



PUBLIC SPEAKING

for Personal Success

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PREFACE

This text, *Public Speaking for Personal Success*, is written for students enrolled in an introductory public speaking course. We have tried to present a thorough blend of theory and practical application so that students will find this book both informative and useful. Our teaching experience and our ongoing research into the basic speech communication course convince us that this is a desirable approach, because it maintains intellectual integrity while showing students precisely how to prepare and deliver a speech. Throughout this text, our suggestions are based on the research literature of our field. In addition, each chapter includes many illustrations and real-life examples to help our readers understand and apply those suggestions.

The title of this text, *Public Speaking for Personal Success*, conveys our primary reason for writing this book. We believe that there is a direct relationship between a person's verbal ability—especially in one-to-many settings—and how that person is perceived by others. If others perceive a person as articulate and competent, then that person's chances for achieving success in personal, civic, and professional endeavors increases dramatically. As one of our former students (now a successful executive in a major corporation) put it, "In the real world of industry and commerce, it doesn't matter how much you know if you can't easily put it into a coherent and persuasive presentation." The title of this text is intended to convey the book's applicability. Students will encounter many occasions when they will have to organize their ideas and present them to others. The knowledge and skills presented herein offer students a valuable tool that will last a lifetime. The time and energy invested now will yield dividends for years to come.

Students learn to give speeches most easily when they see how the ideas they are studying actually apply. For this reason, we have included a large number of carefully developed examples and illustrations. We have deliberately drawn many examples from the classroom because we believe that students must be able to relate to the examples and perceive them as models of attainable performance. We have also included a number of examples from business and professional settings. In chapter 4 on audience analysis, Mark Williams, a computer engineer, fails to communicate effectively with his listeners because he wrongly assumes that their knowledge is comparable to his own. A young government worker's speech falls short of its goal in chapter 12 because the message does not meet the criteria of competence and appropriateness for informative speeches. These examples, framed in settings beyond the public speaking classroom, impress upon students the relevance and applicability of their work in this course.

Our coverage of the material and sequencing of the chapters is designed to fit public speaking classes as they are generally taught today. Our composite understanding of the basic course draws on two major sources. First, we have participated in the "Survey of the Basic Course," a longitudinal survey first conducted in 1970 and subsequently performed three times. This research, the only such study in existence, has afforded us a clear understanding of the topics and the amount of coverage that instructors across the country think are important in the basic speech course. Second, Wm. C. Brown Publishers has conducted both quantitative and qualitative market research in the basic public speaking course. We are confident that the organization and coverage presented here are compatible with most basic courses. However, because the chapters are self-contained and cross-referenced, an instructor can present these materials in a different pattern.

We also carefully reviewed our own experience with teaching public speaking—nearly fifty years in all—to discover what has helped our students become effective speakers. This fund of experience often served as a reliable guide because both of us have tried over the years to think of the student first: which approaches clarify content, reduce anxiety, and generally facilitate the acquisition of public speaking skills, and which do not. The features of this text are designed to respond to student needs based on this fund of experience.

Chapter 1. We are convinced that effective public speaking is an important skill that can contribute to a person's personal and professional success. Such skill derives from a knowledge of the components of public speaking and from self-confidence. The first step in acquiring a knowledge of public speaking is to understand the communication process. In chapter 1 we introduce a process model of communication for that purpose. This

Specific Features

Content Features

model does not allow, however, for the fact that public speaking is more structured and formal than conversation. These attributes of public speaking often produce anxiety in the speaker, anxiety that must be controlled for the speaker to be self-confident. We go on to reassure students that nervousness is normal and it can be controlled.

Chapter 2. This chapter provides an overview of the essential steps in preparing a speech. We chose this position in chapter 2 because many instructors want students to give speeches as early in the term as possible. While we take up many of the same themes in greater depth in subsequent chapters, there is plenty here to get students started.

Chapter 3. The topic of effective listening is attracting increasing attention in our society because so many people are poor listeners. We approach this concern by describing the problems that commonly distract us and undercut our listening attention. This understanding will, in turn, afford students an awareness of how to plan and deliver speeches that make it easier for listeners to pay attention.

Chapter 4. Perhaps the most difficult concept for students to learn is that the speech must be related to the listeners. A speech that listeners do not attend to is a waste of time. Here we emphasize the need for effective audience analysis. Every student who reads this book will know that the audience is the most important part of the speech setting and that careful attention to the listeners is the most effective means of ensuring a successful speech.

Chapter 5. Students often seem to want to include everything they know about a subject in a single speech. Consequently, clear and careful focus on a single idea and a single purpose has often been among the most difficult concepts to teach. We emphasize this point in chapter 5, but only after describing proven guidelines for developing both the quantity and quality of the ideas.

Chapter 6. Often the nature of the topic and the audience will suggest a particular pattern of organization. A planning outline imposes structure on the presentation. This structure helps students assemble their ideas and assists the audience in following the speaker's train of thought. The speaking outline is the final manifestation of this process of organizing and outlining. This is the focus of chapter 6.

Chapter 7. A good introduction prepares the audience for what is to follow, and it confers upon the speaker the confidence that the speech is off on the right track. A good conclusion summarizes the main points of the speech while signaling to the audience that the speech is over. This chapter is filled with suggestions and illustrations of ways to "frame" a speech.

Chapter 8. Effective delivery cannot be taken for granted. Using notes, attending to verbal and nonverbal concerns, and dealing with unwanted surprises are all aspects of delivery. Because effective delivery can make the difference between a good and a mediocre speech, we have tried to anticipate and answer a wide range of questions related to delivery.

Chapter 9. Over the years we have found that most of our students have no idea how to go about developing or using evidence. Chapter 9, on supporting ideas with evidence and argument, presents what we believe to be most helpful to students. We suggest ways that students can strengthen their speeches through attention to the idea of credibility.

Chapter 10. Our students—and most of the adult learners in the business and industrial community whom we have trained—often have difficulty judging, developing, and using visual materials. Students who follow the suggestions in this chapter will be able to develop useful visual materials easily. We are confident that this is the most complete and helpful chapter of its kind among introductory public speaking texts.

Chapter 11. Language provides the building blocks of thought and communication and is, therefore, a tool that can be shaped to serve us better. Our language will work more effectively for us if we understand its nature and the problems inherent in its use. We offer suggestions for improving language use, because we feel strongly that language, if chosen carefully, can be the key to successful presentation.

Chapter 12. Informative speaking involves the transmission of ideas and information from a speaker to an audience. Because the goal of an informative speech can be either to expand upon or clarify what the audience already knows, the nature and appropriateness of a topic are important. We stress the positive aspects of a good informative speech—clarity, simplicity, and concreteness—and reinforce the student's understanding by emphasizing that opposing aspects—vagueness, abstraction, and apparent complexity—are problems that must be avoided.

Chapter 13. Moving listeners in the desired direction is, in a sense, the essence of leadership and is, therefore, an important tool for people who want to achieve personal success. A successful persuasive speaker understands the motivations of the audience, and thus uses logic and emotion to change the attitudes of the listeners. In this chapter students will also learn about the importance of speaker credibility and about the fallacies that must be avoided in order to achieve credibility in the minds of listeners.

Chapter 14. Students need to understand speeches for special occasions because such speeches play an important role in the ritual life of American society. Whether it is a speech of introduction at the Rotary Club, a keynote speech, or a speech of tribute at a retirement ceremony, the special occasion speech places certain demands on the speaker and constraints on the content of the speech. Chapter 14 will make students more aware of this kind of speech and its important role in our society.

Chapter 15. Because decision-making groups are so much a part of our civic, governmental, and business subcultures, effective participation in such groups can make an important contribution to personal success. Decision making, because it is a cooperative process, requires sensitivity to the concerns of others and the effective use of leadership skills. Our final chapter on small groups affords students insight into the nature of groups and provides advice on successful group participation. Many of the principles of effective communication discussed in earlier chapters are shown to apply in a group context. The results of effective decision making often take the form of a proposal that must be advocated. This special persuasion problem implies that the student must learn to handle a variety of public group contexts. Chapter 15 ends with a discussion of these important contexts.

Learning Aids

Chapter-Opening Pedagogy

Each chapter opener is designed to give students the clearest possible impression of the nature and purpose of the chapter. The chapter **outline**, which includes three levels of headings, shows students the chapter organization at a glance. The **objectives** point toward the most important themes within that organization, and the **preview** surveys the essential elements of the chapter. These three elements will acquaint the student with the content of the chapter and effectively serve as the basis for review.

End-of-Chapter Pedagogy

At the end of each chapter the student will find several helpful learning tools. The **summary** aids review by providing only the gist of the chapter. The **key terms**, defined in the *glossary* as well as in the text, provide the essential concepts that students should retain. **Discussion questions** enhance understanding by asking students to apply what they have learned in concrete situations, and encourage students to practice the analytic and performance skills we describe. Following the **notes** are **suggested readings**, an annotated bibliography that gives students suggestions for further reading material. Our end-of-chapter sequence is complete but not burdensome, didactic but not prescriptive.

To help reinforce in students' minds the relationship of public speaking skills to success in later life, we have selected **quotations** from successful people. These quotations appear in boxed inserts in chapters 1, 6, and 11. For example, students will read comments from Senator John Danforth on organizing a speech and from Edwin Newman on the value of effective language use. Gloria Steinem talks about stage fright and Shirley MacLaine about reducing her dependence on lengthy notes. In each case, students will be led to understand that what they are learning now can serve them later.

Boxed Inserts

Students will find the end-of-book material equally helpful. In selecting the nine **sample speeches**, we used instructional value and topic interest as the most important criteria. We also felt it was important to expose students to various levels of speaker experience. Therefore, we have presented speeches by Mario Cuomo and Pat Schroeder, political figures whose success has been based partly on their ability to speak effectively often. In contrast, we have included three speeches by students whose only training has been a one-term course in public speaking. Between these extremes are two speeches by experienced student speakers and two speeches by professional people who speak occasionally. This range of speaker experience should convey to students the notion that growth in public speaking ability is a process that is applicable now, in the classroom, *and* in future pursuits. As a further study aid, we have included *marginal notations* that point out the strengths and appropriateness of the major sections of each speech.

End-of-Book Pedagogy

Student speakers often need to use the library to find information and supporting evidence. We have included a section on **using the library**, which many students will find helpful. Professional librarians have reviewed and provided constructive comments for helping us refine and improve this section of the book. We are confident that students will find it a valuable reference.

The **glossary** is a compilation of the important terms used in the study of public address.

Unique to this text is the **troubleshooting guide**. We think that students ought to be able to find answers to questions *that are couched in student terms*. This guide is organized around the questions most commonly asked by our students. Then the page on which the answer to the question can be found is given. For example, the question might be, "When should I use visual supporting materials?" or "How can I help my group become a stronger team?" The pages on which the answers to these questions can be found are then listed—in this case, on pages 203–8 and 332–33, respectively. We believe that this guide will give students wider access to this text by providing a different approach to organizing and classifying the information.

These end-of-book materials, like the body of the text, have been created with the student in mind. Our overriding concern has focused on students and how we can assist them in acquiring the knowledge and skills of public speaking. We want to serve them well. *Public Speaking for Personal Success* should be much more than a text that gathers dust on the shelf after one term of use. We hope we have created a book that will provide guidance long after students have completed the course. Personal success is, after all, an endeavor that should continue beyond the classroom.

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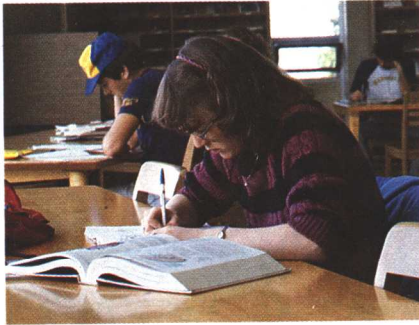
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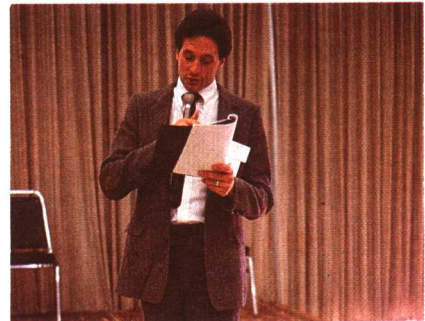
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