

Basic Elements of Public Speaking

Include these basic elements to make your speech effective.

Every speech is made up of basic elements of public speaking. Understanding and including each of those elements can make a bad speech good, or a good speech great. Here's three of the most basic elements and the considerations that each one should address.

1. **Introduction.** Most people don't pay enough attention to the introduction of a speech. The introduction is one of the most important parts of the speech, because if you lose your audience at the beginning, getting them back can be next to impossible. Here's some things that you should have in your introduction.
 - *Attention.* Arguably the most important part of the introduction, you must get your audience's attention. A joke, a quote, a startling statistic, any number of things can serve the purpose well.
 - *Purpose.* Why are you speaking to them? What will make listening worth their time? You might present your purpose implicitly rather than explicitly, but you must present it somehow.
 - *Credibility.* Many speakers neglect this part of an introduction, but depending on your topic, it could be very important. Why are you qualified to talk on the things you are talking about? Don't be arrogant, but be certain that your audience trusts and believes in you and your knowledge.
 - *Orientation.* Is there any essential background your audience needs to know before you get to the meat of your speech?
2. **Body.** This is the main content portion of your speech. Exactly what you need to include will depend on the purpose of your speech, but here are a few essential elements.
 - *Organization.* Your audience needs to be able to follow you. Be certain that you have some sort of pattern.
 - *Transitions.* Don't just jump from point to point, but smoothly move from one issue to the next. Transitions are the 'bridges' of your speech. Without them, your audience will get disoriented and you might leave them behind.

- *Development.* Your points should build on each other, combining into one grand whole. Go from simple to more complex, ending with the most powerful.
 - *Climax.* At some point, your speech should come to a head. Everything should come together, your audience's emotions should be peaked right alongside you, and you should largely fulfill your purpose in giving the speech. Developing a climax is, in my opinion, the hardest part of speech writing (and the most powerful of the basic elements of public speaking).
3. **Conclusion.** Here, you should wrap up any loose ends. This is the final part of your speech, and also the part your audience is most likely to remember. Be certain to include:
- *A final closing example.* Drive your point home with one more powerful demonstration.
 - *Call to action.* What should your audience do now? If you weren't trying to persuade them to do something, what is the most important point that they should take away from your speech?
 - *Why it mattered.* Briefly recap what you said, reminding your audience why it mattered.

(Source: <http://www.speech-time.com/basic-elements-of-public-speaking.html>)

Public Speaking 101

You didn't take "Public Speaking 101" in college? That's ok, because here we have all the information you would have learned there, and it's free!

Public Speaking 101 is an overview of the basics of public speaking. That's your first stop for public speaking information. Once you know the basics, move on to the rest of this website on the left-hand navigation bar.

We'll discuss four areas of basic knowledge important to developing public speaking skills: Background, Basics, Preparation, and Practicalities. Ready, set, go!

The Background of Public Speaking

Here's a couple things everybody looking into public speaking should know - these form the background for Public Speaking 101.

- **What is public speaking?** Simply put, public speaking is talking to a group of people. The Oxford English Dictionary defines public speaking as: "The action or practice of

addressing public gatherings; the making of speeches" (Oxford English Dictionary, 3rd Edition).

- [Types of public speaking](#). Some broad categories are:
 - informative
 - persuasive
 - ceremonial
 - extemporaneous/impromptu
 - [after dinner](#)
 - along with debate, broadcasting, religious talks, etc.
- [History of public speaking](#). Public speaking has existed since the dawn of human history. The first known work concerning public speaking was written over 2500 years ago. Since then, public speaking has evolved to encompass various techniques and technologies.
- [Public speaking facts](#). The *Book of Lists* lists fear of public speaking as the #1 fear, even above death. Is this statistic correct?

Public Speaking Basics

- [The First Principle of Public Speaking](#). Understand that "a person is only as effective as his communication."
- [Fundamentals of public speaking](#). To speak well, one must understand and practice pronunciation, articulation, projection, inflection, and (sorry to break the 'tion' pattern) audience engagement.
- [Basic elements of public speaking](#). A typical speech has a number of basic elements. Among those are the:
 - introduction
 - body
 - and conclusion,

each of which must fulfill specific functions to make the speech effective.

- [Public Speaking Techniques](#). A number of techniques, including utilizing humor, gestures, and repeated phrases, can enhance a speaker's effectiveness.
- [Guidelines for public speaking](#). There are a few rules that one would do well to keep in mind. (Remember, though, that none of these rules are hard-and-fast, but rather are just guidelines.)

Public Speaking Preparation

First and foremost, you must settle on a [public speaking topic](#).

Also, you may want to consider some [public speaking quotes](#) when preparing speeches.

Public Speaking Practicalities

Considering a couple of practical items can make a speech or presentation go smoothly. Some of those are:

- [Public speaking and dress](#). What you wear is important. Your dress forms part of the overall impression you give to your audience.

- [Ethics in public speaking](#). When preparing and delivering your speech, you'll want to consider a couple of ethical issues. For example, what is the proper use of statistics and sources?

There's a lot of information on this page. Need more? My friend Eric Feng is also a professional public speaker, and he's tapped the minds of some of the best speakers in the world to create a killer course that you can download. Check it out: [The FAQ Book on Public Speaking](#).

Congratulations, you've just graduated from Public Speaking 101!

How to speak to the media

Getting your issue, organisation or event into the headlines.

SUBMITTED 10/04/2006 BY [THEA](#) VIEWS 11376 COMMENTS [1](#) UPDATED 2/07/2008



If you want your organisation, issue or event to make headlines, there are three things you should know:

1. types of media that will be interested
2. who to speak to
3. what you want to say

This page can help with you numbers 2) and 3). See the ['Tips for getting media coverage page'](#) for ideas on number 1).

Your audience

Ever seen a stand-up comic who just can't seem to get a laugh? They don't know their audience and so the audience won't respond to their jokes.

Who are you trying to speak to? Who will be interested in what you have to say? For example, if you want to announce the results of a study on the environmental impact of logging in old-growth forests, don't do it at a meeting of a woodchoppers association.

Think about who your audience is and talk to them. Contact the types of media that they would read or watch. For example, the internet is great for young people, but lots of older people don't know how to use a computer, let alone surf the web.

Your message

What do you really want people to know about your organisation, issue or event? Sounds simple, but you have to get your message clear before trying to publicise it.

You should never try to tell people more than three things at once. Choose the three things that you absolutely have to say and build your message on these:

For example:

1. Melbourne's Co-Op Shop celebrates its fifth birthday this Sunday 26th March.
2. the Co-Op Shop sells ready-to-eat food and ingredients to make your day healthy.
3. the Co-Op Shop profits are used to fund community projects.

It is important that people know the Co-Op Shop profits are put back into the community, this is a unique quality of the shop and a major selling point that will attract customers.

Other information such as how many people work at the Co-Op Shop, how the Co-Op was started, or the colour of the Co-Op shop's front door may be nice for people to know but not essential.

Your angle

In the above Co-Shop example the 5th birthday bit is the angle of the story. It's like the bait that the media fish will bite and then you can reel them in with the rest of the info. But if the angle isn't there, you're not going to catch anything.

They say that if dog bites man, it's not news. But if man bites dog, you've got yourself a story.

So you've got to think of something that makes your story newsworthy.

What usually works is:

- if it's timely, if it's happening now
- the 'first' of something, or the 'biggest' or 'best' of something, e.g. the most people involved in something
- an anniversary celebration or annual memorial
- something involving a local person or place (if you're contacting their relevant local newspaper or radio)
- the release of the results of a survey or study that prove something new or have major implications for lots of people
- if you are launching a fundraising campaign and announcing a target you want to reach
- if it involves a celebrity
- if there's a great photo opportunity at an upcoming event or a great photo of something that's just happened (not relevant to radio!)
- anything that adds depth to or is part of the debate of any of the above.

Thea is completing a Bachelor of Communications (Public Relations) at RMIT University, Melbourne. She was part of the first ActNow Incubator team.

(source: http://www.actnow.com.au/Tool/How_to_speak_to_the_media.aspx)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F223rNalrv0> (british accent)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wXSM0eE70uc&feature=related> (media training - good)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SEYBUWCdG3I&feature=related> (cartoonish media prep training)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SWGvhYsDkhg&feature=related> (Ben Roethlisberger interview – how to not answer the question)