

Chapter 1

Knowing Your People, Places and Things

Suggested Lecture Notes

You need to Prepare for the People

To Whom am I speaking?

Demographics:

- Age
- Race
- Cultural Background
- Gender
- Work or group affiliation
- Economic class
- Educational level

Don't know the demographics?

- Ask the person who invited you to speak to tell you the audience demographics and what to expect
- Ask someone who has already been a speaker for that audience demographic
- If the audience members belong to a specific organization, research that organization and its member affiliation
- If there is time and the audience is not too large, you can create a questionnaire

You need to Prepare for the Places and Time

Where is the presentation?

Take into account where the presentation is located:

Size of the town, United States or a different country, type of room, arrangement of the room

Adjust:

The way you speak, where you stand, and the length of the presentation based on the location

When is the presentation?

Three times to examine:

1. Time limit for the presentation
 - Audience interaction
 - Question and answer period (forum)
 - Know the time limitations before you present and adhere to the limits set forth
2. Time of day
 - Crucial in determining the topic and style of delivery
 - Difference between morning, afternoon, and evening presentations
3. Time of year
 - Affects location comfort thus affecting the content and length of presentation

You need to Prepare for the Things

Four Components of Your Personal Brand

Appearance:

Your body language, clothing attire and overall posture

- Do you wear a signature color (that is not distracting)?
- Does your posture convey confidence and poise?
- Do you have a specific gesture that conveys confidence and not nervousness?
- Try to notice your body movements...are any movements engaging?

Personality:

Your behavior, communication skills and attitudes toward people

- What are your best communication skills?
- What do others say about your best communication skills?
- Are you well-versed in several areas?
- Do you have a healthy sense of humor?

Competencies:

Your special skills fulfilling task requirements

- Are you a trained leader?
- Are your technology skills outstanding?
- Does your work history prove you adapt well to change?
- Do you have special licenses that need to be highlighted?

Differentiation:

What separates you from others and how you create value for your market

- What makes you original?
- Are you authentic and convey what you love?
- Do you showcase your strengths?
- Are you prepared to prove how you bring value to the lives of those you meet?

Relax Your Mind

Five things that will help you to relax and gain confidence!

1. Reassure yourself! Be nice to yourself! Talk to yourself!
2. Understand that people want to hear your information! They are not in the audience to judge you or laugh at you.
3. Realize that the more knowledgeable you are about the subject and the more you rehearse, the less nervous you will be.
4. Take a skill-building course and read information about presentation skills!
5. The more you practice the less nervous you will feel.

Why am I speaking?

Two primary reasons:

1. To inform your audience about a topic
2. To persuade your audience about a topic

Your presentation can fulfill both reasons!

What topic is the most appropriate?

Appropriate stands for:

- A topic that will not overtly offend your diverse audience
- A topic that challenges and does not insult your audience's intellect
- A topic that will fit the time limits you have
- A topic that is interesting and will allow for vivid language that engages your audience

Keep in mind:

- Brainstorm topics based on what you know and have experienced.
- Narrow list based on the five W's: who, what, when, where, and why
- Demonstration? Explore "how."

Remember to:

- Speak to the event theme if there is one and to the occasion.
- Speak about something you have experienced, something you have researched, or something you have learned from listening to others.
- Speak to the audience's interest.
- Use language that does not assume gender roles; i.e. *policeman*.

Gender and Culture Awareness

- There are denotative and connotative meanings of words
- Know the demographics and use language that is customary

Podium or Freestyle?

- Knowing whether you will have a podium (or lectern) makes a huge difference in the style of delivery you choose.
- Learn how to present with and without a podium.
- Without a podium, you must be more animated with your visual delivery and louder with your verbal delivery.
- Don't pace or wave your hands around too much or you will distract the audience and the message will get lost.

Technical Capabilities?

- Ask in advance for the appropriate technical devices for you to use.
- If the room is large, you will need a microphone. Find out **in advance** if the microphone is attached to a lectern or if you will have a lavalier or a handheld microphone.
- You may need additional audio or video equipment to enhance your message.
- Make sure you practice with all equipment before you get in front of your audience.

Listening

4 Key Reasons Why We Listen

- To understand a message
- To try to analyze a message
- To provide emotional support
- To enjoy the message or how the speaker delivered it

Remember:

- Be an active listener
- Evaluate yourself
- Listening takes energy

***Have students read Professor Phil Bruschi's 12 Deadly Sins**