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Notes on Public Speaking. An interesting packet of tips by Jack Bannister. Written in September 1977.

NOTES ON PUBLIC SPEAKING

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PUBLIC SPEAKING REQUIRES:

Knowledge, organizing ability, speaking ability, and acceptable appearance.

Hint: Use the models to help you learn the lecture. In the beginning, arrange your models in order as an outline to your lecture. As you progress, you may change the arrangement for better "eye appeal."

1. Get the Listeners attention.
2. State Central Idea and Main Points.
3. Prove Main Points.
4. Summarize.

How do you know a subject well enough to speak about it? When everything you have read on the subject you read before. When new facts stop showing up, that is usually the time to stop.

RECITING FROM MEMORY

The lecturer who relies on his memory instead of reading from written copy is no more reliable than his memory. When one forgets his speech, he may find himself suddenly pitched into a world of confusion as he tries to fight his way back to the wording of his speech. Sometimes he is unable to do so and embarrasses himself and his listeners as well.

A major weakness is that the memorized speech turns out to be a schoolboy recitation with stilted, non-communicative parroting of words. There is apt to be little interplay or communication between audience and speaker.

EXTEMPORANEOUS SPEAKING (MOST EFFECTIVE)

This type of lecture is carefully prepared by analysis, research, and outline. It is neither read, nor memorized. Notes in the form of a brief topic or outline are prepared. This offers the security of careful preparation and at the same time affords its additional advantage of retaining freshness of delivery in which the precise wording of the lecture may vary each time the

lecture is presented.

TRANSITIONS

Transitions are vocal, physical, and verbal bridges that help the Lecturer and the audience move smoothly from one point to another. The transition notifies the audience that the lecturer has finished with one topic and is ready to consider another.

VOCAL TRANSITIONS

The level of the voice is raised or lowered. Lecturers may also speed up or slow down their rate of speaking.

PHYSICAL TRANSITIONS

As a Lecturer arrives at a change of thought, he can move forward or away from his audience.

LANGUAGE TRANSITIONS

This is the most direct means a Lecturer can use to show he has completed one part of his lecture and is about to go on to the next. These language transitions are more effective when they are combined with Vocal and Physical changes in the Lecturer's delivery.

AUDIO VISUAL MATERIALS

Slides and motion pictures can be dramatically and effectively used. They require careful planning. They are all subject to mechanical failure. A projector bulb may fail to function or a film might jump the sprocket. If you are using a slide projector, make sure your slides are in proper order and direction.

Audio visual material should be large enough so that detail can be seen. It should be placed high enough to be seen by those in the back. Talk to your audience, not to your visual aid. Have someone stand by the lights during your presentation.

HANDOUTS

In using handouts, the Lecturer places himself in danger of losing his audience through the very thing he is using as an aid. Some people read slowly. Others read rapidly. Thus some of the audience will fall behind the Lecturer, while others will race ahead of him. The wise Lecturer will save his handouts and pass them out at the close of his presentation.

BEARING

Your bearing and appearance will influence your audience's assessment of you. You must appear vital, alert, and poised. Awkwardness, shifting of weight, and a shambling, careless type of movement will cause the audience's attention to shift from what you are saying to how you look and how you are speaking.

There is no definite set posture which you can assume, but there are some general objectives to keep in mind. These are the things which an audience should deduce from your bearing.

1. That you are alert. Alertness is subtly flattering to any audience; slouchiness and a "who cares" attitude are not.
2. That you are friendly. A lecturer who would establish pleasant relations with an audience must go to at least half way in friendliness, and he must make the pleasant attitude apparent.
3. That you are reasonably dignified. An audience respects a man who has a certain respect for himself.
4. That you are at ease. An audience in one sense, is like a while animal; knowing that you are uncomfortably and nervous makes it rather bloodthirsty.

MODELS

Hold model with as few fingers as possible. Move model as if it were in flight. Try to enhance the model by moving it gracefully.

VOICE

Should be energetic, vital, distinct. Lower pitch of voice to show emphasis instead of raising it.

Fault #1

High pitch – the high pitched voice is a common and unpleasant fault. Far from being persuasive, it is tiresome and irritating. When the voice goes up in pitch it usually thins out, becomes hard, raspy, and nasal. The high pitched voice is unnatural.

The first rule, if you want to avoid the high pitched voice, is to have a relaxed and open throat and an open mouth. Every Lecturer should strive to avoid the unnatural high pitched tones which come from nervousness and excitement.

Fault #2

The falling tone – About three out of five Lecturers have a tendency to let tones die down at the end of sentences and phrases. This is why audiences often miss the important points. The cure for this is to think your thought through until you hit the period. Imagine that you are lecturing to the first two rows of your audience when you open a sentence, and to the last two rows in the rear of the room when you close the sentence.

HINTS:

Don't talk over telemetry.

Don't wait for a laugh.

Pick up the models, don't point.

Try not to talk if back is turned.

Try to give as much movement to a static display as possible.

Don't show all your models at once. Don't display all of your pictures at one time.

Have depth to your display.

Close curtains at beginning and at the end of lecture.

Darken auditorium.

Maximum lighting on table.

Empty boxes removed from viewing area.

If model or picture can be seen by audience, make sure you mention it during the lecture.

Do not let the audience know when the program is ending.

Do not use phrases such as "in closing."

Do not apologize to the audience for anything such as shortness of time, demonstration of failure, etc.

Lack of confidence is the greatest barrier to being a successful lecturer.

Never say anything off color. You are bound to offend someone and one offended person usually makes more noise than the satisfied ones.