

The Do's and Don'ts of Public Speaking

Do:

1. Know your audience and why you are giving the talk. Greet those that you know as they arrive. It's easier to talk to the friendly faces in the crowd.
2. Be familiar with the room you are presenting in. Arrive early, walk around the room, practice using the AV system prior to the presentation.
3. Relax. Understand that the people there want you to succeed. They are there to hear what you have to say. They want you to be interesting, entertaining and informative.
4. The audience notices less than you think. They won't notice if you miss a point or if you are nervous. Only you will know that.
5. Make sure you practice, practice, practice.....

Don't:

1. Don't attempt to imitate other speakers. Be yourself.
2. Don't read your speech word for word. Just refer to notecards with key points to jog your memory.
3. Don't come unprepared. This is a recipe for disaster. Make sure you run through your presentation several times before you have to do it for your intended audience.
4. Don't end your speech with a question and answer session. Conclude with a quote or a call to action.

Checklist for your next speech

1. Do I know my audience and why I am giving this talk?
2. Does my presentation start with a bang! Am I engaging my audience from the start?
3. Am I including the audience in my presentation?
4. Do I have areas throughout in my presentation where I can allow for questions?
5. Are my visuals interesting? Do I have plenty of graphics, charts and photographs that pertain to what I am discussing?
6. Is my presentation under 18 minutes? People lose interest if a presentation goes on too long.
7. Did I practice enough? Make sure you run through your presentation at least 3 times. And at least one of those times in front of another person.
8. Is my closing powerful enough? Is it thought provoking?