



---

*Dale Carnegie®  
Courses*



1030011;1993



---

***Speak More  
Effectively***

BY DALE CARNEGIE

DALE CARNEGIE TRAINING®

## How to Prepare and Deliver Your Talks

Here are eight principles that will help immensely in preparing your talks:

### I. Make brief notes of the interesting things you want to mention.

### II. Don't write out your talks.

Why? Because if you do, you will use written language instead of easy, conversational language; and when you stand up to talk, you will probably find yourself trying to remember what you wrote. That will keep you from speaking naturally and with sparkle.

### III. Never, never, never memorize a talk word-for-word.

If you memorize your talk, you are almost sure to forget it; and the audience will probably be glad, for nobody wants to listen to a canned speech. Even if you don't forget it, it will sound memorized. You will have a faraway look in your eyes and a faraway ring in your voice. You won't sound like a human being trying to tell us something.

If, in a longer talk, you are afraid you will forget what you want to say, then make some brief notes and hold them in your hand and glance at them occasionally. That is what I usually do.

### IV. Fill your talk with illustrations and examples.

By far the easiest way to make a talk interesting is to fill it with examples. To illustrate what I mean, let's take this booklet you are reading now. It has 48 pages

of reading matter and approximately half of those pages are devoted to illustrations. First, there is the illustration of Gay Kellogg's talk about the suffering she endured as a child. Next, the illustration of the speaker on "What, If Anything, Is Wrong With Religion?" Next, the example of the woman who tried to talk on Mussolini's invasion of Ethiopia. That is followed by the story of the four college students in a speaking contest over the radio—and so on. My biggest problem in writing a book or preparing a speech is not to get ideas, but to get illustrations to make those ideas clear, vivid and unforgettable. The old Roman philosophers used to say; "Exemplum docet" (the example teaches). And how right they were!

For example, let me show the value of an illustration: Years ago, a congressman made a stormy speech accusing the government of wasting our money by printing useless pamphlets. He illustrated what he meant by saying the government had printed a pamphlet on "The Love Life of the Bullfrog." I would have forgotten that speech years ago if it hadn't been for that one specific illustration, "The Love Life of the Bullfrog." I may forget a million other facts as the decades pass, but I'll never forget his charge that the government wastes our money by printing and giving away pamphlets such as "The Love Life of the Bullfrog!"

*Exemplum docet. Not only does the example teach, but it is about the only thing that does teach. I have heard brilliant speeches which I promptly forgot*

*because there were no examples to make them stick in my memory.*

**V. Know far more about your subject than you can use.**

Ida Tarbell, one of America's most distinguished writers, told me that years ago, while in London, she received a cable from S. S. McClure, the founder of McClure's Magazine, asking her to write a two-page article on the Atlantic Cable. Miss Tarbell interviewed the London manager of the Atlantic Cable and got all the information necessary to write her five-hundred-word article. But she didn't stop there. She went to the British Museum library and read magazine articles and books about the Atlantic Cable, and the biography of Cyrus West Field, the man who laid the Atlantic Cable. She studied cross sections of cables on display in the British Museum; and then visited a factory on the outskirts of London and saw cables being manufactured. "When I finally wrote those two typewritten pages on the Atlantic Cable," Miss Tarbell said, as she told me the story, "I had enough material to write a small book about it. But that vast amount of material which I had and did not use enabled me to write what I did write with confidence and clarity and interest. It gave me reserve power."

Ida Tarbell had learned through years of experience that she had to earn the right to write even five hundred words about the Atlantic Cable. The same principle goes for speaking. Make yourself something of an authority on your subject. Develop that priceless asset known as *reserve power*.

**VI. Rehearse your talk by conversing with your friends.**

Will Rogers prepared his famous Sunday night radio talks by trying them out as conversation on the people he met during the week. If, for example, he wanted to speak on the gold standard, he would wisecrack about it in conversation during the week. He would then discover which of his jokes went over; which remarks elicited people's interest. That is an infinitely better way to rehearse a talk than to try it out with gestures in front of a mirror.

**VII. Instead of worrying about your delivery, get busy with the causes that produce it.**

Much harmful, misleading nonsense has been written about delivery of a speech. The truth is that when you face an audience, you should forget all about voice, breathing, gestures, posture, emphasis. Forget everything except what you are saying. What listeners want, as Hamlet's mother said, is "more matter, with less art." Do what a cat does when trying to catch a mouse. It doesn't look around and say: "I wonder how my tail looks, and I wonder if I am standing right, and how is my facial expression?" Oh, no. That cat is so intent on catching a mouse for dinner that it couldn't stand wrong or look wrong if it tried—and neither can you if you are so vitally interested in your audience and in what you are saying that you forget yourself.

Don't imagine that expressing your ideas and emotions before an audience is something that requires years of technical training such as you have to

devote to mastering music or painting. Anybody can make a splendid talk at home when angry. For example, if somebody hauled off and knocked you down this instant, you would get up and make a superb talk. Your gestures, your posture, your facial expression would be perfect because they would be the expressions of genuine anger. And remember, you don't have to *learn* to express your emotions. You could express your emotions superbly when you were six months old. Ask any mother.

### **If Your Attitude is Good—Your Talk Will Be**

Your problem isn't to try to learn how to speak with emphasis, or how to gesture or how to stand. Those are merely *effects*. Your problem is to deal with the cause that produces those effects. That cause is deep down inside you; it is your own mental and emotional attitude. If you get yourself in the right mental and emotional condition, you will speak superbly. You won't have to make any effort to do it. You will do it as naturally as you breathe.

To illustrate, a rear admiral of the United States Navy

once took this course. He had commanded a squadron of the United States Fleet during World War I. He wasn't afraid to fight a naval battle, but he was so afraid to face an audience that he made weekly trips from his home in New Haven, Connecticut, to New York City to attend this course.

Half a dozen sessions went by, and he was still terrified. So one of our instructors, Professor Elmer Nyberg, had an idea that might make the admiral come out of his shell. There was a radical in this class. Professor Nyberg took him to one side and said: "I wonder if you will be good enough to make a strong talk to support your philosophy of government? Obviously, you will make the admiral angry, which is exactly what I want. He will forget himself and in his eagerness to refute your position, he probably will make a good talk." The radical said, "Sure, I'll be glad to." He had not gone far in this talk, when the rear admiral leaped to his feet and shouted: "Stop! Stop! That's sedition!" Then he gave a fiery talk on how much each of us owes to our country and its freedom.

Professor Nyberg turned to the naval officer and said, "Congratulations, Admiral! A magnificent talk!" The rear admiral snapped back: "I'm not making a talk, but I am telling that little whippersnapper a thing or two." Then Professor Nyberg explained that it had all been a put-up job to get the admiral out of his shell, and make him forget himself.

This rear admiral discovered just what you will discover when you get stirred up about a cause bigger

than yourself. You will discover that all fears of speaking will vanish and that you don't have to give a thought to delivery, since the causes that produce good delivery are working for you irresistibly.

Let me repeat: *Your delivery is merely the effect of a cause that preceded and produced it. So if you don't like your delivery, don't muddle around trying to change it. Get back to fundamentals and change the causes that produced it. Change your mental and emotional attitude.*

#### **VIII. Don't imitate others: be yourself.**

I first came to New York to study at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts. I aspired to be an actor. I had what I thought was a brilliant idea, a shortcut to success. My campaign to achieve excellence was so simple, so foolproof, that I was unable to comprehend why thousands of ambitious people hadn't already discovered it. It was this: I would study the famous actors of that day—John Drew, E. H. Sothorn, Walter Hampden and Otis Skinner. Then I would imitate the best points of each one of them and make myself into a shining, triumphant combination of all of them. How silly! How tragic! I had to waste years of my life imitating other people before it penetrated my thick Missouri skull that I had to be myself, and that I couldn't possibly be anyone else.

To illustrate what I mean: A number of years ago, I set out to write the best book on public speaking for

businesspeople that had ever been written. I had the same foolish idea about writing this book that I had formerly had about acting: I was going to *borrow* the ideas of many other writers and put them all in one book—a book that would have everything. So I got scores of books on public speaking and spent a year incorporating their ideas in my manuscript. But it finally dawned on me once again that I was playing the fool. This hodgepodge of other people's ideas that I had written was so synthetic, so dull that no businesspeople would ever stumble through it. So I tossed a year's work into the wastebasket, and started all over again. This time I said to myself: "You've got to be Dale Carnegie, with all his faults and limitations. You can't possibly be anybody else." So I quit trying to be a combination of other people, and rolled up my sleeves and did what I should have done in the first place: I wrote a textbook on public speaking out of my own experiences and observations and convictions.

Why don't you profit by my stupid waste of time? Don't try to imitate others.

#### **Don't Be Afraid of Being Yourself**

Be yourself. Act on the sage advice that Irving Berlin gave to the late George Gershwin. When Berlin and Gershwin first met, Berlin was famous—but Gershwin was a struggling young composer working for thirty-five dollars a week in Tin Pan Alley. Berlin, impressed by Gershwin's ability, offered Gershwin a job as his musical secretary at almost three times the salary

he was then getting. "But don't take the job," Berlin advised. "If you do, you may develop into a second-rate Berlin. But if you insist on being yourself, some day you'll become a first-rate Gershwin."

Gershwin heeded that warning and slowly transformed himself into one of the significant American composers of his generation.

"Be yourself! Don't imitate others!" That is sound advice in music, writing and speaking. You are an original. Be glad of it. Never before, since the dawn of time, has anybody been exactly like you; and never again, throughout all the ages to come, will there be anybody exactly like you. So make the most of your individuality. Your speech should be a part of you, the very living tissue of you. It should grow out of your experiences, your convictions, your personality, your way of life.

In the last analysis, all art is autobiographical. You can sing only what you are. You can paint only what you are. You can write only what you are. You can speak only what you are. You must be what your experiences, your environment and your heredity have made you. For better or for worse, you must cultivate your own garden. For better or for worse, you must play your own instrument in life's orchestra.

As Emerson said in his essay, Self-reliance:

"There is a time in every man's education when he arrives at the conviction that envy is ignorance; that imitation is suicide; that he must take himself

for better, for worse, as his portion; that although the wide universe is full of good, no kernel of nourishing corn can come to him but through his toil bestowed on that plot of ground which is given him to till. The power which resides in him is new in nature, and none but he knows what that is which he can do, nor does he know until he has tried."

## IN A NUTSHELL

### How to Make Rapid and Easy Progress In Learning to Speak in Public

Speak about something that:

- (a) you have earned the right to talk about through study and experience;
- (b) you are excited about; and
- (c) you are eager to tell your listeners about.

- I. Make brief notes of the interesting things you want to mention.
- II. Don't write out your talks.
- III. Never, never, never memorize a talk word-for-word.
- IV. Fill your talk with illustrations and examples.
- V. Know far more about your subject than you can use.
- VI. Rehearse your talk by conversing with your friends.
- VII. Instead of worrying about your delivery, get busy with the causes that produce it.
- VIII. Don't imitate others; be yourself.