audience. You want to guide the audience members in converting the experiences they bring with them to the seminar into new learning concepts.

Your seminar should be adjusted to the particular needs of each type of audience: executives, supervisors, technicians, speakers, educators, engineers, scientists, etc. The goal of your program is to produce specific, tangible results by which the individual and his/her organization will benefit.

## GET THEM ACQUAINTED

If the individual members of your group are not acquainted, start them off with an ice-breaker exercise. The purpose is for them to learn a little something about one another, and what their personal goals and expectations might be in relation to the seminar and what they hope to achieve. If the group is an exceptionally large one, ask the participants to turn and introduce themselves to one of their neighbors. With a small group of 10 to 15, ask each individual to stand and share information that answers the following questions for the group:

- ▶ Who are you?
- ▶ What is your occupation or area of expertise?
- ▶ Why are you participating in this seminar?
- ▶ What do you hope to learn from this seminar?

An interesting variation on this exercise is to ask the participants to pair off and spend five minutes getting acquainted on the basis of the above four questions. Then call the group to order and ask each individual to introduce his or her partner.

**Be specific about what you're teaching and explain what skills and knowledge the audience will acquire.**

## **ORIENT YOUR AUDIENCE**

In opening your presentation, you need to establish immediate rapport with your audience and singleness of purpose. Explain the objectives of the seminar in terms of what skills and knowledge the members of your audience will acquire. Be specific and clear about what it is you're teaching and state your objectives so that the results are measurable. For example, "At the conclusion of this seminar, you will have learned nine effective listening techniques and will be able to demonstrate active listening skills." You need to consider three elements in establishing goals or objectives:

1. What your purpose is.
2. What information you want people to retain.
3. What visible results will tell you that you've accomplished your purpose.

Setting objectives gives the seminar direction and focus. Without them, your audience is likely to be confused about the overall concepts to be learned. Sharing your learning objectives will help establish the climate for understanding and prepare the audience for a successful seminar experience.

As you explain the learning objectives, put them on a flipchart or screen, then keep this list for review at the conclusion of the session.

## **YOUR PLANNED PRESENTATION**

Your presentation is a speech based on an expanded version of the seminar objectives designed in the form of a lesson plan. Establish your time limits in terms of realizing your goals. Build in break periods and time for thought and reflection concerning principles covered during the seminar. Allow for unexpected events, such as interruptions, new information, or directions attempted or intervention with a problem participant.

Design your presentation so it has a logical flow and sequence. In addition to having a beginning, middle, and an end, each part of the design should flow naturally into the next part through the use of transitions. These could take the form of exercises or introductory or summarizing comments. Designing a sequence provides a kind of notation or outline to yourself.

- ▶ Establish and list your objectives and share your expectations.
- ▶ Select the methods that will best achieve your goals:
  - **Lecturette** – A short, clear talk describing a theory, model, or collection.
  - **Discussion** – Leading or guiding a group in sharing information and resolving a problem.

- **Case Study** – An account of a problem situation including sufficient detail to make it possible for groups to analyze the problems involved. The case is a slice of life that invites diagnosis, prescription, and possible treatment.
- ▶ Assign time segments to each part of your agenda.
- ▶ Evaluate the design. Will you be able to meet your objectives through the methods you have selected? Can you manage the design? Would you enjoy it if you were a participant?
- ▶ Revise the design until you feel it is appropriate to your goals, and dynamic and complete.

### **USE SEMINAR TECHNIQUES**

The motivation to learn comes from the skills or knowledge your audience lacks at the beginning of the seminar juxtaposed with the desired end results. Participation and increased involvement occur through your application of five general categories of seminar techniques:

1. Structured experiences are planned methods that have a specific focus. These may be interpersonal (between two people), small groups (from three to five people), inter-group (between two groups), whole group (practicing, discussing, processing and sharing information, limited participation and exchange), or intra-personal (increasing self-awareness without interacting).

These structured experiences are learning activities that are arranged sequences of events leading to learning objectives. By using them in your presentation, you engage the audience in both intellectual and emotional experiences. As the leader you know the outcome before the experience starts.

- Learning games and exercises are structured activities in which you break the audience into subgroups to participate in the application of skills related to concepts you are teaching. Emotional involvement is intensified by encouraging a high degree of competition in the learning. Examples are business management games, simulation games and war games. Most games are prepackaged by professional consultants.
  - Prepared recordings provide a flexible start-and-stop method for discussion purposes.
  - A digital recorder and sufficient monitors are required.
  - Demonstrations are means of illustrating correct techniques or procedures. They are used almost entirely for skills learning and may or may not include participants. Coaching to provide tips, conducting a drill and solving a puzzle are kinds of demonstrations.
  - Reading is a vehicle for providing information. It requires your ability to select relevant material and reading skill on the part of participants. After material is read by a participant, encourage others to evaluate the information through group discussion.
  - Case studies or histories are accounts of a problem situation including sufficient detail to make it possible for small groups to analyze the problems involved. The case is a slice of life that encourages diagnosis, prescriptions, and possible treatment of solutions. You direct the analysis by questioning, then reinforce the best answers. If critical information is missing, you provide it. Case histories are published for various career fields.
2. Non-structured methods can be either totally non-structured, in which the group determines both the content and structure of the exercise, or partially non-structured, in which the seminar leader determines the procedure but not the content.

- Mutual inquiry is a totally non-structured method that involves participants completely in their own learning. Divide your audience into groups that do not have any assigned leadership. The groups are to plan a series of learning activities for their own use related to the seminar objectives, then carry them out. This is the most difficult of all methods.
  - Learn/teaching teams are a variation of mutual inquiry with the added function of one group teaching another what they learned.
3. Lecturettes are short lectures usually lasting from between five and fifteen minutes. Their purpose is to provide a theoretical framework for the group, with information related to the seminar objectives.
  4. Discussions focus on the content of the topic material and give participants an opportunity to derive information. They can also provide a means for attitude learning or exposure to the values of others, as well as unconscious values that influence personal behavior.
    - Group discussion is a method used in problem-solving to generate the expression of ideas. Your role is to review and screen ideas through the use of a problem-solving method commonly known as brainstorming. The steps are: Present the problem, ask for ideas, review and screen the ideas, then decide the solution.
    - A buzz session is a discussion technique designed to promote total audience participation by breaking the audience into groups of six or less to discuss information you have presented. You direct the groups to report their conclusions to the larger group.
    - Lecture/forum is a lecture followed by a question-and-answer period. This format provides activity for audience members and gives them an opportunity to explore specific elements of the content in detail.
    - Role-playing is a simulated event in which you direct one or more people in acting out the characters. A key point is that it is based on an actual situation. Role-playing is used to deal with a problem, analyze it and arrive at a solution by enacting the evidence. It stimulates discussion and is a method of learning by doing.
    - An expanding panel involves one or more vacant chairs. Participants join in as they feel prepared to elaborate on information or voice an opinion. It's necessary to establish procedural rules and enforce them.
  5. Processing focuses on how the discussion is handled and what happens during the discussion process. How are people saying what they are saying? How are they interacting? Are they listening and relating to each other? Are they trying to influence each other? Are some dominating and others silent?

### **RELATE TO YOUR AUDIENCE**

Check several times during the presentation to see if the audience understands and follows what you are saying. "Is that point clear to everyone?" Ask different members if they can hear the information and if it makes sense to them. Encourage contributory statements from the audience and reinforce what was learned through the exercises.

Maximize participation by having a skills or learning exercise every 10 or 15 minutes (e.g. buzz groups, round robin, role-play). Get the participants on their feet. Remember that the mind can absorb only what the bottom can endure.

The audience learns not only from what you say directly, but also from how you conduct the seminar.

If you cite an information source or use a quote, provide an accurate reference. A member of the audience may later ask where he or she can find more detailed information on the topic. So be prepared to answer such requests. Repeat important points or state them in different words. Don't overdo repetition and reinforce, but be sure to make your points clear.

A seminar presentation allows you and your audience to respond to ideas as you express them. The questions or problems you are introducing will evoke different points of view, opinions, and feelings about certain concepts. You are, in a sense, inviting the audience to start answering questions that are raised. Avoid asking questions like, "Is there anyone who doesn't understand?" That embarrasses those who don't understand. Ensure your questions to the audience remain positive and put the listener in a positive light. By motivating participants to react to concepts as they evolve, you are also drawing the members together as a group, providing them a focus and a common goal.

### YOUR SEMINAR STYLE

In presenting a seminar you serve as a role model for the audience. The members will learn not only from what you say directly, but also from how you conduct the seminar. So it is essential that you personally reflect the skills and knowledge of what you're teaching. For example, if your subject is a particular area of speech communication skills and you have difficulty expressing yourself clearly, you will lack credibility. There are certain characteristics you must project to be effective.

- ▶ **Be prepared.** Be an authority on your subject. Your preparation should include research, planning, and rehearsal. You may also need a telescopic or laser pointer, and colored markers for a flipchart or whiteboard if necessary. In order to communicate the message, you must have the necessary tools.
- ▶ **Be yourself.** Don't try to imitate someone else's style. Use language that is comfortable for you. An effective style that is natural for you will, in turn, be exciting for your audience.
- ▶ **Be enthusiastic.** Only when you are excited about what you're doing can you communicate that enthusiasm to your audience. Make eye contact. Speak loudly and clearly. Vary your voice in tempo and pitch, and use appropriate gestures. If you notice the attention of your audience is wandering, adjust your presentation. Change the tone of your voice or activate the audience with a learning exercise that allows the members to move and expand their energy. By varying the activities, you can maintain an energetic learning environment and overcome audience fatigue.
- ▶ **Use humor.** Make your presentation fun. Humorous examples help your audience to relax and create group unity. Humor provides you and the audience with another way of viewing yourselves that is creative, meaningful and fun.
- ▶ **Be clear and direct.** Explain, support, and clarify your subject matter so that it is easily grasped and understood.
- ▶ **Encourage feedback.** Ask your listeners how they are responding, how they feel and what they think about the elements and concepts of the presentation.
- ▶ **Be positive.** Your expectations about your audience will affect how the members feel about themselves. By feeling and acting positively, you will convey the message that what you have to teach is exciting, interesting, and important to them, and that they will learn, grow, and personally benefit.



## **LET THEM EVALUATE**

It is important that you receive feedback from your participants to ensure the effectiveness of your seminar in meeting the learning objectives. Feedback will also help you become aware of those areas in which the seminar can be improved. At the conclusion of the seminar, distribute a simple evaluation form and invite written comments from the participants. You might also ask for verbal feedback on evaluation points that correspond to the written evaluation. Points for evaluation should encompass how you did in terms of meeting learning objectives and how you did in terms of participant reactions to the workshop exercises.

## **YOUR ASSIGNMENT**

Plan, rehearse and present a 20- to 40-minute seminar in your field of expertise. Warm up your audience and orient the members as to the nature and learning objectives of the seminar. Your presentation style should provide a role model reflecting skills and knowledge of what you're teaching. Use one or more seminar techniques to enhance the learning process. You may wish to conduct one of Toastmasters International's *Success/Leadership Series* or *Success/Communication Series* seminars for this project.



**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

A motivational speaker's purpose is to supply listeners with the impetus to achieve a goal. Appeal to the audience's beliefs and values through dramatization, vibrant stories and enthusiasm. Give them an incentive and persuade them to embrace your message.

**OBJECTIVES:**

- ▶ Understand the concept and nature of motivational speaking.
- ▶ Apply a four-step motivational method with the purpose of persuading and inspiring.
- ▶ Deliver a motivational speech to persuade an audience to emotionally commit to an action.

**Time:** 15–20 minutes – longer if club program allows

# THE MOTIVATIONAL SPEECH

- ▶ It is our nature to achieve, to build, to want to succeed.
- ▶ We all have certain goals that are important to us. These could be personal or financial security, upward social or professional mobility, enjoying your work or just harnessing the creative forces within you and fulfilling your life's dreams.
- ▶ The secret of success is doing the things failures don't like to do.
- ▶ Enthusiasm is necessary to success in any endeavor. The person who lacks enthusiasm usually lacks confidence and is easily discouraged. Negative attitudes can be eliminated by generating enthusiasm.
- ▶ We tend to become what we think about most of the time. This is the concept of self-fulfilling prophecy. So it is important that we fill our minds with positive goals and affirmations.
- ▶ In any endeavor persistence is a necessary ingredient to achieving success.

## HOW TO MOTIVATE

First, ask yourself what is the purpose of motivation? It is to cause others to think, believe, and act as you want them to, and have them like it. Your objective is to persuade. In order to persuade, you will have to lead your audience through three important steps, the three keys to persuasion:

1. State your proposal so it is clear in the minds of your listeners. Make certain you are understood. Remember that people are not persuaded by what you say, but by what they understand. To determine what motivates others, you have to see the world through their eyes and understand their point of view.
2. Eliminate any conflicting ideas. Be positive in laying the groundwork for mutual understanding. In persuading people you are causing them to change an attitude and alter their behavior. To effectively accomplish that, you must consider that people's needs require fulfillment and that their values and beliefs will influence their behavior toward the end. People are usually more willing to change a value, belief, or behavior if they believe the change will help them in meeting their needs. They are also more willing to accept change as a group than on an individual basis.

People are more likely to accept change if the change is voluntary rather than coerced. If you involve people in effecting change, they will have an investment in it. So show that your goals do not differ from their own.

To be convincing, you must yourself be convinced and enthusiastic. Enthusiasm is contagious. Make it evident that you are united with them in

▶ People are not persuaded by what you say, but by what they understand.

terms of common experience and understanding, yet maintain your leadership role. Use associative phrases such as, "in our common experience," and, "considering our mutual concern."

3. Show them the advantages of your proposal. Clearly demonstrate what it will do for them. Build in an incentive. This may be in either financial or intangible terms.

### HOW TO SELL AND INSPIRE THEM

Your second objective in giving a motivational talk is to get people to act. You want them to see that their personal goals can be best realized by persistence and personal creative effort. Selling them on adopting that attitude and acting on it means you have to inspire them. How do you do it?

Remember that when you are speaking, you are influencing the attitudes of human beings. What you say and how you say it can alter human feelings and behavior. The more motivated they become, the more they'll want motivation and look for it to happen.

- ▶ **Get their attention.** Start off with an arousing opening that has a dynamic attention getter. This can be a unique humorous story, a rhetorical question, an arousal of suspense, statement of an unusual fact, a visual aid or, if appropriate, even getting your listeners on their feet to warm them up. Whatever you use, tie it to the subject of your talk.
- ▶ **Create vivid pictures in the minds of the audience with colorful descriptive words and/or dynamic gestures.** Your voice and body should project power and magnitude. Your goal is to move members of the audience to tears and laughter. Make them feel chills up and down their spines by using lofty phrases and creating dramatic intensity. Be charismatic. Draw them to you with an evangelistic fervor.

Motivational speaking is speaking in parables, telling lively and interesting stories about people who have achieved in spite of adversity. A 45-minute talk should be sprinkled with at least 15 or 20 two-minute stories. Make only a few points and illustrate them with human interest stories.

As a professional speaker, draw on success stories of people and incidents outside the business area that can be related to the efforts of achievement and personal success.

Define things and concepts in terms that are easily visualized. For example, a peculiar characteristic of top management tasks is that they require a diversity of capabilities and temperaments almost never found in one person. They require the capacity to analyze, think and weigh alternatives and to harmonize dissent. But they also require the capacity for quick, decisive action. They require being at home with abstract ideas, concepts and calculations. They also require empathy, human awareness and public representation ability. An effective top manager, then, needs to be four different human beings: "A thinking man or woman," "an action man or woman," "a people man or woman" and "the front man or woman."

- ▶ **Dramatize your speech.** If you're throwing a ball, throw the ball. If you're lifting a heavy weight, lift the weight. If you're running a race, run the race. Act out what you're telling them. Use your whole body to communicate a thought, an image. Remember, you don't go to your audience, you make them come to you. Gestures are the natural result of dramatizing the things you're talking about. Leave the platform. Walk down into the audience. Touch. Make contact. Your hands and body are miraculous instruments capable of making beautiful music. Broad, sweeping gestures conveying energy and power help you visually to motivate and inspire. You become a visual embodiment, a living symbol of inspiration.

**If you involve people in effecting change, they will have an investment in it. So show that your goals do not differ from their own.**

► **Call for action.** Give them a powerful close. Tell a dramatic story that personifies personal achievement and success. Tell them they too can do it, not to quit, that they will succeed whatever their personal goals may be. Recap and relate the success to how each of them will personally benefit. What they want to hear from you is a correlation with reality. All you have to do is show them that relationship. You know who your audience is.

Your closing should be emotionally powerful and dynamic. Touch those people emotionally according to what matters to them – their importance, their personal value, what they stand to gain and, most importantly, their self-worth as human beings. After that, you won't even have to ask for their commitment. They'll give it to you. That's motivation.

### **YOUR ASSIGNMENT**

Prepare, rehearse and deliver a 15- to 20-minute motivational speech designed to persuade and inspire your listeners to achieve personal success. Create vivid word pictures, use dynamic gestures, and dramatize your speech.



# PROJECT COMPLETION RECORD **THE PROFESSIONAL SPEAKER**

PROJECT	SPEECH TITLE	DATE	VICE PRESIDENT EDUCATION'S INITIALS
1. The Keynote Address			
2. Speaking to Entertain			
3. The Sales Training Speech			
4. The Professional Seminar			
5. The Motivational Speech			

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