



INSIGHTS

... for Exceptional Leaders

The Holbrow Group

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The Business Speech Presentation (Part 1 of a series: Part 1 **The Speech Body**)

Communication through the medium of oral presentations is a critical leadership skill. In this - the first of a series of articles, Presentation Skills Coach, Gordon Wilson shows us how to craft an effective business speech presentation.

Congratulations, you have been invited to speak about your product, service, a technical topic or on a social occasion. You are pleased that your networking and professional reputation has earned you this opportunity. This speaking engagement can be an excellent business building and career enhancement occasion. Why not make the most of it?

Now it is time to plan for a successful presentation. Here are some suggestions to get you started.

First record your responses to the following questions:

- Is this your first business presentation? If so, reflect on the planning and preparation time required to develop speech content and practice the oral delivery.
- Last time you spoke to an audience, did you give sufficient thought to the outcome from the audience viewpoint?
- How much time did you invest in research?
- Last time you addressed an audience, what went well? What did not go well?
- Did you prepare sufficiently?

The important messages contained in the above question are:

- **Plan ahead. It takes time to prepare for the delivery of a quality presentation**
- **Know your audience**
- **Research your topic**
- **Reflect on past lessons learned; and**
- **Preparation - Preparation - Preparation**

Never underestimate your audience. Always assume that they have heard their share of excellent presentations. Your job is to be remembered as an excellent presenter.

Regardless of your level of experience, here are some suggestions that will prove helpful when you are next invited to speak.

Determine Your Presentation Objective

Decide if your presentation objective is to:

- Inform
- Entertain
- Inspire
- Motivate
- Persuade

Usually the main focus of an effective business presentation is on one or two of the above objectives.

Once you have determined a clear objective, identify and write a statement of purpose regarding your presentation. A brief written statement of your objective provides a starting point and helps you stay focused on your outcome e.g. *My objective is to persuade my audience that presentation skills coaching will help them with:*

Acquiring new sales or career opportunities

Improving sales penetration

Increasing bottom line profits or income

Building strong and lasting new client relationships

Infusing confidence in the organizations' future state

To Do List

1. Develop content
2. Research both the organization and if possible, your audience
3. Brainstorm aspects of the written presentation outline. Consult with others
4. Consider this question: Following the conclusion of your presentation, what do you want your audience to feel or think?
5. Think about why you were asked to speak-the expertise you bring. This has value to your audience
6. Now **write** your brief statement of objective
7. Ensure you establish a clear written goal to have all aspects of your speech presentation ready - at least 10 days ahead of the scheduled event date

The Presentation Outline

Regardless of the reason for your presentation, the first step is to outline your key points. Let's use the example of photography.

Presentation topic: Photography

List points of reference

- History of photography
- The first camera dating back to the middle ages
- Camera development
- The cameras of the 21st Century
- George Eastman-Kodak and the birth of film
- Black-and-white
- Colour
- The digital age

Amateur photography

- Tips and tricks
- Resources

Professional photography

- Learn from the great photographers e.g. Yousuf Karsh, the legendary Canadian photographer

Cameras:

- Box camera
- 35 mm camera
- Polaroid camera
- Digital camera
- Camera phone

Note: there is no shortage of information on this or most topics. While listing - ideas will come to you, be sure to make a note of the ideas.

Now group the above list under three or four main headings and write a paragraph under each heading. The paragraph length will depend on the overall length of the presentation, i.e. an eight minute speech is likely to have three, two (2) minute paragraphs to allow sufficient time for the presentation opening and conclusion.

Now choose your topic. Let's assume your topic is "Energy Conservation"

- Repeat the above photography example and list your key points related to the topic of Energy Conservation.
- Again using the above photography example, group the listed items into three or four main headings.

Keep in mind your earlier presentation objective - lets say it was to inform and persuade. Now write your complete script - three or four separate groupings. When writing your first draft, resist the temptation to self-edit, just write. Edit later for flow and word choice. This is where the bulk of your time will be invested.

In time the body of your presentation will start to take shape, start to flow. Write and rehearse in a way your audience will understand and lead them, persuade or motivate them that they should conserve energy (or your topic of choice).

All the best with your business speech preparation!

Gordon will provide more tips on this important subject in future issues of **INSIGHTS**.

Gordon Wilson specializes in presentation skills coaching. He is an award winning speaker and long time Member of Toastmasters International. Over the last 12 years Gordon has collaborated with Colin and The Holbrow Group. Working as an effective team Gordon and Colin have developed and delivered a number of leadership development training programs that have fostered sustained learning.

You comments are encouraged and welcome. You can reach Gordon with beefs or bouquets at: Gordon@TheHolbrowGroup.com

News

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