

BE PREPARED TO SPEAK

CHECKLIST

Speechwriting

Step 1: Know Your Audience.

- ☒ 1) How large will your audience be?
- ☐ 2) What are the age and educational ranges of your audience?
- ☐ 3) What are the chief social and financial concerns of your audience?
- ☐ 4) Will your listeners be predominately men or women?
- ☐ 5) What types of employment do your listeners have?
- ☐ 6) What types of hobbies or other interests do your listeners have?
- ☐ 7) Why does this group meet? What common interests bring the members together?
- ☐ 8) What other characteristics typify this audience?

Step 2: Know the Occasion.

- ☐ 1) Is the occasion solemn, formal, or casual?
- ☐ 2) Is an event being celebrated?
- ☐ 3) Does the audience hope to be informed, entertained, or inspired? Or do they hope for some combination of the three?
- ☐ 4) Will a meal be served, and, if so, will you speak before or after the meal?
- ☐ 5) Is there a guest of honor?
- ☐ 6) Will there be other speakers, and, if so, in what order will you speak?
- ☐ 7) How important is your role? Are you the featured speaker?
- ☐ 8) How long a speech does the program chairman expect?

Step 3: Know Your Speaking Environment.

- ☐ 1) How large a room will you be in?
- ☐ 2) Will the audience be sitting in rows of chairs, at tables, or will they be standing?
- ☐ 3) Will you be on a stage or podium, or at a head table?
- ☐ 4) Will you have a lectern?
- ☐ 5) Will you have a microphone, and, if so, will it be portable or fixed?
- ☐ 6) Exactly where will you be, where will the audience be, and where will the guest of honor, the person who introduces you, and other important guests be?

Step 4: Pin Down Your Topic.

- ☐ 1) What information do you have that would provide most benefit to the group members?
- ☐ 2) What information do you have which you are most enthusiastic about sharing with the audience?
- ☐ 3) Why did the group ask you to speak?
- ☐ 4) How can you adapt your special knowledge so that it will both fulfill the expectations of the audience and appeal to their special interests?
- ☐ 5) Is your purpose to inform, persuade, entertain, or inspire? Or is it some combination of the above?

Step 5: Brainstorm.

- ☐ 1) Have you included stories, examples, illustrations, and factual evidence?
- ☐ 2) Have you included illustrations from your personal experience?
- ☐ 3) Have you developed more ideas than you will actually need for your speech?

Step 6: Research.

- ☐ 1) Have you assembled the necessary facts and statistics to make your case convincing?
- ☐ 2) Have you assembled quotes or testimonials from respected sources who agree with you?
- ☐ 3) Have you made use of the materials in your own library?
- ☐ 4) Have you called friends or trade organizations that might have currently updated information?
- ☐ 5) Have you made use of your reference librarian?
- ☐ 6) Have you absolutely assured yourself that all your facts and statistics are accurate and current?

Step 7: Prepare a Rough Draft of Your Speech.

Introduction

- ☐ 1) Is your introduction dramatic, humorous, or unusual enough to grab your audience's attention?
- ☐ 2) Does your introduction include a single sentence that clearly states your topic?
- ☐ 3) Does your introduction conclude with a clear and simple statement of your point of view?
- ☐ 4) Is your language clear and vivid enough to assure your audience that your speech will be entertaining and well-organized?

Discussion

- ☐ 5) Does the discussion section of your speech provide the necessary evidence for your audience to agree with your point of view?
- ☐ 6) Does your discussion concentrate on developing a few points clearly and precisely?
- ☐ 7) Have you organized your discussion section so that your main points develop in a logical sequence or so that the dramatic level builds?
- ☐ 8) Have you used anecdotes, stories, humorous observations, or illustrations to help your audience visualize the meaning of facts and statistics?

Conclusion

- ☐ 9) Have you cued your audience that your conclusion is forthcoming?
- ☐ 10) Have you briefly summarized the very most important points of your presentation?
- ☐ 11) Have you clearly and explicitly stated exactly what actions you would like your listeners to take?
- ☐ 12) Have you left them with a dramatic flourish that makes your speech memorable?

Speech Presentation

Step 8: Transfer Your Speech to Mental or Written Notes.

- ☐ 1) Have you included one word, short phrase, symbol, or letter to remind you of each section of your speech?
- ☐ 2) Have you avoided the temptation to include sentences or whole segments of your speech?
- ☐ 3) Have you personally typed or handwritten your notes?
- ☐ 4) Have you organized your notes clearly using an outline form?
- ☐ 5) Have you made your notes easy to read, with big lettering and plenty of open space?
- ☐ 6) Have you clearly numbered each card or sheet?
- ☐ 7) Have you written out all numbers or quotes which need to be cited exactly?

Step 9: Practice.

- ☐ 1) Have you created conditions as similar as possible to your actual speaking environment?
- ☐ 2) Have you imagined those features of the audience you cannot simulate, things like the full-sized room, faces, the lighting, and the location of the microphone?
- ☐ 3) Have you practiced varying your eye contact among four or five locations distributed throughout the room and holding your eye contact for several seconds at each location?
- ☐ 4) Have you exaggerated variations in the pitch, rate, and volume of your speaking during practice sessions?
- ☐ 5) Have you exaggerated gestures and forced yourself to use them in every sentence during some of your practice sessions?
- ☐ 6) Have you recorded yourself on video or audio tape and evaluated your performance?
- ☐ 7) Have you practiced before an audience of at least one?
- ☐ 8) Have you practiced to the point where your notes are virtually unnecessary?

Control Your Nervousness

Step 10: Beyond Nervousness.

- ☐ 1) Have you imagined your audience responding exactly how you want them to: eager faces, laughter, applause, standing ovation, requests for more information, requests for order forms, handing over checks, asking questions, thanking you, etc.?
- ☐ 2) Have you accepted the fact you may have nervous symptoms on the day of your speech, and gone on to the much more important business of sharing your knowledge and enthusiasm with your audience?
- ☐ 3) Have you reviewed the ten steps and assured yourself that you've done everything necessary to assure an expert speech? Yes?.....

THEN YOU'RE PREPARED TO SPEAK!