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# PUBLIC SPEAKING

Michael Osborn  
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# *For Ann, Randy, and Tom*

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# Preface

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Many years ago we stepped — totally unprepared — into the classroom to teach our first public speaking classes. Talk about performance anxiety! Now we write this preface, convinced that the ancients were wise to place the study of public speaking at the center of the educational discipline. Where else are students required to think clearly and correctly, to speak responsibly, to adapt to the needs of others with sensitivity, to treat listeners ethically, and to express themselves with power and conviction, all at the same time and under the direct scrutiny of critical listeners? Practicing this demanding art can enhance other undergraduate coursework. Because it helps make people more effective, public speaking is also a practical art. In writing *Public Speaking*, we have kept in mind what Diane Ravitch, professor at Columbia Teachers College, advised recent graduates: “The person who knows ‘how’ will always have a job. The person who knows ‘why’ will always be his boss.”

*Public Speaking* offers the student practical instruction on *how* to speak effectively in public and an introduction to the basic principles of effective communication. There are many vivid examples and models of successful speeches illustrating clear, step-by-step advice on *how* to prepare and present a speech. We stress the value of speech training in the development of the total person. We assume that students are curious and that they wish to know and understand *why* some people are more effective and others less effective as public speakers. We also emphasize the idea that successful public speaking is leadership-in-effect and that speech training is excellent preparation for leadership. A solid understanding of public communication makes students more resistant to unethical speakers and more critical of the style and substance of daily communication. We explain our

concept of public speaking as a dynamic circle that links speakers, listeners, language, the specific time and place of the speech, and the overall communication environment. In short, our goal is to provide both the *how* and the *why*, to help students become better speakers and better consumers of public communication.

## SPECIAL FEATURES

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Our combined experience with students of public speaking and our own studies in the field of communication have helped us to develop the special features of this book:

### **Accessible and Readable Presentation**

We have carefully balanced the best of contemporary theory and practical advice, always anchoring abstract ideas with examples drawn from our own classroom experience or from contemporary public speeches. Each chapter begins with a short overview in outline form and ends with Terms to Know, Discussion Questions, and Applications. Many of these exercises refer students to Appendix B, "Speeches for Analysis," at the end of the book. Boxed Speaker's Notes, for example, "Practicing With an Outline" and "Using Examples," highlight important advice and provide an easy reference for students to use when preparing speeches. Chapter 2, "Your First Speech," is a unique chapter that offers students the advice they need to develop, structure, and present a speech of introduction. This overview enables students to turn introductory speeches into engaging portraits that build a sense of classroom community and trust.

### **Thorough Coverage of Types of Discourse**

We not only cover the nature and kinds of informative and persuasive speaking but devote separate chapters to the use of supporting materials and to using evidence, proof, and argument. We treat ceremonial speeches with substance and seriousness, featuring the techniques of identification, magnification, and narrative development. Appendix A, "Group Communication," offers concise practical advice on how to effectively participate in small groups.

### **Abundance of Sample Speeches and Outlines**

Throughout our book we have provided lively, instructive models to guide students in their classroom speaking experiences. Sample speeches and outlines — many annotated in color — illustrate the techniques appropriate to particular assignments. The nine additional speeches for analysis in Appendix B represent an interesting variety of speech topics, types, contexts, and speakers.

### **Extensive Treatment of Planning and Structuring Speeches**

We give careful attention to the important tasks of topic development and speech structure, and we provide step-by-step instruction on how to determine and develop the main points of a speech. We also introduce the concept of good form, which we relate to why speeches succeed or fail. Because outlining is such an important part of planning and composing a speech, the chapters on structuring and outlining appear early in the book. Chapter 7 guides students carefully through the process of outlining a speech.

### **Open, Inviting Design**

Good ideas deserve an attractive presentation. The open and appealing format of *Public Speaking* enables students easily to distinguish among instruction, examples, and highlighted speech texts. Of special interest to students planning a career in business is *Public Speaking at Work*, a full-color photographic interview with a business executive.

## **DESIGN OF THE BOOK**

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The design of the book is both logical and flexible. We have found that the present sequence of topics works well in the classroom, beginning with an overview of the communication process and gradually building more complex skills and deeper understanding. Teachers who prefer a different sequence, however, will find it easy to use our book because each chapter covers a discrete topic thoroughly and completely.

Part I, "The Foundations of Public Speaking," provides basic information that students need to prepare for their first speaking as-

signment. Chapter 1 highlights the personal and social benefits of speaking effectively and explains the ethical responsibilities speakers must always bear in mind. We use a dynamic model of the communication process to emphasize the interaction of speaker, message, audience, and the communication environment in public speeches. The chapter concludes with an overview of the criteria for determining a good public speech.

Chapter 2 prepares students for an initial speaking assignment with specific, practical suggestions for developing, outlining, and structuring a speech to introduce themselves or classmates. This assignment can help establish credibility, provide information for later audience analysis, and set the scene for constructive and trusting class interaction. An annotated student speech of self-introduction completes the chapter. Chapter 3, on critical listening and speech evaluation, stresses the constructive role of the audience in public communication. Common listening problems are identified and ways to overcome these problems are explained. This chapter concludes by developing the criteria introduced in Chapter 1 into a useful "listener's guide" for evaluating speeches.

Part II, "Preparation for Public Speaking," provides in-depth coverage of the basic skills needed to prepare an effective speech: topic selection, research techniques, audience analysis, and basic principles of speech organization. Chapter 4 provides systematic ways to select and refine topics so that the speech purpose is clearly framed. We also identify library resources most useful for public speeches and offer suggestions for interviewing. Chapter 5 provides an understanding of the importance of considering the audience when preparing and developing a speech. We explain how to adapt to the speech occasion, audience characteristics (including demographic information), and audience dynamics. Chapters 6 and 7 focus on structuring, organizing, and outlining a speech. These chapters show students how to determine the main points in the body of the speech and prepare effective introductions and conclusions. Examples guide students through the outlining process, from developing an initial preparation outline to completing a formal outline and a key-word outline for use during presentation.

Part III, "Developing Presentation Skills," covers the use of visual aids, language, voice, and body for an effective presentation. Chapter 8 explains the development and appropriate use of visual aids to augment the message of a speech; examples illustrate the strengths and weaknesses of each type. Chapter 9 provides a comprehensive understanding of the powerful role language plays in communication

and offers many practical suggestions for using language effectively. Chapter 10 helps students develop presentation skills, concentrating on the effective use of voice and body in communication. The aim of this chapter is to help students develop an extemporaneous style that is adaptable to most public speaking situations.

Part IV, "Informative Public Speaking," covers the principles and practices of speeches designed to share information and increase understanding. Chapter 11 explains the functions of informative speaking and presents designs suitable for structuring informative speeches. We go beyond the mechanics to show how informative speaking serves listeners' basic desire to learn, and conclude the chapter with an annotated student speech. Chapter 12 features the use of supporting materials such as facts and figures, examples, and testimony; it also includes special coverage of the use of narrative.

Part V, "Persuasive Public Speaking," describes the principles underlying the persuasive process and the skills needed for persuasion. Chapter 13 focuses on the nature and types of persuasive speaking, covers designs that are especially appropriate to persuasive speeches, and offers an annotated student speech for analysis. This chapter integrates information from the social sciences into the humanistic perspective of the book, showing how persuasion operates in our daily life. In Chapter 14 we explain the uses of evidence, proof, and argument and how they combine in effective persuasion; we also provide information on defective persuasion and fallacies.

Part VI, "Speeches for Other Occasions," thoroughly treats the techniques and ideas for speaking on special occasions. Chapter 15 features ceremonial speaking, showing its relationship to cultural values and emphasizing the important techniques of identification and magnification. We consider many types of ceremonial speeches, including speeches of introduction, tribute, acceptance, inspiration, and celebration. This chapter includes annotated excerpts and an annotated after-dinner speech to illustrate the major techniques.

Appendix A, "Group Communication," introduces students to the problem-solving process and the responsibilities of group participants and explains guidelines for managing informal and formal meetings. Appendix B contains nine additional speeches for study and analysis. Four are by famous public figures: Elie Wiesel, recipient of the 1986 Nobel Peace Prize; Dianne Feinstein, Mayor of San Francisco; Bill Cosby, noted entertainer; and President Ronald Reagan. The remaining five speeches were developed by students on topics ranging from air safety to nutrition.



## SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

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Available to teachers for use with *Public Speaking* are:

- an Instructor's Resource Guide, written by Suzanne McCorkle of Boise State University, containing chapter-by-chapter suggestions and ample supplementary exercises, speaking assignments, and evaluation materials
- test-generating software
- grade management software
- transparencies for use with overhead projectors

For further information, please refer to the Instructor's Resource Guide or contact your Houghton Mifflin Regional Sales Office.

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*Michael Osborn  
Suzanne Osborn*

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