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Water Pollution Control Directorate
April, 1974

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WRITING AND DELIVERING
TECHNICAL SPEECHES

Prepared
by

A. R. Townshend

Technology Development Branch
Water Pollution Control Directorate
Environmental Protection Service

Report No. EPS6-WP-74-2

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ABSTRACT

This paper has been prepared to assist professional staff of Environment Canada in writing and delivering effective speeches to technical and lay audiences. The best features of four selected references covering such topics as "before writing", "writing the speech", "writing techniques", "before speaking", "performing" and "evaluation" have been combined in one document. As a further aid to the speech writer the appendix outlines "essentials of style and steps to effective writing".

For further suggestions on presentation techniques and audio-visual aids the reader is referred to "Guidelines for Effective Seminar Presentations" by Constance Woloschuk, EPS 7-WP-73-1, April 1973.

RÉSUMÉ

Ce document a été préparé à l'intention du personnel professionnel d'Environnement Canada lorsqu'il doit rédiger et prononcer des discours efficaces devant des auditoires de spécialistes et de profanes. Les principales caractéristiques des quatre références choisies, qui traitent de sujets comme "avant la rédaction", "la composition du discours", "les techniques de composition", "avant de prononcer le discours", "le rendement" et "l'évaluation", ont été fusionnées en un seul document. À titre d'aide supplémentaire au rédacteur de discours, l'annexe donne un aperçu de "l'essentiel du style et de la marche à suivre pour bien rédiger un texte".

Pour de plus amples suggestions sur les techniques de présentation et le matériel audio-visuel, le lecteur peut consulter l'ouvrage de Constance Woloschuk intitulé Guidelines for Effective Seminar Presentations, SPE 7-WP-73-1, avril 1973.

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WRITING AND DELIVERING TECHNICAL SPEECHES

1.0 INTRODUCTION

A speech is a literary composition designed to be heard as is music, not read as a report. Depending on its type, it is meant to persuade and motivate, entertain and amuse or stimulate and enrich the intellectual lives of the audience. To accomplish these objectives it is written in simple, graphic and specific language that avoids generalities. Finally, it is enriched with oral illustrations or audio-visual material.

Professional staff of Environment Canada, when delivering a speech, are often addressing a technical meeting where the aim is to communicate technical knowledge and to convince the audience of its validity and usefulness. On other occasions staff may be called upon to address public meetings of various kinds where the purpose is to inform, persuade and motivate laymen to respond to environmental challenges. This paper has been prepared to assist staff in writing and delivering speeches of a technical nature for the above purposes. The principles and procedures advocated may also be employed to prepare other kinds of speeches.

The first chapter discusses the steps to be followed before starting to write. The next chapter deals with speech writing. The third chapter suggests what the speaker should do before delivering his speech, including the preparation of audio-visual aids. The following chapter covers the presentation itself. In conclusion, some tips on evaluation of the whole assignment are offered for self-improvement. The appendix outlines the essentials of style and steps to effective writing as a further aid to the speech writer.

2.0 BEFORE WRITING

You, as a professional in Environment Canada, have been asked to speak to others about your job. In most cases, the audience is knowledgeable about your subject so you must be careful that your remarks are relevant and to the point. If perchance your audience has no strong feelings on the issues you intend to raise, you are free to assemble your arguments as forcefully as possible. If, on the other hand, you face a hostile audience, this is a situation for moderation. You must temper your words and create some sympathy for your cause before facing them fully with it.

2.1 Get to Know Your Audience

The first step then is to analyze the audience in advance of writing through observation, reading and asking questions. By studying the listener and preparing the message to suit his interests and needs you can put yourself into a more advantageous and effective position. In other words, the speech should be suitable for both the audience and the occasion.

2.2 Theme of the Speech

The next step is to hammer out the central statement or theme of the speech. Then you will know where you are going. Careful planning can assure a more understandable speech.

It is vital that you base your theme on a solid bedrock of factually correct information. Researching sources of information is an essential ingredient of any speech, but badly done can be a trap. The principal reason for this is an over-abundance of material. How do you dig out from the buried piles of information which may help you? The best method is to prepare a good working outline before you begin to collect a lot of information.

2.3 Working Outline

A thorough review of your approach and theme, together with an analysis of any random notes and research material, will help you to prepare your working outline. The outline tells you where you are going and it reminds you where you have been so that you don't repeat yourself. It is also a guarantee that you will proceed with your principal points in a logical manner.

The preparation of a good working outline for your speech is perhaps the most critical phase of the entire writing process. Think your entire speech through from beginning to end and list the major points you intend to stress. Here is a sample preliminary outline:

A. Sample outline for an informational speech

Title: "Water, Water Everywhere. . ."

Purposes: To inform a group of laymen about the need for new reservoirs for water storage;

To outline the difficulties involved in the development of the necessary reservoirs.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Quotation from "The Ancient Mariner"

1.2 Anecdote about research man who was seeking "a cheap substitute for water"

Transition: "Oh, there's plenty of the 'wet stuff' around. But the major problem is capturing it and conserving it in an orderly way."

2.0 The storage and distribution of our water supply

2.1 Reasons for reservoirs

1. Flooding rivers
2. Water supply for expanding population areas

2.2 Verification survey for a large project

2.3 Checks on rainfall and topography

1. Visuals to show typical surveys
2. "Take line" survey

3.0 The construction of a reservoir

3.1 Plans and purposes for the dam

1. To hold back the water
2. To create electricity
3. To distribute downstream water supply

3.2 The slow job of land acquisition

1. Setting up the real estate office for buying
2. Engineering office for calculating and co-ordinating
3. Property distribution

4.0 Conclusion: A plea for laymen to keep themselves informed about water storage

4.1 Industrial needs

4.2 The needs of national defense

If a problem-solution thought-pattern is required, then the following type of outline might be used:

B. Sample outline for a persuasion speech

- 1.0 Subject: Water pollution in Pennsylvania
- 2.0 General purpose: to persuade
- 3.0 Specific purpose: to persuade the members of the General Assembly, meeting in joint session, to amend the present strip mine law to include in addition to coal the mining of all minerals and to increase substantially the penalties for nonobservance of the law.
- 4.0 Subject sentence (main idea): Despite the good laws passed by the General Assembly in the past, our streams and rivers continue to be polluted by acid drainage from operating strip mines and can only be kept clear by means of legislation which will require mine operators, regardless of the minerals they extract, to take effective steps to prevent the drainage or else to pay fines high enough to reimburse the Commonwealth for doing so.

5.0 Statement of problem: Pennsylvania streams and rivers are currently polluted by mine acids.

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| (Illustration) | 5.1 Long stretches of the Allegheny River have such a high acid content that fish cannot live in the polluted water. |
| (Statistics) | 1. (Information taken from reliable sources) |
| (Testimony) | 2. |
| (Example) | 5.2 Some parts of Slippery Rock Creek are reported as unfit for swimming and boating. |
| (Anecdote) | 1. A camp site was abandoned. |
| (Personal Experience) | 2. My family and I no longer swim in Slippery Rock Creek. |

(Fact) 5.3 Stocking of some streams with fish has been abandoned because fish cannot live in their waters.

(Forms of support to be varied to suit information available and needs of speaker and listeners)

1. (Enumeration of such streams
2. together with supporting evidence.)
- 3.

(Statistics)

5.4 The estimated annual dollar loss to the Commonwealth has been computed at \$ _____

(Support designed to clarify for the listeners and to appeal to their interests)

1. (Supporting evidence
2. taken from bona fide and
3. respectable sources)

(Fact)

5.5 The current strip mine laws are ineffectual because they cover only the mining of coal and not other minerals, such as limestone.

(Support which will appeal to listeners because of familiar sources cited)

1. (Supporting evidence such as
2. quotes from existing laws, from
3. official state reports, and newspaper accounts)

(Fact)

5.6 The current strip mine laws are ineffectual because penalties on mine operators for non-compliance are not high enough to persuade them to take proper precautions.

1. (Support similar to that
2. under 5.5)
- 3.

6.0 Solution: To solve the problem of stream pollution in Pennsylvania the General Assembly needs to:

6.1 Amend the strip mine laws to cover the extraction of all minerals

1. (Support to show how this
2. will help solve the problem)
- 3.

6.2 Amend the strip mine law to make the penalties for nonobservers so high that strip mine operators will be forced to comply or else reimburse the state enough to pay for preventing acid damage.

1. (Support similar to that
2. under 6.1)
- 3.

At this point you may wish to choose the title of your speech which if possible, should arouse the curiosity and gain the attention of your audience. Similarly, the opening sentence(s) can be composed with the aim to gain attention, stimulate interest, and to orient listeners to the problem. Finally, to help you keep on track rough out the closing sentence(s) to fix the problem and the proposed solution in the minds of the listeners and to stimulate them to take the requested action.

You will notice that there are a number of advantages to constructing a detailed working outline. The speech breaks itself up into clearly defined and manageable sections. You know at all times where you are going, what point you are leading up to. In addition, if there are any holes in your research, the outline reveals them. This helps you focus on what further background material you need to bolster your speech.

A word of warning here. It is entirely possible that the evidence you turn up will not support your premise. If you run into this kind of problem, you should rethink your assumptions and perhaps moderate your views.

2.4 Researching The Speech

The second to last step before writing the speech is to gather all the supporting information you require. You may have already gathered some general information in order to get ideas and material for your outline.

For any speech you must have a great abundance of information, each item carefully selected and analyzed to suit your needs and those of your audience. Information may be acquired from your own experience, by observation, by interviewing those in a position to know what you do not know and from reading.

Do not depend on one source alone for your speech. You must expect to read four to five times as much as you can possibly use in your oral presentation.

Check sources against each other and decide which information is reliable and which author's biases are most honest. To avoid wasting time in discovering speech material, become familiar with the many types of indexes available in libraries. Thumb through as many books and reports as possible when searching for information. Sometimes a quick glance at the Table of Contents will give you a bird's-eye view of the material covered by the author.

It is suggested that you take notes while scanning for research material. Keep a complete biographical reference on every book or article surveyed, listing title, author, publisher, date, page number and library reference number. Some recommend that notes be taken on 4" x 6" or 5" x 8" filing cards. The notes are then available for (1) verbatim information, (2) paraphrase information, (3) summaries and (4) ideas.

Another method is to use a portable cassette recorder to dictate for rough typing useful sections of researched material. If a copying machine is available you may use it to reproduce the desired reference material.

Read from general to specific. It saves time to get as many general ideas as possible and then fill in the gaps. First, read general reference books. Trace broad outlines of the problem on which you are working. These larger over views may help you further formulate the organization of your material. They may also furnish you with additional sources to assist in your research.

Once you have gathered your material your final act before beginning to write should be to check the outline, step by step.

3.0 WRITING THE SPEECH

When you have completed your research, you are ready to write your speech. You have in hand your initial information, also possibly the experiences of others through interviews and conferences, new information taken from books, reports, newspapers, technical journals and other publications. You have verified that your sources are qualified, dependable and current. Knowing the facts gives you confidence to proceed.

Think again of your audience and try to envision what will stimulate them, create the proper mental images for them, and make them realize the significance of your message. Then try to project your message and communicate your facts in keeping with what will sharpen their mental images, and vivify their impressions of what you are saying.

When writing a speech or paper for oral delivery, you must keep one basic idea constantly in mind: The purpose is to write a manuscript that must be heard and understood by listeners the first time. You must construct sentences that can be followed and comprehended easily by listeners.

A phrase that looks perfectly innocent on paper can give quite the opposite impression when spoken out loud. Words can change. Watch your language carefully at all times. Words may have one meaning to you and an entirely different meaning to someone else.

You may feel strongly about a subject and you have a responsibility to communicate your feelings and persuade them that you are right. Don't bully them. They will resent it. Show them the light; don't blind them with it.

3.1 Speech Title

It is time to give further thought to the title of the talk. A well selected title can help prepare the audience to wish to listen. As suggested previously, attractive titles can be found for technical speeches which arouse listener interest.

3.2 The Introduction

The first few sentences that you utter must get the attention of your audience. If you do not capture them in the beginning, you may never get their ears. A dry, uninteresting beginning may cause a considerable amount of mental drifting on the part of the audience, be it one person or many.

Some speakers use humour as an introduction because it is universally appealing. The humour should be related to the talk, however. Otherwise, the audience may recognize that the joke was a ruse to gain their attention. One may also make a direct reference to the audience; for example, the speaker might say, "I know you fellows are probably bored, and you are thinking to yourselves, "Oh Lord, another talk about accidents in a machine shop, but I am telling you, men, if you yawn today, you may be a mighty sleepy corpse tomorrow."

Mental imagery may be used. This means the use of vivid and unusual mental pictures in the first sentence. Visual aids may be used at the opening effectively. One might even consider using sound effects. Another recommends using striking statements, perhaps containing some statistics or colourful statement or something provocative. The last suggestion recommends starting with an anecdote that relates you either to your subject or to your audience.

3.3 Transitional Sentences and Paragraphs

There should be a smooth transition from the Introduction to the Body of the talk. In this section, you may put forward ideas as to why the listener should listen to what you have to say. In other words, you have to show your audience that you have something worthwhile for them to listen to. The key often is to use a word from the last sentence and use it in the next one. This is known as the "chain" method, linking key words or phrases from one sentence or paragraph to the next.

3.4 The Body

The next part of the speech is the Body. At this stage the example is the strong ally of the speech writer. The illustration, a specific instance, the representative sample, the typical incident, are major examples to understanding for some people.

The talk should be as concrete as possible. You must highlight the major features so they stand apart from the details. Then each main point can be seen in relation to its supporting material. This makes the pattern more meaningful.

3.5 The Climax

Good speeches have a climax. The climax is what should stay with an audience long after it has forgotten your initial remarks. Unfortunately, too many speeches return in the end to their original statement. A good, rousing climax is never tacked onto the end of a speech as an afterthought. Know what your climax is going to be right from the beginning and work up to it. It is the target, the goal of your speech and everything that precedes it should contribute to its strength.

3.6 The Ending

The last thing you say in the conclusion is as important as the first thing you say. Few people seem to realize this fact, and the end of many communications is very often the weakest, vaguest, most uninspiring part.

The ending is simply an extension of the climax, a statement of how the action you have urged will affect the well-being of your audience or the course of history, depending upon how ambitious your speech has been. Here's an example. "And if we fully understand the problem and take the trouble to do something about it, I think you will find your own lives a little richer and our town a more pleasant place to live in. Thank you."

4.0 SPEECH WRITING TECHNIQUES

The last chapter presented a scheme for tying your ideas together. The next step is to find some basic key which will act as the relating instrument for the thought processes of your listener. This chapter gives a number of ways to accomplish this. You may use all of them or only those which seem most beneficial for the occasion.

The appendix contains a guide on "Essentials of Style and Steps to Effective Writing" to further assist the speech writer.

4.1 Preview the Major Points

You may begin by presenting all of the main points orally or visually. For example, "The basic movements involved in manipulating a television camera in studio reproduction may be broken down into four steps. I shall begin by discussing number one."

4.2 Repeat the Central Theme

The central idea may be highlighted by repeating it as each new point is brought up. This helps to focus the listener's mind on the main point of the talk, and serves to emphasize the relationship of each new point to the central idea.

4.3 Summary

A summary is a good device for keeping the main idea separate and distinct. The listener must know when you are through discussing one step and are passing on to explain the text. A summary acts as a boundary line between main ideas and serves to highlight and round them off.

4.4 Quotations

Quotations are all right if used sparingly but don't make the mistake of including too many in your talk. They do not take the place of original thought. Still another crutch is the habit of quoting excessively from various publications. Say it with your own words.

4.5 Stories and Jokes

Stories are suitable for clarifying and emphasizing a point as well as for arousing interest. They add a personal and dramatic touch. Stories are frequently used to obtain attention in the introduction and to add emphasis to the conclusion. In choosing a story, you must test its quality and suitability. "Is the story suitable to the background and experience of the audience? Are the characters introduced and identified? Does the plot line have a rising curve of interest?"

You must remember that the ability to tell a good joke is a rare quality, so don't strain for humour. If you can do it easily and well your audience will appreciate it. If you are awkward and unsure of yourself, the result will be embarrassment for all concerned.

4.6 Statistics

Audiences are impressed by statistics but there are inherent dangers in their use. Don't include more statistics than the audiences can comprehend by listening. Don't make statistics too complex. Use round numbers and speak in percentages. Give the audience some standard of comparison for judging the significance of the statistics and what they mean. Help your audience to visualize the statistics. Use visual aids. The most successful speaker is the one who makes a reasonable amount of information clear, vivid and significant in the amount of time available to him.

4.7 Highlight the Main Points with Questions

A significant idea can be emphasized if you stop and ask for questions from the audience. The questions will serve to concentrate attention on the point and get the audience to think more thoroughly about it. Sometimes these questions are rhetorical; that is, you ask them only to emphasize the obvious answer.

4.8 Evaluating Statements

You may state that a factor is important if you support the assertion with reasons. This simple method is often overlooked by instructors who take it for granted that the listeners will realize the essentiality of a point without being told.

4.9 Definitions

Many communications are beamed at lay groups who are not familiar with technical terms and shop talk. The following types of words generally require definition:

1. Abstract words;
2. Technical terms;
3. Words used in any specialized activity;
4. Slang used by provincial groups, or age groups or professional groups;
5. Archaic terms which are now outmoded and no longer in general use and, finally ---
6. Foreign or unique terms.

4.10 Examples

The example is one of the best ways to clarify and emphasize a point. Typical incidents, representative cases, and simple problems are concrete aids to clarity. Examples may be used in the content of a speech as follows:

1. To serve as sample problems when a solution or a method of procedure is being explained;
2. To show how a rule or principle may be applied in a specific case;
3. To show cause and effect relationships;
4. To explain the application of theory to practice;
5. To support a recommended course of action;
6. To show how something has worked in the past;
7. To show how certain mistakes, discrepancies, or wrong methods can affect the present situation.

4.11 Comparisons, Contrasts, & Analogies

A cardinal rule in making information clear is to explain the unfamiliar in terms of the familiar. Comparisons, contrasts and analogies are good devices for implementing this rule.

Comparisons to be effective, should meet certain requirements such as ---

1. The items compared should be similar enough to project logical likenesses;
2. The item to be used as the vehicle of comparison should be familiar to the audience.

Contrasts emphasize differences, rather than likenesses. Analogies are extended comparisons. By the use of some device or process which is known to the audience, a new idea can be explained in terms of the familiar.

5.0 BEFORE SPEAKING

Before the engagement, it is necessary to prepare for the presentation by making audio-visual aids, preparing notes if required, and practicing the speech itself.

5.1 Characteristics of Effective Visual Aids

To be effective a visual aid must have the following qualities. Otherwise, the visual aids will be ineffective and damaging to the presentation.

- 5.1.1 Visibility - A visual aid has not reached its maximum effectiveness until it is seen by every member of the audience. Chalk marks on a board need to be broad and heavy. Charts must be high enough and at the right angle to permit viewing. Glossy pictures need carefully placed light to prevent glaring. Models must not be hidden by the speaker's hands. To test visibility try viewing exhibits from the listener's seat before attempting to use them.
- 5.1.2 Accuracy - Draw diagrams to scale. Let graphs represent figures or trends without exaggeration. Make drawings look like what they are meant to represent.
- 5.1.3 Clarity - Write or print clearly. Focus projector to prevent fuzziness at edges of picture. Place labels near items they describe.
- 5.1.4 Neatness - Wash chalk board before writing on it. Leave suitable margins at sides, top and bottom of board or paper. Avoid marking over errors. Make clean erasures. Keep equipment looking presentable. Replace frayed cords and torn screens.
- 5.1.5 Efficiency - Prepare exhibits in advance. Keep visual aids hidden until ready for use - - cover over chalk board drawings, drapes over models. Set up projectors and screen, test and focus them before hand.

Put exhibits out of sight after use but wait until after the speech is finished before repacking or dismantling them. Test all of your requirements in advance to learn if electric outlets are useable, if tape will hold exhibits on the wall, if easel will stand where needed, if a pointer can be found quickly at hand, if signals for projectionist are working.

- 5.1.6 Effectiveness - Useful visual aids are those which amplify and clarify meaning. If they merely attract attention to themselves, they detract from your meaning.

5.2 Types of Visual Aids

Visual aids attract the attention of the audience. Pictures can make the abstract description of an experience more concrete. They facilitate retention of information and images. Frequently, a visual list of major points is an excellent memory aid, not only to the audience but to the speaker, who can dispense with awkward cards, outline or manuscripts, while delivering his speech.

- 5.2.1 The Chalkboard - The chalkboard may be used effectively if the following steps are taken.

Plan your board work ahead of time. Check equipment in advance. Keep the work simple and legible. Try to talk about material on the board without turning too far away from the audience. If it takes more than a few seconds to make your sketch, it is advisable to put it on before the speech starts. Use a pointer when indicating important features. The pointer also allows you to stand clear while talking.

5.2.2 The Flip Chart - The flip chart is a pad of inexpensive paper (usually 30 x 40 inches) mounted on an easel. It is less convenient for erasing material, but eliminates chalk dust. The marking pen colours are brighter and more easily distinguished. Since the pages are flipped easily, drawings may be prepared in advance.

Certain material may be drawn or written on the pages and covered by sheets of paper attached by adhesive tape. As a certain point is made the speaker may strip off the appropriate tape.

5.2.3 Charts and Graphs - Charts and graphs are vital for presentation of technical data. Be certain the material is helpful or necessary. Keep the speech purpose in mind when considering the types of charts you will use. Types of charts include the organization chart and flow diagrams.

5.2.4 Slide Projector - The important thing is that you practice with your assistant or by yourself to assure the smooth articulation of the slides with the talk. When you wish to talk without displaying a picture, you may use a completely exposed film as a blank. This will keep the screen dark and enable you to continue your talk without turning off the machine. Some rooms may be arranged so that the front of the room where the screen is located is darkened and the rest is sufficiently lighted to allow for note taking.

5.2.5 The Overhead Projector - The projector casts an image over your head on the screen behind you. Since the image is projected over the shoulder, you face your audience at all times. You can provide excellent screen visibility without darkening the room or impairing ventilation.

With your eyes in full view, you can observe reactions and adjust your program to meet the response of the viewers. You can set your own pace and extemporize as you wish, commenting before, during and after projection of a slide. You can alter the sequence of the projectuals

(visuals on transparent plastic) or return to a previously shown projectural without aid from an assistant.

5.2.6 Preparing Your Own Material - Visual presentations should possess unity in that they show one basic idea at a time; simplicity, because the trivial are eliminated; organization, in that they are arranged for rapid perception and comprehension; visibility, since very bit of information is easily seen by the most distant viewer.

5.3 Using Prepared Notes

If you decide to present your talk using prepared notes, be sure they are easy to read. Type or print plainly in capital letters and triple space the lines so that it is easy to find any place in the notes at a glance. Make the notes neat with no markings, strike-overs, or wandering arrows. Don't create stumbling blocks. Stories should be told not read or memorized. It is generally a good idea to write out the punch line of a joke, because if you forget it you are lost. Notes on main points should not be too detailed. They should contain just enough written symbols to stimulate your memory and to keep you on track. Statistics and quotations should be written out completely and read to the audience. Material to be read should be practiced aloud several times underlining the key words and the use of marks to indicate pauses will be helpful to you.

5.4 Rehearsal

Now that your notes are in order, the visual aids ready for use, you can begin your rehearsal. The extemporaneous method of delivery is preferred in most situations. Check your watch before you begin so that you can check on the time required for various parts of the speech.

The best procedure in practising the speech is to reproduce as realistically as possible the speech situation to be faced. If you will use blackboard drawings, maps or slides, be sure to include operation of these visual aids during the practice period. If you are acquainted with the room to be used for the conference, it will be easier to plan ahead how to handle the visual aids.

Talk aloud for the entire speech each time you practice. You may stumble and leave out some parts the first time, but you should proceed through to the end. If you have any doubt about the use of a word or pronunciation, consult a dictionary. Don't make changes at the last minute, they may cause you trouble if you have not had time to practice them.

Practice with your notes until you are virtually free from them so that you can speak with only occasional glances at them. This leaves your eyes free to establish good contact with the audience.

5.5 Final Checklist

Early in the week before your engagement, it is a good idea to make a final checklist, covering all the points that might otherwise escape your attention. This list should include:

1. The Hall:
 - a. Where will you be seated?
 - b. Where will you speak?
 - c. Will there be a lectern?
 - d. How big is the hall?
 - e. How large an audience is expected?
 - f. Will there be a microphone?
 - g. If so, what type?

2. The People:

- a. Who is the meeting chairman?
- b. Who will introduce you?
- c. Who are your fellow dais guests?
- d. Who will be sitting next to you during dinner?
- e. Must you acknowledge anyone in the opening of your remarks?

3. Your Props:

- a. Is your audio-visual equipment in working order?
- b. Can you operate it blindfolded?
- c. Have you rehearsed with your assistant?
- d. Are your visual aids clear?
- e. Do they really help your speech?

4. Your Speech:

- a. Have you rehearsed it?
- b. Have you rehearsed it standing up?
- c. Have you experimented with different ways of reading it?
- d. Have you rehearsed it in front of someone?
- e. In front of a mirror?
- f. With concentration?
- g. Have you heard your own voice on tape?
- h. Have you had it typed to your satisfaction?

5. Your Arrival:

- a. Are you properly dressed?
- b. Where do you go?
- c. What time are you expected?
- d. Whom do you ask for?

If you are entirely happy with the answers to all of these questions, you can leave for your speaking engagement secure in the knowledge that you have almost nothing left to worry about as you make your debut in public.

6.0 PERFORMING

In presenting your speech there are a number of external factors to be considered for an effective delivery. If you plan to read your speech, then the manuscript should be specially prepared and oral reading skills developed. This chapter then, provides self-help for better performances.

6.1 Mannerisms

Mannerisms should be eliminated as an audience tends to pay more attention to them than to what you are saying. Try to express as many sides of your personality as your speech warrants. Certainly one of the more attractive qualities that will appeal to most audiences is that of sincerity. This is done by giving a straight-forward delivery when the content of your speech seems to require it.

A careful and deliberate style has certain advantages, but an audience will appreciate it if you seem truly involved with your subject. A good speech demands an emotional response, but you are not going to get it with a wooden delivery. Allow your natural enthusiasm for the subject to take over. Transmit a sense of excitement to those who have come to listen.

Audiences also appreciate tact. It won't do to "steamroller" points of view that may differ from theirs. It is curious fact that most people cheer for the underdog. If you sneer at the opposition and belittle everything they do, you may find that you have lost sympathy for your own cause.

You can even step out from behind the podium as a change of pace. You can shrug your shoulders, throw up your arms, and nod your head, if the urge strikes you. In private conversation, we don't sit and talk to each other like robots. We use the movement of our bodies to help us make our points and so should all speakers. But it is important to control movement. The speaker should be aware of his body movements and how to control them, if necessary.

6.2 Posture

When talking to a group you should be at ease. At least you should convey this impression to your audience. It is wise to stand tall with shoulders upward and chin parallel with the floor. This does not mean the military posture of attention. Most people agree that one should stand with feet 8 to 10 inches apart with one foot slightly behind the other one - this makes one look at ease.

Don't seem glued to the floor. You may move about but stay erect. Don't slump or lean. Don't prop yourself up on a table, lectern, chair or wall.

6.3 Facial Expressions

Facial expressions also can do grievous harm to the relationship between the speaker and his audience. People soon tire of an expressionless face. This is equally true in the case of a public speaker. Some speakers don't seem to realize it but there is no law that says you can't smile at your audience, or frown, or look angry, or express encouragement. The face should be animated and alive and not stare out like a dead fish. When you rehearse your speech at home, practice it with facial expressions and emphasize and illustrate the points that you are making. Your performance will be much more effective if you do.

6.4 Your Hands

What does a speaker do with his hands? Try to keep your hands at your sides when you begin. Show the audience that you can keep them at your sides if you desire. Then begin to use your hands for expression.

If you are nervous, limit yourself to four basic positions: Both hands on the lectern; right hand on the lectern, left hand down; reverse this position; finally, both hands at your sides. This will give sufficient variations so that the audience won't get the impression that you are locked immobile into place. But, really, hand movements are extremely effective and you should practice them. Shake your fist at your imaginary audience, slice the air with wide sweeping motions.

A definite movement of the hand and arm will emphasize certain words or phrases. Bending forward or taking a step towards the audience adds importance to an idea. A clenched fist is a strong gesture of emphasis. It is reserved for the strongest feelings only and be used with great effectiveness.

6.6 Your Speaking Voice

Many audiences are impressed not only by what a speaker says but by the tonal qualities of his voice. The first task is to study your own voice by listening to tape recordings until you are used to hearing your particular tone and style. It takes a lot of practice to break habits which have been formed over many years.

To make normal speech sounds, the speaker must first inhale. The sounds are amplified or resonated in the cavities of the mouth, throat, and nasal passages. As indicated before, stand straight and tall so that your full lung capacity may be utilized.

When you begin to speak, be sure you have a good supply of air in your lungs. Inhale slowly when you first look at the audience and breathe frequently during speaking. Break up your speech into small segments so that you don't run completely out of air before you take the next breath. A speaker talks in breath-group phrases instead of sentences.

It is better to err on the side of being too loud than to speak with a weak voice. If electronic equipment is used, test the equipment before you begin. Prestige is lost if the speaker touches the microphone and asks the audience whether they can hear him.

Those voices that grate on our nerves we instinctively try to avoid. One of the most common irritants is the high-pitched voice. This comes about because the vocal cords are not relaxed. To correct this fault, consciously relax your vocal cords and force your voice down to a lower pitch. If you expect or hope to do much public speaking, you should practice these exercises regularly. In time, they will become second nature.

Very often speakers who produce a thin sound also have the bad habit of speaking too fast. Their vocal cords are tense because most of the muscles of their body are equally tight. The result of this is a staccato machine-gun-like delivery. Speaking fast is only right if your audience can still understand you. Speaking stiffly is another common fault to be overcome.

The effects of nervousness on the speaking voice and steps that you can take to overcome them are further developed in Section 6.9.

6.6 Eye Contact

The audience should not be a blur of faces to the speaker. Select as many individuals as you can with whom to establish a firm eye contact so that as a speaker, you can observe their facial reactions for signs of inattention. Do not look over the heads of your audience. See the faces in front of you. You should not be so preoccupied with your notes that you are constantly looking downwards.

6.7 Preparing the Manuscript

It should be typed and triple spaced. Wide spaces between the lines help you to keep your place in the text and to find your place quickly and easily when your eyes leave the manuscript for the purpose of establishing eye contact with the audience, answering questions, or manipulating visual aids.

Typewriters with especially large type should be used by speakers who are near-sighted and have trouble reading when the manuscript is placed on a rostrum. It is disconcerting for the audience to watch a speaker who squints or crouches over the paper while reading.

A manuscript should be neat and clean with no mark-outs or strike-outs. If a last minute word change or correction must be made, it should be typed. All pages should be numbered in a consistent fashion. Sentences should be completed on each page so that the reader will not have to turn the page in the middle of a sentence.

Underlining may be used to indicate emphasis. Quotation marks remind the reader that the word or phrase is being used in a special sense. Cue indicators should be clearly marked in the manuscript if visual aids are being used with the paper. Numbers should be spelled out for easy reading. It is difficult to separate the billions and millions when reading before an audience.

6.8 Reading the Manuscript

The fact that the manuscript is before the speaker presents an obstacle to communication because the manuscript gets between the speaker and his audience. This can be overcome by developing skills in oral reading.

The oral reader must be concerned with the audience's reception of information. -- "Can the listener hear? Does he understand?" and like questions.

Most inexperienced oral readers read too rapidly. Some suggestions for pausing are:

- (1) pause briefly before and after key words;
- (2) pause between paragraphs;
- (3) pause after a complex thought or sentence;
- (4) pause before and after quoted material;
- (5) pause between the main divisions of the presentation;
- (6) pause before any abrupt change in thought.

Resist the temptation to hide behind a manuscript. It is the personality, feeling of purposefulness of the reader that communicates. No matter how well written the manuscript may be, it's a dead thing until the reader brings it to life. The manuscript is the accessory device to assist the reader in ease and precision of communication. The manuscript cannot speak for itself.

Be sure you know the correct pronunciation of all words. Don't guess. If you are not sure of the pronunciation, consult a dictionary or an authority on the subject of the speech. Say aloud, repeatedly, all difficult words until the pronunciation is smooth and flawless.

Some sentences may end in a slightly high-rising inflection but others should end in a sharp downward inflection. This adds a note of finality to the particular thought. Sudden changes of pitch are appropriate if they add interest to the words. Try to achieve similar flexibility with loud and soft, fast and slow delivery. Vocal variety is the best antidote for monotony.

Pausing between separate words in a phrase is a device for showing relative importance. Pauses between sentences or ideas have valuable effects. The pause allows the listener to consider, anticipate, and classify information being received. A pause seldom seems as long to the audience as it does to the speaker.

Don't be too glib. Concentrate on what you are saying. It is worthwhile noting that nearly everyone who performs in public, whether he is an actor or professional ballplayer, claims that the ability to concentrate is the difference between success and failure. Think about what you are saying as you say it. The sentence you are reading is not merely a collection of sounds, it is an idea expressed in a certain way with certain shades of feeling. Concentrate on the meaning of your words and think hard about the most effective way to communicate that meaning to the audience.

6.9 Nervousness

There is nothing more disconcerting to the audience than to listen to a speaker who appears to be uncomfortable on the platform. Then the audience pays so much attention to the hapless performer that they neglect the message.

An audience feels secure when it is in the hands of a poised and assured speaker. It will settle back and pay attention to what he is saying because it does not need to concern itself with the speaker's frame of mind.

When you speak in public, for a moment in time you are alone and the focus of attention. The ideas, the method of presentation and the conclusion are all your responsibility. You cannot hide behind a group, a committee, or a paper wall of inter-office correspondence.

It is a terribly lonely feeling, in a sense. It's unreasonable, therefore, to expect any speaker to suppress his fears completely. There are too many good reasons for them to exist.

Stage fright tends to lead to an unnaturally thin and shaky voice. It contributes to body tension. It causes shortness of breath and has a disastrous effect on the bladder. To pretend these are assets is foolish.

There is simply no way to learn to "use fear productively" but, you can take action against the effects however, by doing a few exercises. Before speaking, fill your lungs and diaphragm with as much air as you can hold. Let the air escape slowly and repeat this several times. You will find that this will help steady your nerves and shortness of breath will not be a major problem when you start to speak. At the same time, stretch the shoulder, chest and back muscles. You can do this discreetly in your seat and it will do much to relax you. Beyond that there is only one word of comfort. Stage fright almost never remains with you once you are safely launched into speech. It's most awful moments occur just before you rise. As soon as you are past the first page of your text and are fully warmed to your subject, your nervousness will vanish.

Another pair of faults that often go hand in hand are monotony and slowness of delivery. People react differently to tension and, for some, the response is to try to hold down the mounting pressure by speaking with a great deal of deliberation, keeping their voice as steady as they can. The result, however, can drive an audience to distraction. We have all had the experience of listening to a speaker whose voice does not vary in its inflection, and who separates each word as if they were all precious jewels to be placed before us, one by one. If you are in habit of speaking fast, don't compensate by slowing your delivery to a crawl. Find a happy compromise between the two.

6.10 Reading the Conclusion

Concentrate on the conclusion during the practice period. Many readers fail at this point simply because they are tired of practising. The conclusion is very important because it contains the recapitulation of essential points, a repetition of the central theme and the emphasis for vital solutions. You can't afford to be weak at this point in your delivery. Pause when you reach the conclusion to renew your vocal energy, and to glance ahead for a quick scanning to see the structure of the conclusion. Then proceed emphatically and definitely, planning each idea with firmness and conviction. If you practice in this manner, there is a good chance that you will read your conclusion with effectiveness during the presentation before the audience.

7.0 EVALUATION

Soon after giving your speech you should take some time to evaluate your overall performance. You should ask yourself the following questions:

1. From the audience response could you measure the extent to which its members grasped your message and were motivated by it?
2. Were your audio visuals clear to all and was their presentation without fault? Did they take more time to present than you thought? Did they help you to depart from your manuscript or were they a hinderance?
3. Was the room ideally arranged for your presentation or did something annoy you such as the microphone? Were there a lot of people at the back of the room because it was too narrow for the size of the audience?
4. Did your presentation run too long? Was there enough time for audience participation following your speech? Did you delete any part of your speech because you thought it was not appropriate, was not being grasped by the audience, or was too long?

After assessing your performance on the day of your speech you may wish to consider evaluating your efforts in preparing it.

1. Was the "title" you were given or you selected suitable for the audience?
2. Had you used enough humour, examples, comparisons and contrasts to attract the interest of the audience?
3. Was too much time spent on research and not enough on writing and polishing?
4. Finally did you practice your talk along with your visual aids well enough before hand?

8.0 SUMMATION

In summary you should remember that speeches must be written in an oral style. Sentences should be shorter, technical words must be translated and illustrative material will make instant comprehension easier.

Special attention must be given to the preparation of the manuscript. Large type, few words to a line, short paragraphs, and underlining for emphasis can enable you to seem to be speaking extemporaneously.

Once the manuscript is ready, much rehearsal is needed to enable you to appear to be speaking without reading. Complete familiarity with the manuscript's contents will allow you to concentrate on your listeners and their understanding.

Finally, you must keep reminding yourself that you are speaking to communicate a message to your audience.

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APPENDIX

ESSENTIALS OF STYLE & STEPS TO EFFECTIVE WRITING

A genuine style is the expression of your mind. Your personality will reflect itself through the way in which you handle your subject. Style is only for those who believe in what they write.

The prime essentials of good style are considered to be clarity, conciseness, simplicity and individuality. An explanation of those terms with examples is given in the following sections.

9.1 Clarity.

There is a personal benefit in writing clearly. The more clearly you write the more clearly your audience will understand what you are writing about.

Some specific advice can be given for the detailed task of phrasing thoughts clearly. You should be exact in sentence structure. This may mean writing short sentences. It is better to use a direct statement in the active voice in most instances. Third, you should use concrete rather than abstract words and phrases. The faulty arrangement of words and reference of pronouns may be misleading or obscure the meaning. Words and expressions may be unclear not because they are technical or polysyllabic, but because they can mean more than one thing to the listener.

Finally, punctuation is an important aid to clarity. If you want to punctuate lightly, you should construct your sentences so that few commas are required. This is a worthwhile goal because a clear and flowing style that needs few commas is ideal for most speeches.

9.2 Conciseness

For the most part conciseness is achieved by omitting unnecessary details, condensing unimportant ideas to their essentials, and eliminating unnecessary words.

Too many details are as undesirable as too few. At times too much space is taken up with an explanation of necessary but comparatively unimportant ideas. You should treat such details as briefly as possible.

Most speeches are full of dead phrases. Dead phrases simply take up time. They do not advance the argument. Speakers use them largely as a crutch to get from one point to another. Take care to do away with any dead wood in your talk. Do not use two or three words when one will do. This practice is most clearly seen in so called "business-like" phrases, such as those in the left hand column below:

<u>Wordy</u>	<u>Concise</u>
During the course of	During
In the event that	If

Round-about prepositional phrases should not be used where single words would serve. A number of examples of these phrases are given in the two columns below:

In regard to (about, concerning)	By means of (with, by)
With regard to (about, concerning)	In case of (if, in)
In relation to (toward, to)	In the matter of (in)
In connection with (of, in, on)	In the amount of (for)
On the part of (for, among)	For the purpose of (for)
In view of (because, since)	In the majority of instances (usually)
In event of (if, to)	In a number of cases (some)
On behalf of (for)	On a few occasions (occasionally)
In accordance with (with, by)	In the time of (during)
In order to (to)	The great majority of (for most)
On the basis of (by)	For the reason that (since, because)
In addition (besides, also)	For this reason (so)

Though required occasionally, the "it is" construction also invites verbosity. For example, "it is apparent that" may be replaced by "for apparently". Similarly "it is admitted that" may be replaced by "for admittedly".

9.3 Simplicity

Simplicity is most difficult to analyse. In its broader aspects simplicity has its source in clear thinking. The writer who presents his ideas in the form of parable and symbol, using commonplace words, is avoiding more showy qualities in an effort to make his meanings clear.

It is not easy to write simply; in fact it is more difficult to be simple than to be complex. You may achieve relatively simple style by using short sentences and short paragraphs; the short word to the long; the Saxon word to the Roman; active verbs; concrete nouns; and few adjectives; and finally direct statement and the active voice. The right verb can pump new life into a tired sentence. Further, it can convey a graphic image from what you are trying to say. Learning to use more interesting verbs is largely a matter of habit. People fall back on the same old familiar words because they never take the trouble to experiment. As an exercise, the next time you read an article, pay particular attention to the verbs.

In situations requiring special tact, the experienced speaker may use the passive voice because the active is too blunt.

9.4 Individuality

You achieve individuality in writing a speech by expressing yourself in somewhat the same language you would use if you were conversing with a member of the audience. In essence, individuality requires the use of fresh expressions, every day words, phrases, and personal pronouns.

Good writers take care to avoid stale expressions.

Although tact may occasionally require an indirect approach, individuality is usually increased by liberal use of the personal pronouns "we", "you", and "I". At times a writer, either through false modesty or the mistaken belief that he is avoiding personal responsibility, may write in such an impersonalized style as "it is believed" instead of "I believe" or "it should be appreciated" instead of "we should appreciate".

Understandably, you wish to avoid a succession of "I's" or "We's". However, unless you have a sound reason for doing otherwise you should use personal pronouns when they are appropriate. In this way, you help to make your speech interesting, direct and personal.

9.5 Checklist For a Better Style

Writing in a style that is natural and easy is perhaps the most helpful advice anyone can give. But as you approach the task of composition, bear in mind the following checklist. If it sounds right when you say it out loud, then it is right.

1. Write in Specifics
 - learn to think, speak and write in specific, concrete terms
 - observe the use of specifics by good writers
2. Use Nouns and Verbs
 - use objectives or adverbs only when they add specific meanings to already specific nouns or verbs
 - seek out the word that says exactly what you mean
3. Sort Out Your Ideas
 - sort out important ideas in your writing and express them in principal clauses
 - put subordinate ideas in subordinate clauses and phrases

4. Use Connectives Carefully

- seek the exact connective for your purpose
- make the topic sentence the logical centre of ideas in a paragraph
- make clear the relationship of each sentence with the preceding sentence or with the topic sentence of the paragraph

5. Use Positive, Active Verbs

- search for the most descriptive verb
- weed out weak negatives
- always use the active voice except when the passive voice will give a desired special emphasis
- avoid hiding the subject of a sentence behind a "there is" construction
- the vivid verb: search for the most descriptive verb.
Practice using different verbs

6. Place a Modifier Near the Word it Modifies

- place modifiers so that what they modify is instantly recognizable

7. Make Clear the Reference of Pronouns

- always give a pronoun a clear, unmistakable antecedent
- use an indefinite only when its reference is clear

8. Weed Out Cliches and Unnecessary Words

- think while you write
- revise relentlessly to weed out cliches and unnecessary words
- always use the simple word

9. Use Verb Forms Correctly

- use verb forms that say what you mean and are grammatically correct

10. The Dead Phrase

- guard against sentences that do nothing to advance your thesis
- eliminate dead patches in your prose

11. Common Word Traps

- too many speeches fall into ruts. Break some fresh ground.

12. Use Commas in the Right Places

- use commas to clarify the meaning of your sentences by separating elements in a series or elements within a sentence.

13. Learn the Right Word and Use It

- take a little trouble to find the most descriptive word, the colourful phrase. Don't be a lazy writer. Avoid the humdrum and the too familiar.
- is there a more interesting and graphic way to express yourself? Experiment. Have a little fun.
- always be sure of the meanings of words
- always conform to good usage

14. The Tired Cliche

- avoid the familiar, the well-worn phrase. Your audience will be grateful.

15. Redundancies

- keep a sharp lookout for them. They creep in because you allow yourself to become careless. And while you're about it, don't open yourself to ridicule with a meaningless phrase.

16. The Big Word

- always use the simple word. You don't "employ" a hammer. You "use" it.

17. Jargon

- a sure way to puzzle and alienate your audience

18. Read Your Work Aloud

- have someone read to you, or read aloud yourself everything you write

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