



TOASTMASTERS
INTERNATIONAL

USING **BODY LANGUAGE**



The Better
Speaker Series



**WHERE LEADERS
ARE MADE**



USING BODY LANGUAGE

The Better Speaker Series

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www.toastmasters.org

THE BETTER SPEAKER SERIES

Toastmasters International's *The Better Speaker Series* is a set of presentations offering instruction on basic speaking skills. Designed to be delivered by members to their clubs, presentations in this series provide new speaking techniques and facts that can help all club members develop their communication skills.

Presentations in *The Better Speaker Series* may be offered by any club member and require 10 to 15 minutes to present.

CONDUCTING THE PRESENTATION

"Using Body Language" offers information on using facial expressions, gestures, and whole body movement to enhance a presentation. This product consists of four parts:

- ▶ Definition and explanation of the presentation
- ▶ Guidelines for your introduction to the audience
- ▶ Outline for the development of your speech
- ▶ CD of a PowerPoint presentation to be viewed along with your speech

In Your Own Words

The outline is not a script and should not be read word-for-word. Instead, use the document as a guide for presenting the material in your own words and with your own narrative style. The outline is a structure on which to build your presentation. Use the points of the outline to develop your speech, but be the author of your own oration.

Here are some tips on using this outline to develop and deliver your presentation:

- ▶ Study the outline carefully. Familiarize yourself with the general structure. Preparation is the key to a successful presentation.
- ▶ Use the outline to build your own speech using your own words. Prepare a set of notes indicating where you wish to pause, gesture, or add special verbal emphasis. Highlight key words or sentences to help you present the material most effectively.
- ▶ Be expressive when delivering your speech. Use all of the presentation skills you have learned as a Toastmaster including vocal variety and gestures.

USING VISUAL AIDS EFFECTIVELY

Visual aids add interest to any presentation and help your audience retain information. You are encouraged to use them. If you plan to use the PowerPoint slides for this presentation as visual aids, you will need a data projector, a laptop computer, a table to support them, and a screen for viewing.

In the outline, there are indications for placement of the PowerPoint slides. Each is numbered. For example, V1 refers to the first visual.

Please note that the first slide in the PowerPoint show is a title slide and is not included in this numbering system.

If you cannot arrange for projection equipment but still would like to use visuals, you may copy the material on the visuals onto a flipchart. Do this before the presentation. Use a heavy marking pen that does not seep through the paper, and write on every third or fourth page so succeeding visuals will not show through. Also, make your letters large and heavy with plenty of space between them.

Follow these tips when using visual aids:

- ▶ Set them up and test them before the meeting begins. Place them so they are easily visible to listeners. Place your projector so it projects a large, high, undistorted image on the screen. Focus the image.
- ▶ Bring spare equipment, including a projector bulb, extension cord, extra marking pens, etc.
- ▶ Display your visuals only when they are needed. If you are using a flipchart, flip the page back out of view when you are finished with it.
- ▶ Remember not to stand between the screen or flipchart and your audience or you will block their view.
- ▶ Maintain eye contact with your listeners. Do not talk to the screen or flipchart. If you must turn your back to point out something, pause as you point it out, and then resume speaking only after you are once again facing your audience.

EVALUATION AND THE ADVANCED COMMUNICATOR SILVER (ACS) AWARD

Because this is an outlined presentation, for presenting it you will not receive credit toward completing a manual speech project, but you may receive credit toward your Advanced Communicator Silver (ACS) award. Ask your vice president education to assign an evaluator for your presentation.

Conducting any two presentations from *The Better Speaker Series* and/or *The Successful Club Series* is one component of qualification for ACS recognition. For further details, please view the Toastmasters International website: www.toastmasters.org.

USING BODY LANGUAGE

Introducing the Presenter

TIPS FOR THE PRESENTER: WRITE YOUR INTRODUCTION

All prepared speeches in Toastmasters require an introduction. A proper introduction of you and your speech is important to the success of your presentation. Use the following as a guide in writing your introduction:

- ▶ Include the purpose of *The Better Speaker Series*.
- ▶ Explain why “Using Body Language” is important for a Toastmasters club, stating the purpose and one or more objectives of your presentation.
- ▶ Incorporate some background about yourself.
- ▶ Read *When You’re the Introducer* (Item 1167E) for further details on giving a proper introduction.
- ▶ Give your finished introduction to the person who will be introducing you.

TIPS FOR THE INTRODUCER

- ▶ Ask the presenter any clarifying questions.
- ▶ Rehearse the introduction.

USING BODY LANGUAGE

Outline

INTRODUCTION

The body can be an effective tool for adding emphasis and clarity to a speaker's words. It can also be a powerful instrument for convincing an audience of a speaker's sincerity, passion, and commitment.

Audiences base their judgment of a speaker and the speaker's message on what they see as well as upon what they hear. A speaker's stance, facial expressions, hand gestures, effectively the movement of the entire body, communicate more to an audience than actual spoken words.

Body language can also help release nervous energy. Displays of discomfort through nervous habits distract the audience. Speakers can harness this nervous energy and use it to contribute to their message instead.

Movement attracts and keeps an audience's attention. A stationary speaker is more likely to lose the audience's interest.

There are three general categories of body language:

- ▶ Facial expressions
- ▶ Gestures
- ▶ Whole body movement

FACIAL EXPRESSIONS

Facial expression is often the key to the meaning behind a message. A speaker's face communicates more clearly than any other part of the body. An audience will watch a speaker's face for clues about the speaker's sincerity, attitude toward the message, and conviction.

Match facial expressions to spoken words. If a speaker talks about a tragedy but his or her face carries an expression of joy, the audience will be confused.

Eye contact is important. In some cultures, avoiding eye contact is considered dishonest, insincere, or disinterested while in others it is an expression of politeness and respect. Whatever the locale, try to make everyone in the audience feel as if you are communicating in a personal manner. This projects an air of confidence and sincerity.

GESTURES

Gestures reinforce verbal messages or convey a specific thought or emotion. Gestures can be made by any part of the body but most are made with the hands and arms. Avoid nervous mannerisms, such as fidgeting with jewelry, as they tend to distract and annoy an audience. Conversely, strong, purposeful, and complementary gestures strengthen your message and add interest to your presentation.

V1

V2

V3

V 4

Three Types of Gestures

- ▶ **Conventional gestures** are symbols for words, such as the raised hand for the word “stop” and two raised fingers for the number two.
- ▶ **Descriptive gestures** describe the idea you are communicating, such as holding the hands apart to show length or moving the hands and arms to indicate shape.
- ▶ **Emotional gestures** suggest feelings, such as shaking a clenched fist to show anger or determination or shrugging the shoulders to show indifference.

Gestures must be a natural outgrowth of the speaker’s thoughts and feelings about his topic. Poorly planned gestures look stiff and artificial and detract from the speaker’s message.

The frequency and vigor of gestures must be appropriate for the words. Match gestures to the audience size. Use smaller, conversational gestures for small audiences and large, exaggerated gestures for larger ones.

V 5

WHOLE BODY MOVEMENT

A speaker’s stance, posture, and movement tell the audience whether the speaker is confident, alert, and in command of the situation.

A relaxed, balanced speaking stance provides a solid starting point from which to gesture or move in any direction; this decreases nervousness and helps the speaker feel poised and comfortable. Varying positions during the presentation can help the speaker provide visual transitions from one point of the speech to the next and can help keep the audience focused.

V 6

PRACTICE

Practice using facial expressions, gestures, and whole body movement effectively. Using a mirror or video recording can be useful.

Presenter:

If you wish, you may devise a short exercise allowing your audience to practice different gestures.

CONCLUSION

Visual presentation is a major part of a speech’s success. Communicating ideas visually through gestures and other body expressions enhances not just a presentation but also the speaker’s overall effectiveness.

V 7

“The language of the body is the key that can unlock the soul.”
– Konstantin Stanislavsky, developed the method theory of acting

Evaluation Guide

Evaluator's Name _____

Presentation Title _____ Date _____

- ▶ How effective was the speaker's introduction in helping the audience understand the purpose of *The Better Speaker Series* and the presentation itself?
- ▶ Was the presenter adequately prepared? How heavily did the presenter rely on notes?
- ▶ How did the speaker use vocal variety to enhance this presentation?
- ▶ What other techniques did the speaker use to personalize and augment the presentation? Were they effective? How?
- ▶ Did the speaker display the visuals smoothly and at the appropriate times? How could the speaker improve?
- ▶ What aspect of the speaker's presentation style did you find unique? Why?
- ▶ Did the speaker present the material clearly and simply so audience members could easily use the information to improve their own speeches?
- ▶ What could the speaker have done differently to make the presentation more effective?
- ▶ What did you like about the presentation?

Notes



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