

**The Speech Went Well In the Mirror, But I Froze at
the Presentation ~ How Do I Conquer My Fear of
Public Speaking Forever Vol.9**



by Terry D. Clark

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PART ONE
THE FOUNDATIONS
OF PUBLIC SPEAKING

Chapter 1

Introducing Public Speaking

Communication is a vital key in this new century. It gives an edge to keep abreast with the fast pace of the times. Public speaking definitely works towards this goal.

The diversity of opinions today, which are often controversial, has increased the need for public speaking. People need to voice out their views to function well in society. For some four thousand years, public speaking has been the key in building and keeping a democratic society and way of life. Its influences are vast and affect almost all aspects of life, such as the way we think or act. It is also used in court proceedings, in congress, and even in the plain setting of a classroom.

Speaking in public can sometimes be a real challenge, if not a source of embarrassment; not only to normal people, but even to persons of high rank such as scholars, doctors, artists and entrepreneurs. They may have hesitations in facing an audience, often accompanied by sweaty palms, stuttering, and the tip-of-the-tongue phenomenon. These dilemmas often cause untold problems to the speaker (especially in self-expression) and

unpleasant effects to the audience.

You probably got this book because you are up for a speech delivery soon and you need valuable tips. Or perhaps, you saw the link between success and effective speaking, and have realized this can help you. Hopefully this book would do just that.

Technical terms or jargons in public speaking are explained here, and in a humane way, to help you grow as a good public speaker.

There are scores of books on public speaking. But few really give practical help. This book aims to do what other books have not in terms of giving direct beneficial information.

Careful thought has been given to people who really love to speak publicly but do not have the luxury of time to prepare for such. This will help you make your next speech a great one, and become better with each succeeding speech. It aims to help people write and deliver an interesting, clear, and cogent speech quality. This book also tries to answer the questions and fears of the occasional speaker.

Included also in this book is a summary of experiences in public speaking, and how they have led to success.

Aristotle said “a speaker needs three qualities – good sense, good character, and goodwill toward his hearers.” Thus, public speaking is also

about developing speakers, and ultimately, decent human beings.

Whether the speech is short or long, the same rules apply, like the rule of preparation. The habit of preparing makes good speakers. Some would say that they speak from “inspiration,” when in fact they have been preparing their speeches all their lives.

Chapter 2

Public Speaking and You

Some people are born speakers. Most are not. Hence, you are not alone when you say that you do not enjoy making speeches and speaking in front of a large audience. Stage fright is inevitable. Actors are always nervous to a certain degree before every play.

Perhaps you think your career does not entail public speaking. Well, this is where you're wrong because no matter what your job is, public speaking ultimately will come into the picture in some ways. This chapter, therefore, focuses on the significance of public speaking in our daily lives and on some specifics of the communication process.

Four General Types of Public Speakers

CATEGORY AND ITS CHARACTERISTICS

The Avoider ~

CHARACTERISTICS:

Does everything possible to avoid facing an audience. In some cases, avoiders seek careers that do not involve making presentations.

The Resister ~

CHARACTERISTICS:

Becomes fearful when asked to speak. This fear may be strong. Resisters may not love to speak in public, but they have no choice. When they speak, they do so with great reluctance.

The Acceptor ~

CHARACTERISTICS:

Can do presentations but is not that enthusiastic to do them. Acceptors occasionally give presentations and feel good about them. Occasionally the presentations can be quite persuasive, and satisfying.

The Seeker ~ Always looks for opportunities to speak.

Seekers understand that anxiety can be a stimulant that fuels enthusiasm during presentation. Seekers work hard at building their Professional communication skills and self-confidence by speaking often.

What Roles Can Public Speaking Play in Your Life?

Success in public speaking can open a whole world of opportunities for you. It can help you conquer new frontiers. It can broaden your horizons through personal development, influence, and advances in your profession.

1. Public Speaking Improves Your Personal Development

In Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs, realizing man's self-worth ranks the highest. Giving speeches helps the speaker realize self-worth through the personal satisfaction he experiences whenever a good speech is given. The speaker becomes more confident especially when the audience responds positively. It also reduces anxiety when asked by an authority to speak in front of some people.

There was once a student who dropped a course five times because he hated speaking in front of the class. But after a self-study on building up confidence, he decided to give public speaking a try and was successful. In fact, he came to enjoy the experience and even volunteered to give more speeches.

Through public speaking tools like research, conceptualization, and organization, you have a systematic and effective way of presenting your ideas; and thus, you will be able to express yourself better. You will also become more open to other people. Furthermore, speaking skills put you in a more significant role as you talk with people of high standing. Lastly, public speaking satisfies your sense of achievement when the audience accepts you warmly. This reflects your level of communication skills and acumen. All these contribute to your self-esteem.

2. Public Speaking Influences Your Society

It is not only you who can benefit from the art of communication but society as well. Most governments heed the voice of their citizens; with proper communication skills, you can represent the public in voicing out your rights and opinions.

An example of this would be a community discussion. Usually when a neighborhood holds regular meetings, it discusses certain issues or courses of action. In the discussion, various opinions are expressed and there you

have a clear interplay of public speaking.

People from all walks of life need to speak in public, whether formally or otherwise. From kids reciting in school, to folks in a town meeting, to citizens voicing out national issues; from a plain market vendor, to a president of a company. There is really no way you can avoid public speaking.

3. Public Speaking Advances Your Profession

Public speaking can help in your career, and eventually, your finances.

Usually, success is gauged by answers to questions like, “How long have you been in your job?” or “Do you hold an MBA degree or something similar?”

However, researchers have proven that the best indicator of success in any profession is whether the person is often asked to give speeches. Those who give more speeches tend to have higher salaries than those who give less or no speeches.

Take this average engineer. She enrolls in a public speaking seminar that teaches two hours a week for six weeks. After two months, she is promoted to senior engineer! Her boss has been noticing her superb presentations.

The longer you work for an organization and the higher you climb the organizational ladder, the more your boss will ask you to preside over

meetings and to give talks to the staff and subordinates or the clients. The higher your position, the more your responsibilities in leading people under you; and the more you must speak effectively. A manager once said, “From the chairman of the board to the assistant manager of the most obscure department, nearly everyone in business speaks in public or makes a speech at some time or the other.”

Aside from big organizations like IBM and General Motors, small organizations and businesses in the country also need workers who are good public speakers. Take the high school coach, for example. If he is not persuasive enough to tell the school board that new gym equipment is needed, the school athletes might have to bear with the old gym equipment.

In the same way, if parents are not convincing enough when they complain about a school dress code, their children may end up still wearing uniforms in school. If salespeople cannot explain their products with a convincing sales pitch, then fewer people would buy their products. This is also true for nurses, doctors, firemen, police personnel and other professions. Even employees of General Motors meet regularly to make group decisions that they will present formally to management.

The bottom line is this: Whichever road you take, you will encounter instances that require you to speak in public.

Chapter 3

Getting Started: Your First Speech

Imagine you're in a classroom. Who do you think speaks excellently?

You may select those who look smart or those who often recite in class. You may think that these people are actually more confident than you think they are. Or perhaps, they are born speakers and you are not.

Well, it may surprise you that they're probably thinking the same thing about you! They may also feel that you are a born speaker and envy you because they have fears in public speaking. Some may have special interests in public speaking, but most people do not know anything about it.

Then again, you may actually be a good speaker without realizing it. It pays to find out by actually doing it and by seeing yourself doing it. You may be just like this student during his first speech in class.

He needed to prepare a long speech. Two weeks before, he had started writing his speech. He could not sleep at night. In fact, the night before his speech, he did not sleep at all. However, when he finally did his speech and saw it on video, he realized that it was not as bad as he expected it to be. He did not experience the usual symptoms of speech anxiety, such as going blank while speaking, or speaking very softly and hearing chuckles

in the audience. Through the video, he discovered that he has actually improved in public speaking.

If no video of your speech is available yet, you can watch yourself speak formally in front of a mirror.

Preparing Yourself to Speak

Here are the basic rules of public speaking:

- Gain an understanding of who you are. Discover your own knowledge, capabilities, biases and potentials.
- Gain an understanding of your audience. Ponder upon what the audience wants to hear, what provokes their interest, what they believe in and what they want to know.
- Gain an understanding of the situation. Consider how the setting of the place and other unforeseen factors could affect the way you deliver your speech.
- Anticipate response from the audience. Make sure you have a clear purpose in mind so that the audience will respond in the way you want them to.
- Search for other sources of information. There might be more

materials available for you to make your speech more colorful.

- Come up with an argument that is reasonable. Make sure that the purpose of your speech is supported by clear and reliable data to formulate a sound argument.
- Add structure to your message. Organize your ideas so that the audience will not have a hard time following and digesting your ideas.
- Talk directly to your audience. Make sure the language you are using is one that your audience is comfortable with. Consider the occasion in delivering your speech.
- Gain self-confidence through practice. It is only through practice can you effectively present your speech. Master the flow of your presentation by repeatedly rehearsing it. That way, you can have command over your speech.

Becoming a Good Public Speaker

You have probably heard professors give boring and monotonous lectures. Dull presentations clearly point that a lot of people do not give

much importance to good speeches. These speakers may even be unaware that they are boring or ineffective because they lack knowledge about the basic characteristics of a good speech. Hence, to prevent this pitfall, you must remember some basic principles.

1. Respect the variety of the audience.

Good speakers do not look down on their audience. They consider the audience as equals. They know that the listeners have different backgrounds; hence communicating to each of them effectively would also entail different methods.

Before actually organizing a speech, you have to take into consideration your audience. Consider such things as age, gender, and cultural backgrounds. What do they know about your topic? What are their beliefs and values? By looking at these factors, you can choose a topic that suits them and style your speech in the way you feel would be most effective.

The whole experience can be more enjoyable if you prepare well for the individual and cultural differences of your audience. For example, will both male and female listeners appreciate the information you will prepare?

Would your Hispanic audience be comfortable with the language you're using as much as the Native Americans would? Would some of your comments offend the senior citizens while addressing the younger generation? The more you know about the audience, the better the chances that you will capture their attention and the more you can make your speech fit their situations.

They would feel comfortable listening to you and you would have a better interaction with them.

2. Know as much as possible about listening.

Successful communication does not only depend on good speakers; it depends on good listeners as well. It is a two-way process. If the speaker prepares a very polished speech, it would be useless if the audience does not listen. Know also how to “listen” to the gesticulated reactions of your audience. How comfortable or uneasy they look speaks volumes in terms of their interest or comprehension.

3. Organize carefully to improve understanding and recall.

The best presentations are those with interconnected ideas that flow smoothly from one idea to the next. It is effective because the listeners will be able to follow your arguments and will not get confused along the way.

Three parts of a well-organized speech:

- Introduction: Capture the attention of your audience, boost their interest, and give them a background of your topic.
- Body: Start with your main ideas. Keep them organized and support them with visual and verbal aids as much as possible.
- Conclusion: Provide a recap of all your points and join them together in a way that will create an impact on your listeners,

making them remember your points.

4. Use language effectively.

Keep it short. The simpler the language you use, the more powerful and interesting your speech will be. Too many words expressing a single idea will only confuse the audience and will make your argument weak. By keeping it short but accurate, your audience will remember what you will say and they will appreciate it.

5. Sound natural and enthusiastic.

The problem with first timers is they either memorize the speech verbatim or rely on too many flashcards for their notes. These can make the speaker sound unnatural. Talk normally to people so they would listen more to you. By being natural and enthusiastic, it would be like discussing a favorite subject with your friends. Basically, avoid putting up a “speaking disguise” when you talk. Treat it like an ordinary conversation with your usual companions.

6. Use high-quality visual aids.

A simple text containing key phrases and pictures is an example of a visual aid. Usually, visual aids (Chapter 10) can be anything that supplements your speech. It will greatly help your listeners to follow the flow of your ideas and to understand them at a faster rate. It also gives credibility to your speech, which makes you feel more relaxed and confident throughout. However, avoid making poor visuals because they become more

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