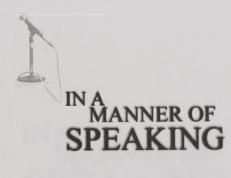
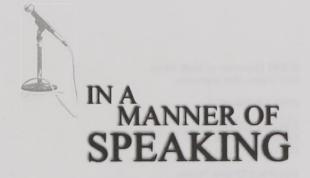
IN A MANNER OF SPEAKING

public speaking made easy S W Krügel





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S W Krügel

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This book is also available in Afrikaans: By wyse van spreke – die maklike weg na openbare redevoering, ISBN 1-86888-164-4.

Dedicated to my wife, children, grandchildren and their children

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Foreword

Why is public speaking so important today? What are the benefits that the art of 'expressing myself clearly and concisely' holds for me? How should I express what I have to say? What should my speech be about? Where do I start and where do I end? Which obstacles will I have to overcome?

The answers to these and other questions are given in detail in this manual, which is illustrated with a host of practical examples. Mistakes of which public speakers are often guilty, are explained in plain and simple language.

This manual was written by an accomplished public speaker with many years' experience in addressing schoolchildren, students, trainees, managers and directors in the private and public sectors of South Africa.

Although primarily directed at scholars, students, trainees and beginners, this manual may also serve as a refresher course for people in more senior positions, to reassure them that they are still on the right track. Remember: by **what** you say and **how** you say it, you can either bring about your own downfall or proceed on the road to success.

I trust that this manual on the techniques of public speaking, that is, to express oneself better, will make a positive contribution to the optimal utilisation of the country's most precious assets – the skills and expertise of its people. A well-known saying applies here: 'Give a hungry man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach him to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.' This manual aims to teach how to make speeches, of all kinds, for a lifetime!

We wish you the very best in putting the suggestions and principles contained in this work into practice.

Prof S W Krügel

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PS: This book is also available in Afrikaans *By wyse van spreke – die maklike weg na openbare redevoering.*

Introduction

Speech is the medium we use to communicate with one another in our daily association with other people. Speech is also our most important resource for acquiring and sharing knowledge, as well as for making our needs known.

Human beings **speak and communicate** not only in words, but also by means of gestures. Gestures involve the whole body, that is, the whole person is present when gestures are used – our minds are occupied with thought processes, our eyes are engaged in seeing, our tongues are used for speaking, our arms and fingers are for pointing, our legs are for moving from place to place, and our lungs are for drawing air.

The right body language can help us obtain an important job and a better income. Body language in the world of politics plays an important role throughout the world today — think, for instance, of past presidents Nelson Mandela, George Bush, Mikhail Gorbatsjof, Ronald Reagan and others. Most politicians are carefully coached on how to conduct themselves in public, when appearing before television cameras, and during interviews by the media. Some of them even receive speech and drama training to help them make a better impression on their audience.

The following are examples of body language:

- Facial expressions, which clearly show how you feel.
- Gestures of the hands, face and eyes to emphasise what you are communicating verbally.
- Non-verbal gestures that send a clear message, for example, a fist with only the thumb extending upwards, which (in South Africa) implies victory.
- Touching someone to encourage him or her.
- Clothing and hairstyles, which clearly say who you are.
- The tone of you voice your means of expression, which sometimes has a greater impact than your words!

Today, success in numerous professions depends on the use of the voice. Without this essential instrument, many professions will become mute and disappear. Speech also exposes our character and personality—it is one of the most precious assets we can possess. For example, it is well known that people who communicate well, become the leaders of their groups. It is also general knowledge that an advocate with the gift of expressing his or her point of view clearly and unequivocally will be promoted to judge much sooner than his or her

peers. The same principle applies to teachers, ministers of the church, politicians and a whole variety of other occupations.

Would-be public speakers who wish to make their mark must learn to use their voice with good intonation, in a controlled way and with sincerity – all essential requirements for success. The ethical, aesthetic and psychological value of speech training cannot be overemphasised. With the help of speech training, shy, reserved people are taught to articulate language naturally and fluently; an ability which is an important psychological building block in acquiring self-confidence and a well-balanced personality.

Walter Ripman, a respected phonetician, states: 'Breath is the medium by which our speech is made.' Correct breathing plays a very important role in any act of speech. Breathing is synonymous with life. No living being can exist without breathing. This stream of life is also the origin of most sounds uttered by humans and animals. The chest forms the protective framework of the lungs which breathe air in and out, thus forming the origin of all human speech and sound. Correct breathing is essential for a good voice and, initially, has to be consciously learnt by the aspirant speaker. If the speaker, because of stage fright, for example, becomes tense, the breathing organs are directly affected adversely, breath flow is made difficult and his or her voice may even disappear completely.

Research has proven that general voice problems that have to be consciously avoided by a speaker are a breathless voice that has no force; a throaty voice caused by a lazy tongue; a nasal voice; a loud, harsh and cutting voice; a trembling voice; a squeaky voice; an uncertain voice; a dead, monotonous voice, and a stuttering voice.

In the case of serious deviations in voice quality, a speech therapist, with the help of a psychologist and physician, will be able to find the causes and suggest treatment. As far as body posture is concerned, if you consciously and regularly follow the practical suggestions below, they could eventually become an automatic part of yourself and your personality:

- Whether you are walking or sitting, lift your chin so that it is high enough to look the person you are talking to in the eye.
- Lift your chest just enough to give you a feeling of alertness do not push it
 out. Do not push your shoulders backwards; they will automatically assume
 a natural position.
- Allow your hands to hang comfortably and relaxed down your sides, or to

rest in your lap. Be careful of using too many hand gestures, or no hand gestures at all (you are, after all, alive, and your hands need to speak too!).

- Experiment with different stances and you will find that the best body posture in front of an audience is where one foot is slightly away from the other one and faces forward. Your weight and length will determine the width of this short step. Rest your weight on both legs so that you feel comfortable and at ease.
- If you move about, use the whole foot, not the heels only. Your foot must make a rolling movement from the heel out to the ball of your foot.
- Tuck in your stomach so that it is in a comfortable position, keeping your chin and chest as indicated above.

If you follow these suggestions, your body posture and way of walking will not only create the impression that you are a pleasant person, but you will really feel that you are a pleasant person – someone who meets life halfway with a smile and with self-confidence (Speech training - C Louw & S Potgieter, pp. 80 – 7).

Of late, the words **effective verbal communication** have become a magic formula, not only in advertisements, books, magazines and speeches, but also in conversations where sincerity, honesty and clear articulation are a prerequisite.

The reason for the increasing emphasis on effective verbal communication, or the art of speaking, is closely associated with the constitutional changes that have taken place in South Africa and in the rest of the word. There has been a shift away from dictatorship, where all the power is seated in one person or one group of people, to a more democratic approach that has taken power and authority from one individual or one group of people, and transferred it to more people and groups. The result? A trend which means that an increasing number of leadership positions, committees and boards are being established in the social and community life of the country, so that more and more people are beginning to participate in the government. In turn, this situation has resulted in a greater need for experienced public speakers and debaters – a trend where guns are set aside and words are used.

An experienced statesman recently made an eloquent statement on the impact and importance of the WORD – whether written, sung or spoken. He said that the word and not the atomic bomb was the mightiest and most powerful weapon in the world today – it could devastate, break down, destroy, justify crime and set

in motion – to mention but a few of the abuses that may occur. The positive use of the word, however, can also generate respect, peace, love and prosperity. History books are packed with examples of the influence of the word.

David J Brewer, a well-known public speaker and debater, has the following to say about the influence and power of the spoken word:

Oratory is a masterful art. Poetry, painting, music, sculpture, architecture, please, thrill, inspire; but oratory rules. The orator dominates those who hear him, convinces their reason, controls their judgement, compels their action. For the time-being he is master. Through the clearness of his logic, the keenness of his wit, the power of his appeal, or that magnetic something which is felt but cannot be defined or through all together, he sways his audience as the storm bends the branches of the forest.

There is no mystery or secret magic formula for effective verbal communication, or the art of speech. If someone really has something worthwhile to say and knows his or her subject, there is no reason why it cannot be said as well before a hundred people as before only one person. An **audience** is, after all, merely a **larger** person; in other words, a **large collective individual**. Yet, many people fear addressing an audience. The physical signs of their fear are hands that shake, breathlessness, a racing heart, a red face, cold sweat, a dry mouth and stumbling speech.

Experience has shown that few untrained people are capable of standing up before strangers, equals, or superiors and deliver a good speech. The reason is simple: they regard the ability to make a speech as some kind of inborn, magical talent — a mystical gift with which only a handful of chosen, fortunate beings have been endowed. This is far from the truth! All ordinary people can learn how to express what they wish to say clearly, powerfully and with conviction before groups or face to face with one person.

How often do we not find that an intellectually brilliant person with numerous scholastic and academic distinctions is incapable of making his or her mark anywhere in society or in the business world? Such people are often shunted to the sidelines as so-called backroom employees, while their less-distinguished peers, who have been trained to express themselves well in coversations and in front of groups of people, leap ahead or are given more senior positions. The reason for this state of affairs is, once again, simple and obvious – the less-



distinguished peers have learnt how to communicate in, and before, groups. They have learnt to communicate effectively, that is, to express themselves well when addressing groups of people, or when communicating with their equals and superiors during coversations, discussions, conferences, debates and at meetings.

Reserved people can also benefit from and in-depth study of effective verbal communication. How often, for example, have you not desperately wanted to join in during a discussion on a specific subject, but remained silent merely because you did not feel capable of standing up and addressing a group on your feelings or convictions?

This is the most important purpose of this manual: to teach you the principles of effective verbal communication, in other words, to enable you to express yourself in a well-prepared speech.

Ordinary people have many reserves of physical and mental capability. Many experts are convinced that normal people use at most 50 per cent of their brain power voluntarily, while the remainder stays dormant. To apply this latent brain power in a positive way requires thorough preparation and a lot of practice and, in turn, your own preparation requires a lot of self-discipline on your part.

All development is self-development. Nobody can do this for you, not even a training expert! As a trainee, you need to decide actively to set yourself a series of challenging and realistic goals, to work hard to achieve the goals you have set yourself, to evaluate your progress, and to apply self-discipline in general.

All leaders, aspiring leaders and pace-setters in all spheres of life share one common goal, and that is to master the art of effective verbal communication – the ability to convince and inspire others through the spoken word.

Benefits involved in mastering the art of verbal communication

The ability to express your thoughts verbally on a specific subject clearly, articulately and succinctly will make an important contribution towards your personal development and success in all spheres of life – in the business, financial, educational and social fields.

This is so for the following reasons:

- You will recognise the essence of a matter and know how to consider alternatives.
- You will know how to formulate your opinions, find solutions and put across your points of view skilfully.
- You will cultivate a more convincing, urgent and authoritative presence and so become someone who can convince others to do what you expect of them
- You will improve your general appearance and bearing.
- You will improve the intonation, articulation and general quality of your voice.
- You will be better able to 'advertise' your abilities by bringing what you have to offer to the attention of people in key positions.
- You will be in a position to benefit financially by presenting yourself favourably to those involved in appointments, promotions and remuneration. (For example, it is well known that international public speakers such as Ronald Reagan, Mikhail Gorbachev, George Bush and others made large amounts of money from public speaking.)
- You will know how to arrange your ideas and solutions logically and present them with conviction within a group, and you will find that this ability will result in the members of the group accepting you as a leader - someone whom they can respect and whose opinion counts.
- The practical suggestions in this manual on effective public speaking will also indirectly enable you to compile memorandums, conduct sales interviews, write business letters, prepare advertisements and promotions, and conduct yourself efficiently in all other situations where effective communication is essential.

Obstacles on the road to success

The biggest obstacles on the road to effective verbal communication, apart from physical factors, are of psychological origin, such as fear and lack of selfconfidence, which arise from nervousness and stage fright. These negative feelings even occur among the most seasoned orators who have never overcome their fears. Stress and fear can make a speaker give up – paralysed and stuttering; a dismal failure before even the most sympathetic audience. A public address can be as devastating to your health as over-exertion can be for someone with a weak heart; it may even lead to a heart attack!



Stressful situations can cause silent ischaemia in a victim – a painless but life-threatening interruption of the blood flow to the heart muscle. It does appear, however, that stress is only dangerous to those who are already suffering from a heart condition. 'It would therefore be wise for people in the high-risk group to undergo regular tests for ischaemia,' says Dr Alan Rozanski, chief researcher of a study group in Los Angeles. There is a witty expression that summarises how most people feel when first speaking in public: 'Stage fright leaves the speechmaker tongue-dried and tongue-tied.'

For ordinary mortals facing their first public address, stage fright can have dire consequences. It can make the speaker feel as if he or she is drugged; clear thoughts become jumbled, concentration is affected, lips become sealed, creative thought is blocked, self-confidence undermined and, ultimately, the speaker, sweating and trembling, takes flight. Such a failure of nerves can severely damage a person's self-esteem and prospects of promotion, for example.

Yet, aspiring public speakers can make a big success of their first speech, winning the respect and esteem of the audience and opening the way to social status and even progress to a leadership position; all because of an ability to express themselves well, to put across their suggestions and thoughts clearly and with impact, and impress and convince their audience.

Stage fright can, to a great extent, be overcome and defeated by thorough preparation of a speech. Thorough preparation, together with the speaker's conviction and assurance, brings life to a speech; it stimulates the interest and imagination of the audience, wins them over and convinces them.

Simple rules to help you overcome your fear of public speaking

- Make sure you know your subject better than anyone in the audience.
- Make yourself master of the words you use. If you can correctly pronounce these words and are sure of their meaning, your fears about your vocabulary and sentence structure will disappear.
- Make sure you use correct grammar.
- Pay attention to your appearance. Dress neatly for the occasion and make sure your stage etiquette is correct, as well as your body language.
- Take things easy. Be calm, take a deep breath and pause between sentences.
 Forget about yourself and concentrate on your interest in your subject.

All these safety measures will naturally take time to practise, but remember that all good things take time. Use your words economically, use your time sparingly and carefully, and persevere until you have achieved your goal!

For the sake of clarity, a **model speech** is divided into the following four phases or steps:

STEP 1 – Speaker's own preparation

STEP 2 – Preparing the audience

STEP3 - Delivering the speech

STEP4 – Meaningful summing up and conclusion.





Speaker's own preparation

The speaker's own preparation is a crucial requirement for delivering a successful speech. It is hardly possible to devote too much attention to this aspect. In fact, successful speakers often devote much more time to preparing a speech than to delivering the speech. A successful public speaker once said that if he were to be asked to deliver an hour-long speech, he could do so immediately, but if asked to give a fifteen-minute presentation, he would require at least three-quarters of an hour to prepare himself thoroughly.

Own preparation involves the following actions by the speaker:

1.1 The choice of a suitable subject for the speech

Speakers are usually given free choice on the specific subject. In such a case, speakers must ensure that the subject falls within the field of experience of the audience! It is not a good idea to deliver a highly technical speech on pig farming to a group of sports enthusiasts! The level and depth of the subject are also relevant; the language and style could vary from light and popular to a highly scientific or technical approach. It is also wise not to be too ambitious with an over-supply of information, as you will lose the attention and interest of the average person. It is also essential to determine the aim of the speech: Is it to entertain? Or is the intention to instruct? Is it a farewell speech or a tribute to someone? These are only some of the possible aims of a speech.

1.2 Gathering information and aids

The necessary information and visual aids relating to the specific topic need to be gathered. These aids include films, videos, analysis sheets, flow charts, written instructions, component manuals, handbooks, memorandums, forms, machines, tools and dictionaries. To achieve success in a speech, it is essential for speakers to be informed about all aspects pertaining to the topic to be discussed. It is also preferable that speakers should have broader knowledge of the topic or subject than merely the content of their speech. It is always a risk to speak on a subject which stretches your own knowledge.

The following suggestions on **own preparation** are worth noting and can be very useful to speakers. **Speakers should ask themselves the following questions beforehand, and have clear answers to them:**

First, what is the aim of the speech and what results are expected?

Second, what is the crux of the speech? A few thoughts on the features of the subject you are describing are sufficient.

Third, the central idea must be broken up into three or four proposals or options, and each proposal must be illustrated with suitable examples on the advantages and disadvantages of each option. If you are suggesting specific actions or steps, you must provide sufficient reasons for supporting or rejecting such actions or steps. Direct observation or experience is the best way to confirm a point of view. For example, a child confirms for himself that fire can burn him by holding his hand over live coals until he feels the effect.

Sometimes other methods are necessary to confirm a point of view. Speakers, for example, must be able to quote expert evidence by referring to an **authority** on the subject:

- The authority quoted must not be prejudiced.
- The same authority should not be quoted too frequently.
- It is valuable to quote a source that is the same as that of your opponents.
- The source of the authority must be acceptable to the audience.

Special methods of rejecting an argument include the following:

- Disparage your opponent's argument as unimportant or ridiculous.
- Apply the remainder method, where certain conclusions are drawn, that prove all arguments except one or two to be false, thus implying that the remaining arguments must also be false.
- Make use of the dilemma method, where two conclusions are reached and both are rejected.

1.3 Analysis and recording of the subject in steps and key points

Main steps (or main points) can be identified by asking questions and seeking answers through demonstrating the task or instruction. For example, what should the operator or responsible person do or know first? Second? Third?

Care must also be taken to make one step flow logically from the other. Do not begin with dessert and end with soup! Next, consider each step separately with a view to establishing key points, that is, important points under each main step, by asking questions such as: **What** should be done? **How** should it be done? **Who** should do it? **When** should it be done? **Where** should it be done? These are the questions, and answers, which were described by Rudyard Kipling (1865–1936) as his five faithful little soldiers; soldiers who provided him with all the material he needed to become a successful writer.

When, for example, one is speaking about work done in the workplace, keep in mind that anything in the execution of an action that could endanger, injure or affect the quality of the work of an employee, could increase costs and could facilitate the work would qualify as important key points.

When determining steps and key points, care must be taken not to include irrelevant factors. In other words, points that do not have a direct bearing on the subject or topic, that is, are not applicable to the subject as a whole and which the person executing the task or instruction does not necessarily have to remember, may be given as introductory information.

This process of selecting main steps and key points is of particular importance where the main aim of the speech is of an instructive nature. An example of such an analysis sheet appears as Appendix 1. In this case, the analysis sheet was drawn up by an instructor of a group of beginners on the subject 'How to prepare yourself for making a speech'.

1.4 Selecting suitable examples

An excellent method of collecting a series of suitable examples is to illustrate every important point or fact with a practical example and to memorise them, obviously on condition that they support a particular argument and make it clearer for listeners to grasp the concept as a whole.

1.5 Location

If the choice rests with you, select a suitable location where your presentation can be given without any disturbance. However, this may not always be possible, but do try to avoid interruptions as much as you can. Pay attention to aspects such as the neatness of the lecture room and the most suitable time for your speech.

1.6 Rehearsal

Rehearse all the steps and key points aloud in the language of your audience, just as you would present them before your audience. A mirror or a small group of intimate friends can be of great help in this respect. Your own preparation is hard work a,nd requires self-discipline and dedication. Remember the old maxim: 'Nothing of value is ever achieved without hard work.'

1.7 General suggestions for preparing your speech

- Use your time sensibly and avoid those wasted hours and time spent on pursuits that do not bear fruit. Acquire the habit of reading something worthwhile in idle time in order to add to your knowledge, and to find new ideas and methods.
- Buy a notebook in which you can jot down new ideas that come up, subjects that need to be pursued, or new words with their meaning and pronunciation.
- Buy a good dictionary, a sine qua non for everyone who wishes to learn to speak better, in other words, who wishes to master the art of speaking.
- Use correct grammar, language and style. (A good dictionary is essential.)

Study correct stage etiquette.

 A lectern or table on which your notes and aids are neatly arranged is absolutely essential.

• Memorise the main points and outlines of your speech by creating a mental picture of the framework of your speech. Or compose a sentence in which each word forms a heading for your speech, or form a word in which each letter identifies a discussion point or an argument, for example PLOC for the different management funcfunctions: Planning, Organising, Leadership and Control.

A good general point of departure is to write out the speech in full, then to summarise it, and continue doing so, to the point where just a scheme or framework remains that can be consulted in the course of the actual making of the speech. However, keep in mind what someone once said: 'If you have a skeleton, don't let the bones of your speech rattle too much; and don't prepare a jelly-type of speech either.' In other words, don't just give the scheme, remember to 'flesh it out' as you go along. You must have a clear structure, otherwise your speech will be a shapeless blob of jelly.

Remember that at the beginning of the twenty-first century – in an age of nuclear power, computers, journeys into space and cellular telephones – the spoken word still remains the most powerful opinionforming instrument and source of information in the world!



STEP 2 Preparation of the audience

Once you have completed your own preparation, consider this step for preparing your audience to receive your message in the right frame of mind. Just as a farmer ploughs his land before sowing, so a good speaker prepares his or her audience to receive the seeds of knowledge and skill. Preparing the audience is a crucial step for a speaker. If he or she does not succeed in gaining the attention and stimulating the interest of the audience, the potential 'harvest' will be lost forever, together with all the time and money spent.

But how should you prepare your audience to receive your message with enthusiasm and interest? What should you do to win over a hostile audience?

2.1 Put the listeners at ease

In the business world, matters such as potential mass dismissals, reductions in salary, new laws and safety measures can easily lead to mass hostility rising to the surface. Here, much more than speechmaking is involved.

The purpose in such a case would be to expose all the untruths and banish all the uncertainty, false rumours, anxiety, and fear on which hostility is often based - this is truly no easy task. There is no need to panic! Get the group talking by discussing, by way of introduction, matters about which they are informed and with which they are familiar. Experience has proven that topics such as their favourite sports and hobbies are good starting points, and contribute towards making group members feel more relaxed and at ease. Strive to sound informal. friendly and interested. Under no circumstances should you get on your high horse or attempt to do all the talking yourself.

Once the group members feel at ease and are prepared to approach the matter more calmly, a good speaker will have gained the opportunity to begin the next phase of his or her approach.



2.2 Stimulate the interest of the group members

Successful speakers always stimulate the interest of their audience. Many excellent speakers believe that they can afford to spend up to a quarter of the time at their disposal on stimulating the interest of their audience, and only three-quarters on conveying their message, and still achieve greater success than they would if they spent all their time, or almost all their time, on conveying their message and methods. Therefore, always attempt to generate an enthusiastic response and a desire for more information among members of the audience.

Once a speaker has succeeded in generating such enthusiasm about the subject, the rest of the task will be relatively easy. One way of planning to generate interest and enthusiasm is to answer questions such as the following:

- What will this knowledge or skill mean to me as a member of the group?
- Will it contribute towards my keeping my job?
- Will it help me avoid making mistakes that could embarrass me?

If it would mean the same to a member of the group, this advantage should be mentioned. Listen to what a member of a group once had to say in this regard, 'I don't care whether he can complete the task in four or in ten steps. What I want to know is what I will learn and why? If it makes sense, I will listen. And when I say "sense", I mean: what are the advantages of this new approach to me? It may sound strange, but who would be interested in something that would not ultimately be of benefit to me?"

2.3 Emphasise the importance of the work

Another method of gaining the interest of group members is to win their trust and to explain how the new approach, for example, automatically links up with other activities in the office or factory. Explain why it has to be done and why it is so important. Remember that all the work in an office or factory or on a farm is equally important — even that of messenger — and that everyone wishes to do something that is worthwhile. By emphasising the importance of the work, a speaker is also emphasising how essential it is that it should be done well.

2.4 Be enthusiastic

Yet another method of stimulating interest is to be enthusiastic yourself. If a speaker has a cool and detached attitude towards a matter, he or she cannot expect the group to be enthusiastic about is. (See *Appendix 2* for suggestions on **how to get on well with people.**)

Once a group has been **tuned in** to the message, the speaker can progress to the third step in the speech process, namely **presenting the message.**





Presenting the message to the audience

As far as methods of presentation are concerned, when a person has something to say, there are basically three methods from which to choose: (1) speakers can address their audience without any visible aids or notes, that is, speaking off the cuff. (2) they can read from prepared notes, or (3) they can face their audience with a compromise method, where both of these methods are used.

Each method has its advantages and disadvantages. The first method, delivering the entire speech without any visible text, manuscript or notebook, ensures valuable eye contact and gives an impression of thorough preparation. However, a speaker who speaks without any text or notes is inclined to digress, jump from one point to another, and to repeat himself or herself. On the positive side, an impression of spontaneity, sincerity and warmth is created.

The method of writing out and reading main points is best for novice or inexperienced speakers. However, reading is not the same as talking, and the speaker loses eye contact with the audience. On the positive side, however, this is the simplest and easiest method. A disadvantage is that a poor reader may appear unprepared - a sad spectacle.

The compromise method involves using the best aspects offered by both of these methods. Experience has shown that this method achieves the most favourable results, particularly when transparencies and flow charts are used.

In all three methods speakers follow certain basic steps. They must decide what they want to convey to their audience. They should arrange their angles of approach and their arguments properly. Only then should they decide on which method or combination of methods to use.

The suggestions and prescriptions that follow are important for speakers in practical situations and are applicable to the written as well as the spoken word. The suggestions are clearly illustrated when the speech to be made is of an instructive and informative nature. Speakers should therefore apply their suggestions and prescriptions selectively, according to the nature and aim of their speech.

- 3.1 Explain what should be done and how it should be done. Use the task analysis that has been composed beforehand for this aspect. Make sure your task analysis is to the point and accurate, and do not quote incidents and details that do not have a direct bearing on the subject or the task at hand.
- **Show** how the work should actually be done through practical demonstrations, for example, in training physicians.

3.3 Illustrate

One of the most effective ways of holding the attention of a group is a visual presentation. Photographs, films, videos and sketches can be valuable in this respect. Remember, when you talk you do not rely only on words and their meanings. For example, speaking too rapidly, or in a staccato manner, or whispering or shouting, lifting your eyebrows, pointing a finger, shrugging your shoulders and blinking you eyes are all signs that add more dimension to the components of the message you wish to convey to your audience.

A trainee recently remarked: 'Pictures and sketches are very helpful; I learn better when I can actually see things rather than only hear them.' The use of our senses is very important. The old saying about non-verbal communication makes a lot of sense: 'One good picture is worth a thousand words.'

3.4 One important aspect at a time

Providing information in stages prevents discouragement and confusion, and ensures that the information is absorbed properly before the next aspect in logical sequence is presented.

3.5 Emphasise each key point

Emphasise each key point, first, by intonation. Make your voice sound cheerful and lively, and stress key words. Second, use repetition. Do not be afraid to repeat aspects. Repetition is undoubtedly one of the best methods of instruction. Remember: experience is nothing more than re-

petition. Third explain why something has to be done in a specific manner – people remember facts better and find them more interesting when they understand why it is better to do something one way rather than another. When people understand the reasons, they will be less inclined to say: 'Any other way would work as well.' This attitude in itself could lead to the adoption of faulty methods or risky short cuts.

3.6 Pause briefly after completing a specific step containing key points

A brief pause, on the one hand, gives listeners an opportunity to consider the information conveyed to them, and to ask questions about aspects about which they feel certain. Speakers, on the other hand, have a brief respite to consider the next part of their speech. For the speaker, this short pause affords him or her the opportunity of considering the next part of his or her speech.

3.7 Strive for clarity

'Begin with the familiar, lead on to the unfamiliar.' This should be every speaker's maxim. The familiar immediately grabs listeners' attention and gives them and the speaker a common point of departure. Furthermore, speak the language of lay people: do not use technical terms and abbreviations before you have explained them to the listeners in plain language.

Words such as kitsch, sessions, effects, weak current, bracket creep and bull market will be familiar terms to those who deal with this terminology daily, but will mean nothing to the uninitiated, no matter how qualified they are in their own disciplines. Some audiences, particularly in the informal sector, have an aversion to the use of buzz words, that is, words that are trendy but mean absolutely nothing. Buzz words such as focus, conceptualise, at the end of the day, informs and revenue enhancement are particularly annoying. Jargon and clichés; the repeated use of words such as okey-doke, and obscure sentences, such as This circuit has a variety of responses, depending on the input signal must be avoided at all costs.

3.8 Give explicit explanations

Thoroughly prepared speakers would never find themselves having to interrupt their presentation by having to say something like: 'Oh! I'm so sorry to have to go back, but in step 1, which we have just discussed, remember to make sure that you ...!'

Speakers should always make sure that each step or section has been properly covered before proceeding to the next step or section – going back and forth, and filling in afterthoughts will ruin any effort to communicate clearly.

3.9 Exercise patience

Impatience will get you nowhere. On the contrary, it can only upset and irritate listeners, thereby obstructing open communication and spoiling what you have achieved with so much trouble and effort. **Respect without fear** and **professional esteem** sum up the relationship that should exist between listeners and speakers. Think back to your schooldays and remember how a class responded to an impatient, crabby teacher.

A speaker who wishes to maintain good relations should never laugh or make remarks about the mistakes of members of the group! In a good speech there is no call for sarcasm, ridicule, or mockery. It is likely that someone in the group may ask *ridiculous* or *stupid* questions. If the speaker laughs or resorts to sarcasm, a sensitive person may well become even more inhibited and refrain from asking further questions.

3.10 Speak correctly, convincingly and at a suitable pace

Your voice is a powerful instrument in your exercising of control as a speaker. Most people, however, underestimate the value of their voices as a reflection of their general personality. If you develop your voice to its full potential, you will, as a result, find that you will benefit in every aspect of your life as a result.



Experience has proven that voice development will, among others, bring about the following benefits:

- greater self-confidence
- a better self-image
- better verbal communication ability
- improved professionalism
- relaxation of tension
- the disappearance of damaging inhibitions.

Good speakers also avoid repetition of the same word or sentence, clumsy sentence constructions, incorrect word usage and confused or vague ideas.

When conveying important information, make sure that you speak at a pace that is suited to the ability of your listeners so that they can grasp and register what you are saying.

Speakers who have delivered a specific lecture or demonstrated a specific task many times over may well be inclined to rush through it at great speed and with great efficiency. This will be counter-productive, however, if the subject is new to the audience or group members. Care must be taken to prevent this from happening.

Listen to what someone once said about being instructed in such a hasty manner: 'I don't like these over-hasty explanations at all; I'm no Einstein and when he explains things at such a speed it makes my head whirl.' However, do not talk, read or demonstrate too slowly either, as the recipients of the message may become bored their attention wanders – and you will probably be marked as a longwinded and boring lecturer and person.

It is therefore best to proceed as fast as the audience is able to absorb facts – no slower and no faster. By reading their body language, you will notice soon enough whether you have conveyed your message at the right pace.

3.11 Conduct yourself properly and position yourself on the stage

Successful speakers regard stage conduct and etiquette as very important factors during the delivery of a speech. Some audiences draw certain psychological conclusions from speakers' entry and exit, as well as from the way they conduct themselves on stage. People notice the position of the eyes, face, muscles, arms and legs, as well as breathing and posture as a whole. This branch of psychology is so important that it is even offered at universities and colleges.

Good speakers take note of the role that the **correct position** plays during their presentation and practise the specific requirements in this respect.

3.12 Collect sufficient and suitable material for your speech

In general, speakers require broad background knowledge against which they can project the specific subject with which they are dealing. Some of the knowledge required may be stored in their memories from previous sources such as books, magazines, college and university lectures, and practical experience. A prospective speaker must learn the art of acute observation by taking in everything he or she sees, hears, smells or tastes, that is, using all the senses.

Speakers should also be able to reach relevant conclusions from their observations. They should remember that we often perceive what we want to perceive. They should therefore always test the truth of what they see and hear by taking account of the opposite.

It is a good idea for aspirant speakers to read as broadly and as selectively as possible about the subject with which they are dealing.

Speakers should read past and present literature, and daily newspapers and magazines in order to keep abreast of new developments and recent events. By reading as much as possible and keeping a card or computerised system for easy reference, they will be able to build up a reference store to use when comprehensive sources are required quickly.

The three best sources of information at a speaker's disposal are discussion, reading (which includes using a good dictionary) and thinking. Reading is still the main source, while thinking has priority over any in-depth discussion. The value of all the knowledge and material gathered can be lost, however, if a speaker's language, style and conduct are such that the listeners' attention wanders to such an extent that they completely forget the subject. Remember, whether you are training a student or a novice, writing a report, putting across a point of view or strategy, or selling an article, your success will always be determined by your use of words, and the more intelligible and simpler, the better.

3.13 Build fluency and eloquence into your speech

Probably one of the most important elements in effective public speaking is the ability to build fluency and eloquence into your speech. Without this, speakers are seriously hampered despite their best efforts. Not even a pleasant appearance, a golden voice, a good sense of humour, or appropriate experience will save the situation if these two factors are missing.

Fluency and eloquence are sufficient for some audiences. In fact, in some parts of the world a speaker who can overpower an audience with a torrent of words is regarded as a great speaker. But there are also those who are too lazy to extend their vocabulary and make do with the same words over and over again, such as 'not bad', 'nice', 'OK' and 'cool'. A mixture of languages, such as English littered with French, has no place in a speech.

People often underestimate the power of conviction that these factors represent. The truth is that successful speakers simply must possess a high standard of fluency and eloquence. To meet these requirements, an extensive vocabulary is essential. There are several ways of acquiring a good vocabulary. First, start a new word and sentence book — an ordinary notebook in which you can write every new word or expression you hear or read, together with their meanings.

Study a good synonym dictionary, and books and articles on public speaking, and make use of every opportunity that presents itself to make a speech yourself. Remember the proverb 'Practice makes perfect'. Lack of fluency may be ascribed to physical or mental causes. If a slow tongue is the cause of lack of speed and fluency, this can be remedied and the tongue made to move faster.

To speak fluently and eloquently, you should speak loosely and comfortably, and not stiffly and grimly. People who speak stiffly usually stammer too. In every good speech there should also be a measure of fun and entertainment. A deadly serious, statistical style of speaking must avoided.

Style involves selective word usage; correct pronunciation, and good word and sentence construction. It includes the use of formal and informal language. Neither of these forms on its own, is right or wrong. It depends on the situation. The degree of formality may vary between absolutely formal (e.g. the funeral of a state president) and completely informal (e.g. a speech at a braai). Speakers should take care, however, not to become too informal by using vulgar language; the response will not be in their favour. By the same token, pretentious, affected formality would not please an audience either.

The use of humour is in order, but within limits. A hearty laugh now and again can do everyone a world of good. However, humour used to make personal attacks on people or telling jokes that border on blasphemy or crudeness is neither funny nor humorous. A sense of humour does not merely mean being funny. Thackeray says: 'The humorist professes to awaken and direct your love, your pity, your kindness, your scorn for untruth and pretence, and your tenderness for the weak, the poor, the oppressed, the unhappy.'

If the lack of fluency is of a physical nature (e.g. a dry throat), it can be remedied with medication. Speak naturally; do not recite or dramatise. Be yourself! You are merely telling other people what you know in an interesting and convincing manner. You are not interpreting a role, you are neither an actor nor an actress, nor are you an elocution artist.

Sincerity, honesty, and truthfulness form the basis of all effective public speaking.

Fluency is based on simplicity of speech. Never sound conceited or arrogant. Most people detest a torrent of sentimental words. Also beware of high-sounding words, especially if you are not quite sure of their meaning! Remember: the more intelligible and simpler your language, the better.

A copious flow of words is not, in the professional sense, a speech. Remember never to speak for too long; do not exceed the time given you. It is a form of bad manners and is inconsiderate towards others. A long-winded, less monotonous speaker will quickly earn the dubious reputation that he or she suffers from verbal diarrhoea. Stop speaking before the audience begins to wish that you would stop. Apply word economics; work sparingly with your words. Get to the point, support your arguments with facts, and then stop. Remember the proverb: 'Stand up, speak up and shut up.'



STEP 4 Meaningful rounding off of the speech

You are now aware of the fine art of 'how to make a brilliant speech'. Do not allow this knowledge and art to be forgotten or to fade away. Make sure that you adhere meticulously to the following steps:

- Practise regularly (even if you do it in your room in front of a mirror or a group of good friends). Remember that nobody who has accomplished something can continue to be a success without working on it. You cannot achieve success without effort on your part. A wise man once said: 'Success is not a lift, you have to climb the stairs.' You cannot press a button and a door will swing open; the ladder of life must be ascended step by step. Abraham Lincoln described the climbing process as follows: 'If you want to go up, you must first get down to work.'
- Expand your knowledge. Read and study as many books and writings on public speaking as possible. Take notes of valuable suggestions.
- Listen attentively to a variety of speeches, including those published in newspapers or broadcast on television. Remember that there is a difference between hearing and listening.
- Draw up a framework of original speeches that sound interesting and worthwhile.
- Test all speeches you read or listen to against the requirements of a good speech. Ask yourself the following questions: Does it have the right structure, that is, an introductory aim, body and conclusion? Does the speech contain the necessary ethos (credibility), pathos (emotion) and logos (facts)?
- Last but not least persevere until you succeed.

