

ECC PUBLIC SPEAKING SKILLS WORKSHOP

Public speaking is seen by too many of our activists as an awesome task, too difficult and frightening even to attempt. The result is that we are dependent on just a few veteran ravers. This is obviously an unhealthy state of affairs, not least because it starts to get boring after a while.

Our problem is not that we do not have more activists capable of speaking publicly - it is that they lack the confidence to do it for the first time.

This workshop gives ECC activists an opportunity to speak for the first time (or to practise) in a situation which comes close to real speaking conditions but which is not as scary.

The workshop incorporates the four main ingredients of effective public speaking: it acquaints new speakers with basic speaking **TECHNIQUES**, gives them an opportunity to **PRACTISE** in a safe environment and get immediate **FEEDBACK**, and builds their **CONFIDENCE**.

FIRST SESSION

TIME : ± 2 hours

MATERIALS : 1. Copies of a dramatic speech that the participants in the workshop will practise delivering (eg Mandela's response to Botha's offer of conditional release)

or Slabbert's farewell speech to Parliament).

2. Copies of the guidelines on Public-Speaking Technique (attached).

VENUE: It is best to simulate actual speaking conditions and use a large hall with a stage and a lectern.

PROCEDURE: 1. The facilitator explains how the workshop is to run and gets feedback from the group.

2. The group ~~is~~ brainstorms what they think makes for good public speaking and discusses the guidelines (10-15 minutes).

3. The facilitator allocates to each member of the group a different passage from the speech. Each passage should take about 2-3 minutes to read aloud.

4. The participants are given time to familiarise themselves with their passage and to work out how to deliver it.

5. Each member of the group in turn delivers his/her passage from the stage. The rest of the group is spread throughout the hall.

6. Immediately after each participant, the group as a whole evaluates him/her. This is the most important part of the workshop. The feedback should consist of positive as well as negative comments. Negative comments should be concrete and not vague, and should be accompanied by suggested improvements.

7. Once all the participants have delivered their passage, they may want to have another go taking

into account the feedback they received. The second reading can be done with or without feedback, depending on how the group feels.

: 8. The group evaluates the workshop.

FOLLOW UP SESSION Very NB.

The group may want to have a follow-up session at a later date which is run as the first ^{session,} but for which the participants have prepared their own short speeches (of about 5 minutes).

GUIDELINES ON PUBLIC SPEAKING TECHNIQUE

INTRODUCTION: CLOSING THE DISTANCE

Public speaking is all about COMMUNICATING with your audience.

Between you and your audience is a ^{great} distance, both physical and in that you're doing all the talking and they're just listening.

Your aim is to close the distance, to reach your audience and move them.

The difference between good and public speaking lies in using your voice and body to maintain that distance or to narrow it.

These guidelines are not a checklist for The Right Way to Talk.

There is no one correct speaking style. You must find your own style, one that comes naturally and that you feel comfortable with.

The points on technique below are simply ways to help improve it.

POSTURE AND BODY LANGUAGE

While there aren't any bonus points for good posture, bad posture and irritating physical mannerisms can inhibit effective communication and put people off.

So stand up STRAIGHT. Stand STILL. Your body, and especially your neck and shoulders should be as RELAXED as possible.

Don't hunch up. Don't shuffle. And don't step forward and backward or rock from foot to foot.

Most importantly, TALK TO and LOOK AT your audience. Make sure that you cover the ENTIRE audience.

Don't talk to your notes. You'll want them in your hand or on a lectern. Having them on a low table means spending too much time looking down. Every time you look down your voice gets lower and the audience has to look at the top of your head. This is not ~~an~~ ~~ideal~~ good communication.

If your hands shake you won't want to be holding your notes, so make sure in advance that there's a lectern you can put them on.

Speakers often don't know what to do with their hands.

Putting them in your pocket usually looks too casual and clasping them behind your back looks too formal. Both constitute defensive body language.

It's best to keep your hands at your side or to rest them lightly on the lectern. Use your hands for emphasis and to underline important points but avoid repetitive meaningless movements.

For as long as you're on the platform DO NOT SMOKE.

Chewing gum, sniffing loudly and scratching yourself are also considered offensive. ✓

Oh yes, and make sure you have the same colour socks + eyes on.

VOICE

You have to talk LOUDLY, CLEARLY and SLOWLY enough to be heard and understood by everyone in the hall.

A big problem with many speakers is that they're too unemotional, boring and monotonous in their delivery.

So USE your voice.

Where appropriate, VARY how loud / soft and how slow / fast you talk.

EMPHASIZE the words or ideas you want to stand out. It's worth planning in advance where you want to place your emphasis in a sentence and even underlining the key words.

Show some EMOTION. Convey with your voice the feelings you want to arouse in the audience. Move speakers by far underact than overact.

Inexperienced speakers are usually scared to use SILENCE, the good long Pause.

The pause can be very effective just before or just after a dramatic or important point. It can also indicate a shift in direction or give the audience an opportunity to absorb what you've said.

One also pauses momentarily to take a breath! make sure you do this at an appropriate point in the sentence.

-preparing the voice / -the dry mouth syndrome!

WHAT TO DO ABOUT HECKLERS

The most effective way of handling hecklers is to IGNORE them and KEEP TALKING.

Acknowledging or responding to the heckler will only put you off your stride and be distracting for the audience. If the heckler becomes really disruptive, the chairperson should take over and handle the situation.

WHAT TO DO ABOUT NERVOUSNESS

There's really nothing you can do.

Don't worry if you feel nervous before or during a talk.

most experienced speakers do.

In fact being nervous keeps the adrenalin pumping and puts the sparkle in your eyes.

Calming down

PREPARING A TALK

People have such different ways of approaching a talk that it's not all that helpful to repeat the traditional advice on how to write a speech (eg you must have a beginning, a middle and an end, you must tell a joke).

Write your talk as you would naturally speak it.

The most important point is to prepare PROPERLY; know your audience, know what you want to say and know how you want to say it.

Above all, whether you talk from a written speech or from brief notes, be ABSOLUTELY FAMILIAR with your talk.

The more familiar you are with it, the more confident you will be and the more convincing.

- The daunting dilemma of dull direction - people need guidance on how to order content.

FEEDBACK

Need to look at ways of presenting ideas + facts creatively.
Make sure you get it, when practising beforehand as well as after your speech. It's the only way to improve.

NOTES

E.C.C. PUBLIC SPEAKING SKILLS WORKSHOP - 14 FEBRUARY 1985

FORM

Posture

eyes and head
lectern
body position and movement
use of hands

Voice

projection
emotion
variation (pace, volume, emphasis)
the pause

CONTENT

Preparation

know your audience and what is expected of you
determine style of talking and content of speech
construct framework of speech
write speech
rehearse out loud, with an audience

Techniques

establishing arguments clearly
snappy opening and conclusion
rhetorical questions
climaxes
repetition
sense of drama
turning popular notions on their head

PROPS

water; smoking; tomatoes; critical appraisal

"We know that he has, more than any other man, the gift of compressing the largest amount of words into the smaller amount of thought".

(Churchill)

"You get the impression that their normal condition is silence and that speech is a slight fever which attacks them now and then".

(Satre)

11-2-85

Nelson Mandela's full statement

JOHANNESBURG. — Nelson Mandela has responded to the conditional offer of freedom made in Parliament by the State President, Mr P W Botha.

The response was read on Mandela's behalf by his daughter Zinzi at a function in Jabulani, Soweto, yesterday:

"On Friday my mother and our attorney saw my father at Pollsmoor Prison to obtain his answer to Botha's offer of conditional release.

'Strangers'

"The prison authorities attempted to stop this statement being made but he would have none of this and made it clear that he would make the statement to you, the people.

"Strangers like Bethell from England and Professor Dash from the United States have in recent weeks been authorized by Pretoria to see my father without restriction, yet Pretoria cannot allow you, the people, to hear what he has to say directly. He should be here himself to tell you what he thinks of this statement by Botha. He is not allowed to do so. My mother, who also heard his words is also not allowed to speak to you today.

"My father and his comrades at Pollsmoor Prison send their greetings to you the freedom-loving people of this our tragic land, in the full confidence that you will carry on the struggle for freedom.

"He, with his comrades at Pollsmoor Prison send their very warmest greetings to Bishop Tutu. Bishop Tutu has made it clear to the world that the Nobel Peace Prize belongs to you who are the people. We salute him.

"My father and his

comrades at Pollsmoor Prison are grateful to the United Democratic Front who without hesitation made this venue available to them so that they could speak to you today.

"My father and his comrades wish to make this statement to you, the people, first. They are clear that they are accountable to you and to you alone, and that you should hear their views directly and not through others.

"My father speaks not only for himself and for his comrades at Pollsmoor Prison but he hopes he also speaks for all those in jail for their opposition to apartheid, for all those who are banished, for all those who are in exile, for all those who suffer under apartheid, for all those who are opponents of apartheid and for all those who are oppressed and exploited.

'Puppets'

"Throughout our struggle there have been puppets who have claimed to speak for you. They have made this claim, both here and abroad. They are of no consequence. My father and his colleagues will not be like them.

"My father says: I am a member of the African National Congress. I have always been a member of the African National Congress and I will remain a member of the African National Congress until the day I die. Oliver Tambo is much more than a brother to me. He is my greatest friend and comrade for nearly 50 years. If there is any one among you who cherishes my

freedom, Oliver Tambo cherishes it more, and I know that he would give his life to see me free. There is no difference between his views and mine.

"My father says: I am surprised at the conditions that the government wants to impose on me. I am not a violent man. My colleagues and I wrote in 1952 to Malan asking for a round-table conference to find a solution to the problems of our country, but that was ignored.

"When Strijdom was in power, we made the same offer. Again it was ignored.

Challenge

"When Verwoerd was in power we asked for a national convention for all the people in South Africa to decide on their future. This too was in vain.

"It was only then, when all other forms of resistance were no longer open to us, that we turned to armed struggle.

"Let Botha show that he is different to Malan, Strijdom and Verwoerd. Let him renounce violence. Let him say that he will dismantle apartheid.

"Let him unban the people's organization, the African National Congress.

"Let him free all who have been imprisoned, banished or exiled for their opposition to apartheid.

"Let him guarantee free political activity so that the people may decide who will govern them.

"I cherish my own freedom dearly, but I care even more for your free-

dom. Too many have died since I went to prison. Too many have suffered for the love of freedom.

"I owe it to their widows, to their orphans, to their mothers and to their fathers who have grieved and wept for them. Not only I have suffered during these long, lonely, wasted years.

"I am not less life-loving than you are. But I cannot sell my birthright, nor am I prepared to sell the birthright of the people to be free. I am in prison as the representative of the people and of your organization, the African National Congress, which was banned.

"What freedom am I being offered whilst the organization of the people remains banned? What freedom am I being offered when I may be arrested on a pass offence?

'What freedom?'

"What freedom am I being offered to live my life as a family with my dear wife, who remains in banishment in Brandfort?

"What freedom am I being offered when I must ask for permission to live in an urban area?

"What freedom am I being offered when I need a stamp in my pass to seek work?

"What freedom am I being offered when my very South African citizenship is not respected?

"Only free men can negotiate. Prisoners cannot enter into contracts. Herman Toivo ja Toivo, when freed, never gave any undertaking, nor was he called upon to do so.

"My father says: I cannot and will not give any undertaking at a time when I and you the people are not free. Your freedom and mine cannot be separated. I will return." — Sapa

Collection Number: AG1977

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PUBLISHER:

Publisher:- Historical Papers Research Archive

Location:- Johannesburg

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