

Ten Delivery Principles Every Speaker Should Use

DP1 *Set the Stage*

Start smart. Begin your speech with caution and care consciously aware of the factors that create the audience's first impression. Your speech begins well before you ever open your mouth. Consider each stage and how they impact your speech.

- **Before the speech:** Includes your attitude about delivery, degree of preparation, your confidence level and various non verbal messages.
- **Taking the stage:** Includes how organized you appear, your stride, posture and confidence level, and even how friendly and approachable you appear.
- **Establish:** Stand before audience feet firmly planted, exude friendly confidence through posture and poise, establish rapport through eye contact and calmly wait each and every audience member to "be ready" to hear your words.
- **First spoken words:** Know your first two lines. Project the words using plenty of vocal variety and pauses for impact. (Be careful to not look down at your cards and break the connection with the audience.)

DP2 *Control the Energy*

Beware and aware of the competing energies in any given speaking environment. Speaker's energy, audience energy and room dynamics each intersect to create a given dynamic. Anticipate and respond appropriately to create a conducive, receptive environment.

- **Speaker's Energy:** Speaker energy related to and about the presentation (are you excited or dreading, prepared or unprepared) and your energy outside the presentation (your health or stressors that impact your personal energy).
- **Audience's Energy:** Collective energy of the group (high/low, weak/strong) vs individual group member's energy (negative/positive).
- **Room Energy:** The size, temperature, lighting and set up all influence the feeling of the presentation.

DP3 *Speak Up!*

Engage your diaphragm to speak up. Speaking from your diaphragm ensures that your words resonate from deep within you and are fueled by your breath. Speaking from your throat rather than your diaphragm over time can damage your vocal cords. There is a direct correlation between controlling nervous energy and speaking up. The more you speak up confidently, the more control you will exert over anxiety.

DP4 *Sweeten It!*

Make the speech all that it can be by taking advantage of every opportunity your speech allows. Each speech contains specific opportunities to consciously engage the audience and make the content come alive. Consider how you can capitalize on every opportunity. Consider incorporating each of the five senses; implement each delivery principle to the best of your ability. Most people have few opportunities to stand before an audience and create change...make the most of the opportunity, make the speech all that it can be.

DP5 ***Power of the Pause***

Powerful use of silence to solicit a specific response from the audience. Four types of pauses are: transitional, dramatic, impact, unplanned. Often, pauses should be planned prior to delivery.

1. **Transitional:** Pause used to notify the audience of a change in ideas both large (points) and small (research and connections). Length of the pause depends upon the size of the change.
2. **Dramatic:** Pause used to add impact to an idea. Can be used to gain attention usually for humor or to make a profound point, like asking probing questions of the audience.
3. **Impact:** A short pause used to create emphasis and interest prior to verbally emphasizing certain words with tone and pitch. Typically incorporated prior to numbers, conjunctions, adjectives and pronouns a short pause is inserted before the verbal emphasis is added.
4. **Unplanned:** Strategy a speaker incorporates live to reset the focus or direction of the speech. Speaker stops speaking and waits long enough to continue the speech as planned.
 - Audience Regroup: Audience attention wanes or gets off topic responding to a disruption.
 - Speaker Regroup: Speaker may get off topic or competing thoughts make it difficult to formulate cohesive sentences.
 - Sentence Regroup: Strategy to pause long enough to identify the right word rather than insert filler words.

DP6 ***Engage, Engage, Engage***

Planned, thoughtful ways to keep your audience involved in your presentation. The 4 Ps for an engaging speech include:

1. **Personal stories:** Share personal stories that includes details: who, what, where, why, how and how. Don't be afraid to be vulnerable.
2. **Probing questions:** Ask probing questions that require the audience to conjure up their own experience and connection to the content.
3. **Props (3D):** Incorporate objects that demonstrate or illustrate content from your speech. Be creative.
4. **Physical activities:** Inject activities that require at least two audience members to move from sitting in their seat. (Stand request to verify audience response/role plays).

DP7 *Use Your Space Wisely*

Consider your use of space and how you can use your space to solicit the best audience response. Cultural influences create a powerful response to space dynamics within each of us. Breaking cultural norms can be a very powerful way to gain the audience's attention. Your space includes various different elements.

- **Stage:** The stage itself can differ greatly varying from a formal lifted stage placing you above your audience to a less formal space in front of an audience. In either situation always strive to get as close to your audience as possible. Either bring yourself to the audience or bring members of the audience to you physically or verbally by identifying specific audience members or targeting areas in the audience i.e. those of you in the back row.
- **Podium or Lectern:** A podium is a raised platform and a lectern is a slanted high desk often used to place speaking notes during a lecture. Often one or the other will be provided for your use as a speaker. Just because it is there does not mean that you are required to use it or are tied to it. The situation often dictates which rules to follow. Consider whether or not you can step out from behind the podium or if the situation is formal and requires you to adhere to the spot behind the podium. Whenever you have the opportunity to shrug the podium or lectern do so as you can incorporate body language and movement and get closer to your audience.
- **Audience:** Just because you as the speaker are given a space in front of the audience, doesn't mean you can't break free from the confines of the stage and go into the audience or incorporate other areas in the room into your speech. Move audience members, incorporate "plants" in your audience to toy with the proxemics of the group.
- **Body Language:** Never show your audience your backside. Keep your body open to your audience. You can validate that your body is open to your audience by extending your arms directly out from the angle of your shoulders—is your audience included in the embrace? At any given point and time during the speech, your arms should be able to embrace your audience, if they can't move your body. No matter where you are, left, right or center, your upper torso and shoulders should be directed towards your audience, never away from them.

DP8 *Respect*

Respect the time, premise for the event and the cultural influences at stake. Speaking engagements fit into events in a very specific way. First and foremost respect the guidelines and have an awareness of where the presentation fits into the event. Depending upon the location and cultural nuances at play, you as the speaker should adapt to the specific contexts of the engagement.

DP9 *Dance with Your Audience*

Acute awareness of how each audience member responds to each word, pause and gesture you convey and your ability to read and respond appropriately to fulfill the ultimate purpose for the speech.

DP10 *Have Fun!*

Ability to be "in the moment" able to enjoy and actually have fun with the experience, executing each delivery principle effortlessly. Point where you are able to empower your words using the energy the anxiety creates to deliver your best speech.

- Master implementing all the delivery principles.
- Feel the excitement you have for the well planned out activities
- Appreciate the audience's response to you and
- Relax in the knowledge that you have worked hard and are confident in your ability to connect and share a message that matters with your audience.