



Steps in Public Speaking

1. **Select your speech topic** (see our handy brainstorming tip sheet if you need help in coming up with a subject).

2. **Consider Your Audience.**

What is the range of ages? What are their political views? Are they mostly male or female? Given these demographics, how will the audience most likely react to your ideas and how can you prepare for their reactions?

3. **Think about the Occasion.**

Is this a somber event like a funeral? Is it a festive event such as a wedding? Is it an event where you want to instill a sense of excitement such as a fan conference?

4. **Analyze the Setting.**

Will you give the speech on a stage in a large auditorium? Via tele-conference? In a small classroom with a podium? In a large venue, you will have to project more, pause more, and won't be able to make as much eye contact. In a small classroom, you'll need to project less, pause less, and establish much more eye contact.

5. **Determine Your Purpose.**

Be specific. What do you want the audience to leave with? Do you want to change their beliefs or habits? What do you want them to do when they leave the room?

6. **Prepare the Body of the Speech in Outline Form.**

- Start with a clear thesis.
- Determine the best organizational structure for your purpose:
 - Topical
 - Spatial
 - Chronological
 - Motivated sequence
 - Problem/solution
 - Statement of reasons
 - Comparative advantage

- Select supporting material
- Determine the transitions that will help signal to the audience when you're shifting to a new section of your speech.

7. Prepare the Conclusion.

Summarize your main points, but use different words from what you used previously.

End with a clincher—a statement that will cause your audience to remember your speech when they've left the room.

8. Prepare Your Visual Aids.

Make sure the visual aid actually serves a purpose and that you will use it in the speech.

Otherwise, it will just be a distraction. Please see the Writing Center's tip sheet on visual aids for more help.

9. Practice, practice, practice.

Give your speech in front of a mirror. Time it with a stop watch (the Writing Center recommends the free, downloadable "Handy Free Clock." Know it cold so that you don't end up reading your outline or being overly dependent on your note cards.

10. Get Comfortable on the Day of Your Speech.

Arrive early. Hang around the podium or the front of the room as the audience files in. Greet people. Smile.