

## **Intro**

### The Anatomy of a Speech

Writing a speech need not be a huge task. And yet many people particularly those who are new to public speaking will spend a ton of time sweating the details.

While it doesn't hurt to put some thought into what you are going to say, too often people will spend so much time writing their speech they never get around to adequately practicing it. The net result, they flub the speech delivery, because they are ill prepared.

As a general rule you need to spend at least 4 to 10 times as much time practicing your speech as you do writing it.

In this simple report we will discuss the key elements you need to consider during the writing of your speech, so that you can do it as quickly and effectively as possible.

Before we start let me make a couple of things clear.

Every draft of your speech is a draft, including the last one. You will never find the perfect words, and every time through your speech you will likely come up with a slightly different way to say the same thing. That's one of the beauties of the English language.

The reason I say this is that many people get too wrapped up with the need to memorize their speeches word for word. While you will see below, I do advise you to remember parts of your speech, for the most part, I advise against it. Instead I will advise you to remember what it is you are going to talk about.

So my first two take aways are:

There is no perfect text, so don't break your back trying to come up with the perfect language. Don't worry about needing to remember everything you write. Instead as I will tell you later, you will merely need to remember the topics you are going to talk about, plus the first few and last few sentences of your talk.

## **Message**

Whether you are preparing a five day seminar or a five minute talk, you need to come up with a single sentence that summarizes the entire purpose of your presentation. You need to be clear about what it is you are going to share with your audience.

If you are not clear on why you are addressing your audience, there is no way you can expect them to know what you are trying to say. Make sense?

This is the most fundamental lesson you can take away from this report. To be an effective speaker, you need to have a singular purpose for the entire presentation.

If yours is a sales presentation, you need to be clear on whether you are trying to close the sale, or to advance the sales process. Then everything else in your speech can be focused on accomplishing your purpose.

If your talk isn't a sales pitch, you still have a purpose. It may be to persuade or motivate or even just to entertain. Whatever your purpose, you need to be very clear from the start why you are asking people to listen to you talk.

The tighter and more focused you talk is, the more likely people will respond favorably to your presentation. By being clear on your purpose you are better able to remove extraneous elements which could divert your audience's attention away from your primary objective.

It's hard enough to capture and keep people's attention, without giving them new unrelated things to think about. By sticking to a single underlying objective, you will significantly enhance not only the quality of your presentation, but also the quality of the audience's response.

## **Audience**

Speaking of audience, this is the second fundamental starting point in preparing any presentation. Your audience is the empty vessel into which you are going to place your information

In our first step we decided upon our purpose. This is the gift we are going to share with the world. But just which section of the world are we going to address? If our topic has to do with parenting, our presentation may logically differ if we are addressing a group made up primarily of young fathers vs. another of primarily mothers. The topic may well be the same, but the approach would likely differ.

If you are in a sales presentation, and you are talking to decision makers, you may well focus on top level aspects of your product or service and direct your talk toward getting a decision. On the other hand if you are primarily addressing mid level staff, your function may need to be more oriented to establishing your product's value and suggest ways your audience could most effectively lobby for you within their organizations.

Just as a pilot needs to plot a course from his point of origin to his ultimate destination, you need to plot your course from your objective to your audience's needs. If you are going to successfully land your argument at its destination, you need to be pretty clear on where your audience is.

## **Medium**

Not every speech is given from the front of an auditorium, in fact many a speech is prepared and given in small groups settings where the audience may not even realize that they just heard a prepared speech.

The location and set up can have a significant impact on your speech and your speech preparations. Will you have access to audio visual gear, a white or blackboard? Will you be using a microphone? Will the audience be seated auditorium style or around tables or in some other arrangement.

Will there be other speakers, and if so where do you come in the schedule. Will you be speaking just after lunch or just before the end of the day's sessions.

Any and all of these questions and more can have a material effect on you and on your audience and they need to be taken into account when you prepare your presentation.

You want to be as aware as possible of the venue and any special equipment you intend to use or may have available to you. It's always a good idea to preview the room in advance, if only to help you visualize giving your presentation flawlessly during your rehearsals.

So in addition to starting with a clear idea of your purpose and the specifics of your audience, you also need to have a clear idea of the venue you will be presenting in. While this is not always possible, the more fore thought you are able to give to this key ingredient, the better.

Now that we have these major prerequisites accounted for we can begin preparing your speech, however we are not going to begin at the beginning. Instead we will start at the end, and more specifically the call to action.

## **Call to action**

No matter if your speech is minutes or hours long, it eventually must come to an end. If you have done your job well it will be a successful end.

During your speech you will have grabbed your audience's attention and kept them raptly following each and every word as you build the case in support of your one single message. Now that you have fully covered your topic in the allotted time, you want to do two things. The first is to summarize the journey you have just taken them on.

You will remind them of why the topic is of importance to them specifically and summarize the key points you made in support of your case. And then you are going to issue a call to action.

This is the moment of truth, the reason you gave your presentation, and it's time to ask for the sale. Figuratively speaking. And maybe actually, if yours is a sales presentation to decision makers.

We start at the end to once again emphasize the need for a single clear purpose to your talk. Your call to action may be to encourage people to volunteer their time for a local charity, or to convince expectant mothers to breast feed, or to vote for your favorite candidate.

It should be easy now that you have laid out your case, and no surprise to your audience. This is the payday for your efforts, and since this is where you get paid you want to pay particular attention to making this part of your speech as succinct and as convincing as possible.

I recommend that you carefully craft this section of your talk and memorize it. You want to start and end your speech strong, you will be far more convincing that way, and having your final closing memorized will help you end strong.

Having your ending memorized also serves as a useful insurance policy in the event your speech goes a bit over the time limit and you are forced to cut your body short. Having a good strong ending firmly in mind can serve to cap off your talk, and many in the audience will not even realize you didn't cover all your material.

Two final arguments for doing the ending first. First most people practice their speeches by starting at the beginning and going until they falter. They then start over again and proceed again until they run into a problem. This process works well, but sometimes, particularly when time is short, the front end of a presentation gets well rehearsed, while the back end may not. By starting with the backend, you guarantee that you have given solid thought to the most important part of your speech, and collect your \$200 and pass goal.

The final argument is my first argument all over again. When you have a clear idea of your call to action, it will be easier to decide what does and doesn't belong in the body of the speech which is out next topic.

## **Body**

The body of your speech is the middle 70-85% of your entire talk. It's here that you do the heavy lifting, but since you have more time, you don't have to carry the whole load on any one point. You have time to spread your argument, message or case over three or more pillars of support.

In general most people suggest you restrict the body of your speech to three main elements, although this is not a hard and fast rule. Although you probably do not want to go beyond five main points for fear of losing or confusing your audience in most short to moderate length presentations.

If you have a lot of disparate points to make, the thing to do is to spell them all out as single phrases on a piece of paper and then group them into 3 to 5 main groups, the fewer the better.

Once you have done that, review each group and specifically ask yourself whether or not the point is directly tied to your call to action or not. When you are preparing a speech you will often find yourself reminded of all kinds of related but ancillary ideas or anecdotes. You want to cull these out of your talk, so that you can focus on the most powerful and relevant items that will most specifically interest your audience.

This is why we have already focused our attention on understanding the makeup of our audience.

Once you have grouped your ideas and culled them, you want to rank them in relative importance to your audience. This again may vary from your own perception of value, so be sure to keep that audience in mind. It's them you are trying to sell, you are already convinced. Start with your best argument first. It will have the most impact on your audience and the rest will line up as good supporting arguments.

Within each main group try to come up with a story you can tell that will illustrate why the particular point will matter to those things your audience values. In almost all cases you audience will prefer to hear stories to dry facts. So paint a picture in words showing how each point provides specific and real benefits the audience will appreciate.

## **Transitions**

If the body of your speech has three major points, you are going to need four transitions. A transition is a link from one part of the speech to another. And while they are not particularly difficult to come up with they play an important role in keeping the flow of your presentation going and in helping you remember how to get from point to point.

The first transition links your opening with your first major point, the middle two link the main sections of your body, and the final transition move you from the body to the close.

These can be very simple phrases such as, ...and this leads me to the following..., and further more, consider this..., and ...in summary.

Some speakers find that as long as they remember the introduction and close and their transitions, they don't need to memorize anything else in their speech. Instead they remember the stories they are going to tell as part of each main body point and memorize how they get from body point to point.

## **Introductions**

Some writers will argue with me about my prior claim that the conclusion is the most important part of the speech. And they do have a point.

While I say the call to action is your payday, and thus the most important, they will argue that if you don't grab your audience's attention in the first place, there won't be a payday no matter how good your call to action is.

Your introduction has two main purposes, that is to grab your audiences attention and to set the stage for what you are about to tell them.

It should always be bold and strong, although it should almost always also start out with a pause to allow your audience to focus their attention on you after you are introduced. Here again, familiarity with your audience can pay dividends because you specifically want to connect to them, so that they know you are talking to them, and not to someone else in the room.

The use of questions directed to the audience, costumes, gestures and even pyrotechnics verbal or real all can have a place in this role as long as they are carefully targeted to your objective of connecting with your targeted listeners. Well delivered humor is often effective as well, if followed up with a compelling connection between your audience and your topic. And that is a key point. What ever you do to capture your audience's attention, it must tie them to your topic.

And then you tell them what you are going to tell them. It's often good in a sales situation to create a picture of a problem your audience is facing that you are going to solve ultimately with your presentation and your call to action. While your introduction should be short, you can on occasion do well by dwelling on the pain of a current situation as this will draw your audience into your presentation all the more, if it's a pain your audience actually feels. If it is, help them feel it in all it's gory detail.

By grabbing their attention, and reminding them of their pain or association with your topic, you have set the stage for the arguments of your body and your call to action.

Memorize the element, and prepare yourself for congratulations.

## **Conclusion.**

You now have the key elements of a highly successful speech. Congratulations.

There is of course more to giving a speech than just writing it, but it is the key initial component. However, some experts suggest that the actual words account for just 7% of a speeches actual impact. The rest is attributed to body language and vocal variety.

These and other elements are discussed in more detail in my [Public Speaking Extraordinaire](#) program. I encourage you to check it out. It will help you overcome any stage fright you may now have and shows you how to go from dead zero to public speaking hero in just three days. It's a powerful program, that's 100% guaranteed.

Best wishes,

Earl Netwal  
The Micro Business Specialist

Also be sure to visit my blogs.

<http://TopPublicSpeakingTips.com>

<http://MicroBusinessSpecialist.com/blog>

<http://ArticleMarketingHint.com>

### **Other Recommendations**

Interested in Internet Marketing?

Get an A-Z overview of everything you need to know to start your own million dollar online internet empire. Four hour video series covers 8 different major aspects that you really need to know to get yourself launched online.

[Internet Marketing Intensive](#)