

Technically Speaking – Part II

Delivery

Source: http://techspeaking.denison.edu/Technically_Speaking/Delivery.html

Face the audience

Recall a time when you've had a great conversation with a friend. Certain non-verbal actions of this communication took place – some without thought. More than likely the two of you were facing each other throughout this conversation. On the other hand, we tend to turn on our backs on each other and walk away from each other during stressful communications (e.g., arguments).

A good speaker engages with the audience throughout their presentation. Certain non-verbal actions enhance this engagement and one of the most important actions is to face the audience as you are speaking. If you must interact with the screen, stand next to the screen and not in front of the screen. Your posture must remain open to the audience at all times.

Avoid Annoying Mannerisms

Most people identify annoying mannerisms as the most distracting actions a speaker can make during a presentation. Mannerisms of this nature are usually done subconsciously and are physical in nature. You must identify any annoying mannerisms before they can be corrected. To better understand and witness first-hand your mannerisms, you should record your presentations. Consider your gestures, body movement, posture, and eye contact when reflecting upon your recorded presentations.

Don't Use a Chalkboard

A speaker may be tempted to use a chalkboard when a presentation is given in a classroom type environment. A chalkboard is rarely available when presenting at professional conferences. The audience's attention is divided when a chalkboard is used in conjunction with a screen. Most often the content to be placed on a chalkboard should be incorporated directly into your presentation. The use of a chalkboard is acceptable during the questioning period your presentation.

Show Enthusiasm

If you are not interested in the content being presented, it shows. If you must present on this content, you should work hard to invoke enthusiasm into your presentation somehow. Certain aspects of non-verbal communication may help enhance enthusiasm when it is lacking. Of course, a speaker who exhibits passion and enthusiasm for their presentation is much more enjoyable to listen to than one who lacks these characteristics.

Say it Loud and Clear

An excited and dynamic speaker who enthusiastically presents their material will engage the audience over a long period of time. Speaking tends to increase in speed when a speaker is excited. This is especially true when the speaker is comfortable with the content being presented. You should face the audience and ensure that your voice is projected outward when you are speaking. You should speak slightly louder than usual and reduce your speed a bit from a normal conversation. Other characteristics of your speech patterns may also need to be adjusted when speaking in front of an audience (e.g., some may purposely incorporate more pauses in their speech when speaking to an audience).