

# Tero International Impromptu Speaking

When called upon to “say a few words”, even the most experienced speakers must deal with a butterfly or two, when they are totally unprepared. However, the most experienced speakers are only rarely totally unprepared. They anticipate the possibility that they will be called on and have at least mentally formed a few thoughts, and often rehearsed a brief presentation. That is usually the reason that some people can stand up when called upon and deliver a smooth, flowing, intelligent, apparently spontaneous speech that makes its points clearly and memorably.

Follow these tips for successful impromptu speeches.

## **A Few Words**

A few words should be just that—a few words! Rarely should they be more than five or ten minutes of words.

## **Delivery Techniques**

While impromptu speeches are not formally prepared, you can take the techniques learned in preparing a presentation and use them in an impromptu situation.

Stand when possible, otherwise sit up straight. Make eye contact with your audience, increase your volume and vocal inflection, pause for emphasis and use supportive gestures.

## **Organization**

Most likely any impromptu presentation will concern a subject with which you are familiar, so you need only organize information and ideas that you already possess.

If there is any possibility, no matter how remote, that you may be asked to say a few words at a meeting or gathering, have your thoughts organized. It is better to be prepared and not be called on than not to be prepared.

The worst thing that will happen is that you will spend a little preparation time on a speech and then not use it.

It is far easier to make a two-hour speech without preparation than a five or ten minute presentation. The brief speech needs ample preparation, time to gather the ideas and organize them into as few words as possible. And so, if you are to speak well and yet be brief, you need to organize your thoughts.

Every presentation needs an opening and closing, no matter how short. The opening can be short or a little longer, depending on how much think time you need. Remember, you think faster than you speak. Buy yourself some time.

### **Know Your Audience**

- What is the occasion?
- Who will be there?
- What are the most probable subjects?
- Who are the scheduled speakers?
- Who might be asked to say a few words?
- What are they likely to say?
- What are the most likely questions?
- Are there any known biases or positions?
- What are the controversial issues?
- How do others view you?
- What might you be asked?

Observe what is going on around you and respond to it. Can you comment on something another speaker has said? Can you compliment the audience?

### **Above All**

Don't apologize. Say a few words and then sit down.



#### **Tero International**

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