



Toastmasters International

Basic Communications and Leadership Program

The basic Toastmaster manual includes ten speech projects, each designed to develop communications skills one step at a time. Each speech builds upon what you have learned in your preceding speeches.

When you join Toastmasters, you will receive a manual with the ten speech projects. In each project, you prepare a speech on a subject of your choice and deliver it using certain speaking principles. Following is a summary of the objectives involved in each speech.

Speech Title	Objectives	Duration
Ice Breaker	To begin speaking before an audience. To help you understand what areas require particular emphasis in your speaking development. To introduce yourself to your fellow club members.	4-6 minutes
Speak with Sincerity	To convince the audience of your earnestness, sincerity and conviction on a subject you thoroughly understand. To confront and control any nervousness you may have.	5-7 minutes
Organize Your Speech	To organize your thoughts into a logical sequence that leads the audience to a clearly defined goal. To build a speech outline that includes an opening, body and conclusion.	5-7 minutes
Show What You Mean	To learn the value of gestures and body movements as part of a speech. To explore the different ways of using body language. To develop a sense of timing and natural, smooth body movement.	5-7 minutes
Vocal Variety	To explore the use of voice volume, pitch, rate and quality as assets to your speaking. To apply the principles of a well-developed voice to a particular speech.	5-7 minutes
Work With Words	To gain an understanding of the functions and uses of the spoken word. To select precisely the right words required to communicate your ideas clearly, vividly and appropriately. To avoid common mistakes in word use.	5-7 minutes
Apply Your Skills	To bring together and apply the communication skills you have learned in the preceding projects. To organize your speech in a logical manner, following one of the suggested outlines. To research the facts needed to support your speech. To make a personal evaluation of your progress.	5-7 minutes
Add Impact to Your Speech	To learn the value of props in speaking. To learn how to use props effectively in your presentations.	5-7 minutes
Persuade with Power	To present a talk that persuades the audience to accept your proposal or viewpoint. To achieve this persuasive effect by appealing to the audience's self-interest, building a logical foundation for agreement, and arousing emotional commitment to your cause.	5-7 minutes
Inspire Your Audience	To understand the mood and feelings of your audience on a particular occasion. To put those feelings into words and inspire the audience, using all the techniques you have learned so far.	8-10 minutes



The Ice Breaker

By now you've heard speeches by club members and have probably participated in Table Topics. This is your opportunity to give your first prepared talk and "break the ice."

The best way to begin your speaking experience is to talk about a familiar subject - yourself. Of course, this subject is too broad for a short four- to six-minute presentation. You must narrow it by selecting three or four interesting aspects of your life that will give your fellow club members insight and understanding of you as an individual. These might include your birthplace, education or family. You could explain how you came to be in your present occupation and tell the audience something about your ambitions. Or you could explain the effect an incident from your youth has had on your life. One speaker donned hats as she talked about her life. She wore a chauffeur's hat as she talked about driving her children to their activities, a fireman's hat as she discussed the crises or "fires" she encountered daily at her work, and a chef's hat as she told of her love of cooking.

Once you have the highlights of your talk in mind, weave them into a story, just as if you were

telling it to friends around the dinner table. Share significant personal experiences. The more personal your talk, the warmer the relationship will be between you and the audience.

Opening, Body and Conclusion

Like any good story, your talk needs a clear beginning and ending. Create an interesting opening sentence that captures the audience's attention. Memorize it, if necessary, and use it even if a better idea occurs to you just before you speak. Then devise a good closing and memorize it, too.

A memorized beginning and ending enable you to start and finish your talk with confidence and ease. In any speech, it's best to select a few main points (three or four at the most) and emphasize them by using examples, stories or anecdotes. If you merely state a fact and then continue, most of your audience will miss the point. You should make a point, say it again in different words, illustrate the point, and then state it once more in order to be clearly understood. This is a good skill to learn. Choose your points and illustrations carefully. Too much information may overwhelm the audience.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

For your first speech project, you will introduce yourself to your fellow club members and give them some information about your background, interests and ambitions. Practice giving your speech to friends or family members, and strive to make eye contact with some of your audience. You may use notes during your speech if you wish. Read the entire project before preparing your talk.



OBJECTIVES:

- ▶ To begin speaking before an audience.
- ▶ To discover speaking skills you already have and skills that need some attention.

Time: Four to six minutes

If you think you will need notes, write a brief speech outline on note cards, which you can place on the lectern. Refer to them only when you need them. Remember, you're speaking, not reading. Many speakers begin by writing out an entire speech, then breaking it into parts, with a key word for each part, and finally writing just the key words on one note card.

Preparing Yourself

Now the talk is ready, but are you ready to present it? Practice the talk until you are comfortable with it. You won't need to memorize the body of the talk, since you already know all about the subject. As mentioned earlier, you should memorize the opening and conclusion.

Present the talk to a family member, a friend or your Toastmasters mentor. Ask for comments. They may give you some helpful suggestions. If you have a tape recorder, record the talk and listen to it carefully, making any necessary improvements. Using a tape recorder is one of the best ways to improving your speaking ability.

Instead of thinking of this presentation as "making a speech," think of it as a talk before a group of friends, sharing information of interest. Don't be afraid of the audience. They have already experienced the same feelings you're having. They want you to succeed and they're eager to help you!

Appearance is important. Be well-groomed and appropriately dressed for your presentation. When you look right, you feel good about your self. You'll then forget about your appearance and concentrate on your talk. You will have increased confidence because you know you've made a good first impression with the audience.

Presenting Your Talk

Once you've prepared and practiced your talk, relax. Nervousness is common to every speaker, no matter how experienced. In fact, you can put this nervous energy to work for you by using it to add excitement to your delivery. No one is going to notice a little quavering in your voice, and it will soon disappear anyway as you become involved with what you're saying. (More information about controlling nervousness appears on page 71.)

While being introduced, take a deep breath and slowly exhale. This will help your voice sound resonant and natural. Begin by facing the Toastmaster

and saying, "Mr. (or Madam) Toastmaster," then face the audience and say, "Ladies and gentlemen. . ." or "Fellow members and guests. . ." Pause, then begin with your memorized opening.

While speaking, make "eye contact" with various members of the audience, first looking directly at one person for a few seconds, then looking at another, so people feel included in your talk. As you do this, glance periodically at the timer. If the red light comes on while you're talking, move smoothly to your conclusion and finish quickly. Observe time limits whenever you speak.

Don't worry about what to do with your hands. Leave them at your sides if this makes you more comfortable. You'll have opportunities to practice "body language" later.

Finish with your memorized conclusion. Some speakers say "thank you" at the very end to signal to the audience that they are finished, but this is not necessary. Instead, after you say your concluding words, nod at the Toastmaster of the meeting and say, "Mr. (or Madam) Toastmaster" and enjoy the applause.

Your Evaluation

After you finish, you'll probably begin evaluating yourself even before you return to your seat. You may think you left out some of the best parts. Every speaker thinks that. Just congratulate yourself on having delivered your first speech, then write down the things you did well and the things you want to improve to make your next speech even better.

To supplement your self-evaluation, an experienced club member has been assigned to evaluate your efforts. Before the meeting begins, give this manual to your evaluator so he or she may make notes on the evaluation page of this project. This gives you a permanent record of your progress. If you want the evaluator to observe something in particular, be sure to inform the evaluator in advance.

Ask other members for additional comments after the meeting (some may give you their own brief written comments during the meeting). All of these comments may not be useful to you, but you should consider them carefully. Remember, each evaluation is an *opinion* of how that person perceived you and your presentation. These opinions usually (but not always) will be helpful to your self-development.

Evaluation Guide for

The Ice Breaker

Title

Evaluator

Date

NOTE TO THE EVALUATOR: In this speech the new member is to introduce himself/herself to the club and begin speaking before an audience. The speech should have a clear beginning, body and ending. The speaker has been advised to use notes if necessary and not to be concerned with body language. Be encouraging and point out the speaker's strong points while gently and kindly mentioning areas that could be improved. Strive to have the speaker look forward to giving another speech. Your evaluation should help the speaker feel glad about joining Toastmasters and presenting this speech. In addition to your oral evaluation, please write answers to the questions below.

_ What strong points does the speaker already have?

_ How well did the audience get to know the speaker?

_ Did the speech reflect adequate preparation?

_ Did the speaker talk clearly and audibly?

_ Did the speech have a definite opening, body and conclusion?

_ Please comment on the speaker's use of notes.

_ What could the speaker have done differently that would have improved the speech?

_ What did you like about the presentation?