

# Preparing your speech

## 5 TIPS FOR GREAT SPEECH PREP:

- 1. KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE:**

Your audience is the reason you're delivering your speech. It's important you keep your audience at the forefront of your mind when preparing your content.

**Who are they?**  
**Where are they from?**  
**What are their expectations?**  
**What new information am I giving them?**  
**Why should they listen to what I've got to say?**

These are all questions you should ask yourself when preparing your speech. You may have to give a similar speech to different audiences and should prepare your speech appropriately for each one. For example, a politician will deliver a message to the cabinet room very differently from how he would deliver it to people working in a mine. Make your speech audience specific.
- 2. SIMPLIFY YOUR STRUCTURE:**

A speaker was asked for the secret of their great success. After thinking about it for a long time he replied: "First I tell them what I am going to say. Then I say it. Then I tell them again". This is a fantastic anecdote about how to think in a broad way in regards to structuring your speech. How you structure your speech will depend on its purpose, however if there is a central theme you are trying to drive home you should focus on reinforcing this through introduction, the body of your speech and your conclusion.
- 3. USE HUMOUR:**

No one put it better than John Cleese: "If I can get you to laugh with me, you like me better, which makes you more open to my ideas. And if I can persuade you to laugh at the particular point I make, by laughing at it you acknowledge its truth."

Don't force humour or tell a joke because you think you need to. Try and make it relatable to your topic or yourself by recounting a funny story that the audience can relate to.
- 4. KNOW YOUR OBJECTIVE:**

Remember from point one, you're giving your speech for a reason, to a particular audience. Your objective is what you are trying to *DO* to your audience. You might be trying to inspire them, educate them, console them or simply entertain them. If you are unsure about what your objective is, ask yourself how you want your audience to feel at the end of your speech. Do you want them to feel motivated? Concerned?

Your objective will keep you focused and you allow you to not only determine what to include in your speech but how to deliver it.
- 5. TELL A PERSONAL STORY:**

This should be relatively easy to do if you're speaking on a topic that you've had personal experience with or know well. What you are doing through personal stories is revealing yourself. Self-disclosure is a great way to gain your audience's trust and attention. If you can reveal something about yourself that the audience may not be expecting of you it can completely shift their assumptions. Self-disclosure doesn't necessarily need to be dramatic, it may be that you share some personal information that is common knowledge and relate that to your topic through a story. For example,

*"My husband is a Swans fan and I barrack for Carlton which has caused some challenges for us however we've persevered through them and this has given me a great insight into the need for compromise, not just in marriage but in all relationships - especially those in the workplace"*

Peter Cook

WWW.PETECOOK.COM.AU