



GIVING SPEECHES AND CLASS PRESENTATIONS

(adapted from <https://connect.cognella.com/drc/0D59202527F64DD25CC457C3919CCBF6>, Ch. 7)

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ABOUT PUBLIC SPEAKING

Many people get anxious when they are required to speak publicly. The way to combat this fear is to be prepared. The more you prepare and practice, the more comfortable you will feel.

Giving speeches and doing class presentations are good experience for the “real world” because being able to communicate both privately and publicly is extremely important in work and in life.

ELEMENTS OF A GOOD PRESENTATION

Good speeches and presentations should:

- Inform. Research your topic well. Your presentation needs to have substantial information so your listeners will learn something.
- Engage. Your presentation needs to involve listeners by asking questions or encouraging audience participation.
- Entertain. Your presentation should use humor, surprise or audio/visual aids so listeners will respond and react.

BEGINNINGS AND ENDINGS

- The beginning of your speech should grab the audience's attention with a story, joke, anecdote or question to ponder.
- Follow your introduction with an overview of what you plan to cover, addressing main points.
- Keep momentum going throughout, incorporating a natural progression of ideas, information and examples.
- Your speech's ending should be smooth, flowing from the rest of the speech. Summarize and synthesize key points, providing useful takeaways. Don't end your speech or presentation abruptly.

PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE!

- The more you practice, the more comfortable you'll feel during your speech or presentation.
- Practice the first part of your speech the most since that is the part where you'll likely be most nervous.
- Practice out loud in front of family, friends or the mirror.
- Practice often. Knowing the material well will enable you to look at your audience when you speak, so that you can refer to your notes or slides rather than reading them.
- Practice with the technology you plan to use, so you can deal with any glitches if they arise.

GROUP PRESENTATIONS

- Work together as a team.
- Everyone must contribute equally, according to their strengths.
- No team member does all the work.
- No team member gets a “free ride.”
- Make decisions together, listening to and respecting the opinions of each team member.

PUBLIC SPEAKING DO'S AND DON'T'S

- Do keep your presentation short and to the point.
- Don't go over the allotted time or rush material at the end.
- Do keep your presentation engaging.
- Don't look down at your notes or slides the entire time.
- Do connect with your audience, establishing eye contact while you speak.
- Don't turn your back to your audience.
- Do show interest in the audience's involvement, gauging their interest and adapting your presentation accordingly.
- Do be lively and expressive.
- Don't speak in a monotone.

If You Would Like to Learn More About Giving Speeches and Class Presentations

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