

# Chapter 1

## Knowing Your People, Places and Things

### Suggested Lecture Notes

#### You need to Prepare for the People

##### *To Whom am I speaking?*

Demographics:

- Age
- Race
- Cultural Background
- Gender
- Work or group affiliation
- Economic class
- Educational level

Don't know the demographics?

- Ask the person who invited you to speak to tell you the audience demographics and what to expect
- Ask someone who has already been a speaker for that audience demographic
- If the audience members belong to a specific organization, research that organization and its member affiliation
- If there is time and the audience is not too large, you can create a questionnaire

#### You need to Prepare for the Places and Time

##### *Where is the presentation?*

Take into account where the presentation is located:

Book Examples:

Size of town, different country, type of room, arrangement of room

Adjust presentation to the location including the way you speak, where you stand, and the length of the presentation.

##### *When is the presentation?*

Three times to examine:

1. Time limit for the presentation
  - Audience interaction
  - Question and answer period
  - Know the time limit before hand and adhere to that limit
2. Time of day
  - Crucial in determining the topic and style of delivery
  - Difference between morning, afternoon, and evening presentations
3. Time of year
  - Affects location comfort thus affecting the content and length of presentation

## **You need to Prepare for the Things**

### **Relax Your Mind**

#### **Five things that will help you to relax and gain confidence!**

1. Reassure yourself! Be nice to yourself! Talk to yourself!
2. Understanding that people want to hear your information! They are not in the audience to judge you or laugh at you.
3. Realize that the more knowledgeable you are about the subject and the more you rehearse, the less nervous you will be.
4. Take a skill-building course and read information about presentation skills!
5. The more you practice the less nervous you will feel.

### **Why am I speaking?**

Two primary reasons:

1. To inform your audience about a topic
2. To persuade your audience about a topic

Your presentation can fulfill both reasons!

### **What topic is the most appropriate?**

Appropriate stands for:

- A topic that will not overtly offend your diverse audience
- A topic that challenges and does not insult your audience's intellect
- A topic that will fit the time limits you have
- A topic that is interesting and will allow for vivid language that engages your audience
- Brainstorm topics based on what you know and have experienced.
- Narrow list based on the five W's: who, what, when, where, and why
- Demonstration? Explore "how."

Remember to:

- Speak to the event theme if there is one and to the occasion.
- Speak about something you have experienced, something you researched, or something you learned from listening to others.
- Speak to the audience's interest.
- Use language that does not assume gender roles; i.e. *policeman*.

### **Gender and Culture Awareness**

- There are denotative and connotative meanings of words
- Know the demographics and use language that is customary

### **Podium or Freestyle?**

- Knowing whether you will have a podium (or lectern) makes a huge difference in the style of delivery you choose.
- Learn how to present with and without a podium
- Without a podium, you must be more animated with your visual delivery and louder with your verbal delivery.
- Don't pace around or wave your hands around too much or you will distract the audience and the message will get lost.

### **Technical Capabilities?**

- Ask in advance for the appropriate technical devices for you to use.
- If the room is large, you will need a microphone and know if it is a lavalier or handheld microphone.
- You may need additional audio or video equipment to enhance your message.
- Make sure you practice with all equipment before you get in front of your audience.

### **Listening**

*4 key reasons why we listen*

- To understand a message
- To try to analyze a message
- To provide emotional support
- To enjoy the message or how the speaker delivered it

Remember:

Be an active listener

Evaluate yourself

Listening takes energy

**\*Have students read Professor Phil Bruschi's 12 Deadly Sins**