

Speech Qualities: Part 3

The following four speech qualities largely deal with making your point. Driving it home to the audience. The main purpose of your talk should be to impart or transfer information to the audience, and presumably they are there to learn. If they forget the benefit is lost. One of the best ways to help the audience remember your talk is to repeat the most important points. The old adage that repetition is the mother of learning seems to hold true in this case.

H. Repetition for Emphasis

1. Repetition of main points using summaries
 - Progressive summary – review essentials of each main point as it is considered drawing into each successive summary the essentials of the preceding points.
 - Concluding summary – review entire talk in a few brief statements; “tell them what you told them”.
 - Summaries need not be dry or repetitive restatement of points or ideas.
 - Can be accomplished by:
 - Illustrations
 - Use of quotations
 - Different viewpoint
 - Comparisons and contrasts
 - Drawing parallels
 - Use of synonyms and questions
 - Use of outline form in introduction
2. Repetition of difficult concepts, unclear points
 - Depends on audience
 - Eye contact will tell you if your audience is “getting the message” or not.

I. Gestures

Adds emphasis to what you say, leaves a visual impression, vitalizes ideas, should be natural and appropriate, includes body and hand gestures as well as facial expressions, they animate and enliven you as well as your talk; may not apply when using visual aids in a darkened room.

1. Descriptive gestures
 - Express action, or show dimension or location
2. Emphatic gestures
 - Express feelings and convictions
 - Punctuate, vitalize, and reinforce ideas
 - Do not let them become mannerisms

J. Topic or Subject Theme Emphasized

1. The theme is the “gist” of your talk, permeates the entire presentation, and will be obvious to the audience if properly emphasized.
2. Accomplish by:
 - Selecting an appropriate theme – not too broad or narrow for circumstances
 - Repetition of key words, phrases, thoughts, and ideas
3. Appropriate topic or theme
 - Depends on audience, objective, and the material your need to cover
4. Theme words or ideas repeated

K. Main Points Made to Stand Out

1. Main points must be identified and codified before developing the presentation. They serve as labels or headings for sections of the talk; they are the essential information you want to get across to the audience.
2. Essential points are those that are necessary to accomplish the purpose of the talk, to get the message across.
3. Depends on what the audience already knows.
4. Not too many main points
 - Ordinarily the number of main points in a talk is relatively small (3-5) no matter how much time is available for the presentation.
 - Audience can reasonably grasp only so much information at one sitting.
 - Rule of thumb: if an idea could be left out and the purpose of the talk still is accomplished, that point is not necessary.
 - Some minor points may be included as connectives, but should not be emphasized.
 - The presentation should give the impression of simplicity no matter how complicated the material.
5. Main ideas developed separately
 - Each one should stand alone and developed separately whenever possible
 - Use repetition, overlapping and regressions for connections, as appropriate
6. Sub-points focus on or serve to clarify main points
 - All points of proof, data, quotations, or other supporting materials should bear directly on, or focus on, the main idea and amplify or clarify it.
 - Explicitly make the connection for the audience; do not assume the audience will make the connection of sub-points to the main idea.