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# ART OF PRESENTATION

Учебное пособие

Рекомендовано ученым советом федерального государственного бюджетного образовательного учреждения высшего образования «Оренбургский государственный университет» для обучающихся по образовательным программам высшего образования по направлениям подготовки 45.03.01, 45.04.01 Филология

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Данное учебное пособие содержит аутентичный практический материал, направленный на развитие у обучающихся умений и формирование навыков, необходимых для осуществления эффективной публичной речи на английском языке в сфере деловой коммуникации.

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## Contents

Introduction .....	4
1 Performing your speech .....	5
1.1 Non-verbal communication.....	8
1.2 Voice Management .....	14
2 Making a Good Start .....	24
3 Producing a Final Effect with the Conclusion .....	37
4 Conversing with the Audience .....	45
4.1 Building rapport .....	45
4.2 Engaging audiences.....	46
4.2 Storytelling.....	49
4.3 Some activities to try in your presentations.....	52
5 Handling questions .....	54
5.1 Dealing with aggressive comments and questions .....	57
5.2 Typical awkward situations .....	59
6 Group discussions .....	66
6.1 Informal Group Discussion.....	66
6.2 Managing a Discussion .....	68
6.3 Panel Discussion .....	78
6.4 Debate .....	80
6.5 The Leader’s Role in Group Discussion.....	85
6.6 Bad Listening Habits and Their Cures.....	88
References .....	91
Appendix 1. Keys .....	93
Appendix 2. Great Speeches of the 20 <sup>th</sup> century.....	94
Patrick Henry: “Give me Liberty or Give me Death!” .....	94
John F. Kennedy. Inaugural Speech .....	98
Dr. Martin Luther King. I have a dream .....	101
Appendix 3. Transcripts of Group Discussions .....	107

## **Introduction**

For non-native speakers the process of preparing and structuring a presentation in English can be quite difficult and demanding, but the more challenging is the art of performing it. The presenter needs certain skills which go beyond the range of ordinary professional ones.

This book gives a lot of pragmatic tips in the context of stage fright, effective body language, creating powerful introduction and conclusion, conversing with international audience, handling questions and others. Additionally, it deals with structuring and managing group discussions and debates.

This book uses only authentic materials and it is aimed at students studying philology or linguistics who are interested in public speaking in business English. The book consists of Introduction; six Units which mainly concentrate on performing effective business presentations and provide the learner with actual presentation techniques and speech vocabulary; Appendix, including the greatest speeches of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and transcripts of group discussions; References. Each unit contains useful language and practical exercises and can also be used separately to focus on particular elements of performing presentations.

# 1 Performing your speech

A ‘speech’ can be anything from saying a few unprepared words in front of a small group of people, to formal address to an audience of thousands. However, whenever you speak in public, the way you deliver your message is as important as the content of it. One of the major problems here is overcoming *stage fright*.

Stage fright is almost universal among public performers: singers and actors as well as speakers. Some experience it in severe form and few – in its milder forms, no matter how long they appear in public. Stage fright comes from feeling ‘inadequate to meet a situation’. One of the paradoxes of human nature is that most of us want an audience, and yet fear it. When we get attention, we become afraid. Inexperienced people are afraid of standing alone against the audience, afraid of failure. Experienced speakers are afraid of not doing their best.

Stage fright is not merely a mental state. It is also positively physical: the heart beats rapidly, one feels giddy, the voice is harsh and constricted.

The problem is not to overcome stage fright but to reduce it, get it under control, and use it. Psychologists have proved that reasonable amount of stage fright, if controlled and directed, makes you a better speaker.

The procedures for controlling your stage fright are as follows:

1. *Get an interesting subject.* Avoid talking about something simple. Instead, get a subject that really interests you.

2. *Be well prepared.* Many cases of severe stage fright are simply the result of inadequate preparation.

3. *Get excited.* It is natural and very positive reaction by the body to produce adrenaline when faced with a challenge in order to sharpen the senses. If you aren’t feeling excited, you aren’t prepared, so recognize the feeling and be grateful for it. Your body is preparing you physically and mentally to perform well.

4. *Get real.* Presenters set themselves unrealistic expectations. They think *I have to speak like a native speaker. I have to make everyone laugh, I have to make people like me, I have to make people think I am the leading expert in this field.* Added to this, people

hugely underestimate their own capacity to deliver. They fail to see their own knowledge, their own expertise, their own value to the audience and the value the audience sees in them.

5. *Control your body. Use physical action.* The person who has stage fright is physically tensed over. This tension is not merely the effect of fear; it is also in part the cause of fear. Try to relax. Drink lots of water. Stretch and warm up, breath properly, do not waste energy. Free the tension in the arms, in the hands, and, above all, in the face. Use those tense muscles. Put them in action, and the action will reduce the tension.

Do go and talk to your audience before you speak – smile and laugh to relax.

Don't sit nervously and get stressed by watching people enter the room.

On practical level the following tips can be helpful:

- if your knees are shaking – stand behind a desk;
- if your hands are trembling – don't hold papers;
- if your mouth is dry – have a glass of water ready at hand.

6. *Think of your subject and audience rather than of yourself.* While speaking, ask yourself: Can they hear me? Can they understand me? Have I made the point clear? Am I encouraging them to appreciate something they had not appreciated before?

---

*N.B. He speaks well who gives something of himself to the audience*

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7. *Control your mind.* Working with your mind is one of the most important areas of stress management. Thinking positive thoughts about yourself, your performance and your audience is the way to say goodbye to stress.

Do NOT let yourself say the following:

*“I am bound to forget what I am supposed to say.”*

*“The audience will try to catch me out with awkward question.”*

*“The audience will enjoy seeing me fail.”*

*“I won't be able to stop my lags from shaking”.*

Instead, before you start speaking say positive things to yourself:

*“I will enjoy myself.”*

*“I’ve something useful to say”.*

*“I can actually do this quite well”.*

*“I will present an authoritative image.”*

*My audience will be interested in me.”*

*“This is just a conversation with a few friends”.*

*“I’m not perfect and I don’t have to be”.*

*“This presentation will be great practice. I’ll be even better next time after this”.*

*“I will be able to answer their questions competently.”*

### **Suggestions on using movement to release stage fright**

#### *Before you speak*

1. Before you speak, sit upright and start breathing *deeply* and *regularly*.
2. Relax your hands. Press the fingertips of one hand against those of the other until the fingers when opened feel easy and relax.
3. Relax the muscles of your face and jaw and throat. Lean the head forward as if you were almost asleep. A yawn is the best of all exercises for relaxing your face and throat.
4. Think again about your breathing. Is it regular? Is it deep?

#### *While you speak*

5. When you stand up before the audience, get set to speak:
  - a. Set both feet firmly on the floor, so they will not be tempted to shift or wander.
  - b. Stand up straight, to your full height.
  - c. Draw in a deep breath. (You need power to fill that room!)
  - d. Open your mouth wide to strengthen the sound of your voice.

### ***Time to Practice***

*Study the physical appearance, muscular tone, and bodily action of speaker who is notably ineffective. Select a fellow student, a teacher, politician – any speaker who is invariably dull.*

- a. Observe their posture. Is it inert, sagging, or stiff?
- b. Observe the overall muscular tone. Is it listless, inert, or mere awkward?
- c. Observe the changes of posture. Are they related to changes of thought, do they distract from what the person is saying, or do they seem unrelated to anything you hear?
- d. Observe the specific action of the speaker's head, arms, and hands. Are they listless? Are they awkward? Does the speaker merely fidget? Does it make you uncomfortable to look at them?
- e. Assess the speaker's mental attitude behind all of this. Does the speaker show a desire to communicate to others?

### **1.1 Non-verbal communication**

Albert Mehrabian is frequently quoted during discussions of non-verbal communication. His research in the 1950<sup>th</sup> revealed the importance of body language and voice when presenting. He judged that the total impact of a message is about 7% verbal (words only), 38% vocal (including tone of voice, inflection, and other sounds), and 55% non-verbal.

Although the percentages can be argued about, there is little doubt that effective presenters need to manage aspects of voice and body language effectively in order to get their message across.

#### ***Body language***

Your speech starts before you even say a word. Your audience takes notice of you before you begin to speak. They form an impression about your level of confidence, your ability, and your credibility during your short trip to the podium.

It is generally believed that 90% of the impression is formed within the first 60 seconds, and if the first impression is poor, it is very difficult to persuade the audience



to think positively. It is therefore vital to get not only the words right but also the body language.

Your *posture* and *movement* tells how you feel about yourself. Looking down and refusing to face people directly gives the impression that you are ashamed or embarrassed. Cocking your head to the side, dropping your chin, wrapping your arms around your body, or clasping your hands tightly in front of you can also make you appear insecure or defeated. In general, the body should remain open with the avoidance of positions such as folded arms, clamped together hands and lifted shoulders. Closed positions give the impression of a barrier between the speaker and the audience.

Here is a checklist for correct posture and movement:

- Stand straight and tall with the weight on the balls of the feet. This will give the impression that you are leaning slightly forward and so are interested in the audience.

- Avoid tension in your shoulders.

- Look straight ahead at and around your audience. Avoid looking down which appears negative and lacking in confidence. Do not look over the heads of your audience, as this can appear arrogant.

- Let the arms hang loosely by your sides so that you can use your hands and arms to gesture when needed. Avoid fiddling with the hands as this can convey unease to the audience.

- Do not be tempted to hide behind a table or lectern. Always face your audience so that they can see the whole length of your body – it will make you appear so much more confident.

- If you are using a lectern, be careful not to bend over it or lean on it. Instead, stand naturally erect and gently rest your hands on the sides of lectern.

- Do not apologize for your presence, stand up tall with authority and look your audience straight in the eye!

- Control the space between yourself and the audience positively, sometimes approaching the audience, sometimes moving to examine the projected slide. Moving around is vital to animate a presentation, to create a dynamic movement which the

audience has to track. But remember: too much movement can irritate as well as impress.

- Imagine you have a string running up your back and through the crown of your head. Pull the string up to an imaginary hook on the ceiling. Walk tall!

*Gestures* are used to supplement and interpret words. The best gestures are neutral, spontaneous, done on the impulse.

The main function of gestures (as well as voice) is to reach out to the audience, to carry your message across to all the listeners.

Effective gestures should point, indicate, suggest, separate, emphasize, carry some particular definite meaning – and should be so clean-cut that the audience can have no doubt what the meaning is.

An effective gesture cannot be halfway or timid. It must be abundant. Use the whole body, all-in-one-piece.

Gestures need to be adapted to the nature and size of the audience. The size of the audience determines the expanse of gestures. In actual public speaking, gestures should be made spontaneously.

*Tips for using gestures:*

- Use fingers in a specific way when describing points with numbers.
- Record a video of yourself giving a presentation and note down effective and ineffective gestures.
- Try to time gestures with the rhythm of your speech. All effective presenters synchronize the physical and the verbal.
- Do not use gestures which are unnatural for you. It will show!
- Do not show. It's rude.

### ***Eye Contact***

Eye contact with your listeners is absolutely essential for becoming effective communicator. Firm and assertive eye contact is taken to mean you are open and honest. It encourages them to pay attention to you, respond to you, and to respect you.

There is nothing disturbing than a speaker who steadfastly refuses to look at his audience and who insists on looking permanently at the floor or out the window. The

listeners will think that you are not interested in your topic or in them. The opposite is equally frustrating – a speaker who selects a member of the audience giving them a long hard stare and refuses to avert his eyes.

Where your audience is too big for you to look at each person individually then you will need to practice making “W” or “M” movements with your eyes so that all areas of the audience receive eye contact.

Good eye contact also allows you to ‘read’ your listeners’ faces to get feedback on your speech.

Amount of eye contact an individual member of the audience requires is a cultural and a personal thing. Thus, eye contact customs vary from culture to culture. In some eastern cultures, women are expected to lower their eyes in communication situations. In other countries it is a sign of respect to lower one’s eyes when speaking to other people. In the United States making eye contact with your listeners is absolutely essential for becoming an effective communicator. However, a lot of non-native speakers tend to lose eye contact too often for very obvious reasons:

- they look up and away from the audience when trying to recall English vocabulary; this is a typical movement when accessing memory;
- they spend a lot of time looking at their slides and not at the audience so that they can see the English vocabulary they need to explain their point.

*Tips for effective eye contact:*

- Scan the audience, taking time to establish eye contact with specific individuals for around fifteen seconds, and then move on to the next person. This way individual members of the audience feel you are talking *to* and not *at* them.

- Avoid turning your back on the audience when presenting slide information. Bob Dignen gives advice of TTT [4; 78] – touch-turn-talk:

Touch: move a hand in the direction of the slide to indicate important information.

Turn: turn your head to look directly at the audience.

Talk: talk about the information.

## ***Facial Expressions***

The overall look of speaker's face can give nearly as much information as speaker's eyes. A smile can provide the impression of confidence. Other facial expressions convey different emotions the speaker feels. Determination, confidence, openness, friendliness are all communicated by facial expressions. Speaker's face should reflect the words, but generally be open and positive.

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*Smile is the second best thing you can do with your lips.*

---

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### ***HOT TIPS***

- Be yourself – if you are unnatural, people will sense it.
  - Be confident and relaxed – think positively and smile.
  - Get feedback in order to develop yourself.
- 

## **Time to Practice**

*1. Stand before the mirror and assume a good speaking posture. Then present the following sentence with vigor and strength:*

“Government **of** the people, **by** the people, and **for** the people shall not perish from the earth.”

Emphasize the words *of*, *by* and *for* with hand gestures. Remember: using only the arm and hand with the head and torso perfectly still is good for a comedian, but not for a public speaker. A public speaker should use all-in-one-piece action (the action should involve your hand, a shoulder, head, torso, leg, knee, ankle and foot). Work on it with the right arm, left arm, both arms.

*2. Use gestures to carry the appropriate meanings of the statements below. Follow these directions:*

- Use spontaneous gestures. Pay no attention to elegance, but act on impulse.
- Use abundant gesture; avoid timid, restrained, or half-hearted movements.

- Use the whole body, all-in-one-piece.

1. "The first thing to remember is this ..."
2. "Would you mind coming to the front rows?"
3. "Here's another side to the question we haven't yet considered..."
4. "Please don't shoot!"
5. "You look really nice today."
6. "A horse! A horse! My kingdom for a horse!"

3. Practice the following passages and demonstrate before the class your ability to communicate them. Among the kinds of action that will be needed are: the total body, stepping forward and backward, shifting of weight, head emphasis:

a). "Come over here, will you please? I have a problem I want you to look at... It's here on page 12."

b). "Step forward, please... No, that's too much! Back about two inches... There, that's about right. Now to the left two feet or so... Too much! To the right a little... Hold it! That's exactly right!"

c). "Ladies and gentlemen: we ask you to believe in us and to have faith in us. We have not succeeded, not entirely succeeded at least. But we have made progress. We have fought the good fight; we have kept the faith; and we have followed the course, not for ourselves but for you".

4. Watch a video recording of one of your presentations and evaluate yourself using the scales below (ten is high, one is low). Ask other people to rate your body language using the same scale. Compare the results. Develop an action plan based on these two ratings.

Volume	10 – 9 – 8 – 7 – 6 – 5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1
	Notes: .....
Tempo	10 – 9 – 8 – 7 – 6 – 5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1
	Notes: .....
Tone	10 – 9 – 8 – 7 – 6 – 5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1
	Notes: .....

Chunking	10 – 9 – 8 – 7 – 6 – 5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1
	Notes: .....
Articulation	10 – 9 – 8 – 7 – 6 – 5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1
	Notes: .....

## 1.2 Voice Management

Some people’s voices are naturally strong. Other people have voices that are weak and do not carry. In this case, some training is necessary for a speaker in order to communicate better.

First of all, a good speaking voice starts with ***breathing***. Breathing for speech is different from ordinary, biological breathing. In silent breathing relatively few muscles are used and the periods of inhaling and exhaling are about equal. In breathing for speech inhaling is quick and uses more muscles, while exhaling is much more slow due to activating large group of muscles to produce speech sounds. Some people can do it effectively and unconsciously.

Things to consider about breathing while you speak:

1. For public address inhalation is deeper, or more rapid, or both, than ordinary breathing.
2. For public address, exhalation must be more forceful and more controlled than for ordinary breathing.
3. This force must be supplied by muscles of the thorax and abdomen without undue tension of muscles in the throat and face. The operational rule for good speech, there, is power in the abdomen, relaxation in the throat, and flexibility in the face.
4. A speaker does not keep on talking until he / she runs out of air, but smoothly refills with short catches of breath. Thus, the lungs are never entirely inflated, nor ever too empty. This enables the speaker to maintain vigor of voice to the end of each thought.

There are five areas to consider to improve the way you speak for presentations: volume, tempo, tone, chunking and articulation.

**Volume.** The human voice has a large variety of resonators of various sizes and shapes – larynx, pharynx, mouth, nose and others. Used efficiently, the resonators give your voice *a volume* and subtle variations of vocal quality.

A common fault of presenters is not speaking loudly enough. There are two tips: firstly, always check with people at the back of the room that they can hear you; secondly, continue talking at the right volume for these people. If you are using a microphone, do not get it too close to your mouth. Experiment with different distances before the presentation.

**Tempo (pace)** – the rate at which you speak. It is important to vary the speaking rate in order to add color and variety to your voice. Most people speak quickly in a presentation, because they are nervous. On the one hand, if a speech is too fast, listeners will not be able to understand it. On the other hand, if the tempo of a speech is too slow, the audience will be bored. A comfortable speed for an audience of non-native speakers is about 90 words per minute (for native speakers around 110-120).

There are tips for fast speakers and slow speakers.

If you are a fast speaker, then you will probably have to slow down a little. Remember, fast speakers can be seen by some as energetic and dynamic, and by others as rather individualistic, aggressive and arrogant.

Relax and use more pauses between words and sentences. *Pauses* are very necessary in speech for a number of reasons:

- A pause gives the speaker time to think.
- A pause gives the audience time to absorb information.
- A pause makes the speaker appear authoritative and confident.
- A pause is useful for dramatic effect.

Mistake! Nervous speakers will often resist the temptation to pause and punctuate the gap with ‘mmmm’ and ‘errr’.

Practise speaking more slowly by speaking aloud paragraphs of text more and more slowly.

Slow speakers can be seen by some as analytical and prepared and by others as uncreative and boring.

Think less analytically and become more tolerant of using the wrong word or making a grammatical mistake. Practise speaking faster by saying aloud paragraphs of text at increasing speeds.

In many ways, the secret is to ensure variety of tempo: faster in explanations and slower when making the key points. Stress control is very important as well, as it causes most presenters to speed up a lot.

---

*Power in the abdomen, relaxation in the throat, and flexibility in the face!*

---

**Tone.** The tone of the voice – whether it sounds interested, bored, angry, nervous – has an enormous emotional impact on the listener.

A communicative voice has variety of emphasis – special force or intonation given to the word or phrase. By emphasis, we reveal meanings, indicate degrees of importance, and tell how we feel about them. When we speak, we communicate two simultaneous meanings: what we are speaking about and how we feel about it.

A speaker should spot the important words, let listeners know why they are important and communicate their meanings with precision.

There is no perfect model. Enthusiastic speakers will energise some audiences, but irritate others who may see this speaking style as unprofessional and self-promoting. A more serious voice with a flatter intonation will communicate expertise to some, but might send others to sleep.

Cultural differences add to this complexity. In the end you should aim for a tone of voice which expresses professional expertise, personal warmth and a positive outlook: which could mean either injecting or reducing energy, according to your natural style. Ask people who you know well for their assessment of your voice and how you might communicate to a range of different audiences.



One more characteristic of the voice here is *pitch* – the note at which you speak. The voice is dull if the speaker has a restricted range.

**Chunking.** We develop impact when presenting by cutting sentences into chunks of meaning which we then emphasize with stress and pausing.

Try reading aloud this presentation extract to see how chunking enhances a message. Pause slightly at the end of each line and stress the words or parts of words in **bold** text.

There are **two big issues**  
which we **must** talk about **today**.

**Firstly,**

There is the issue of **product** range  
and how **new** and **fierce** competition  
presents a **real threat**.

**Secondly,**

We should look at **marketing**,  
and where we've **succeeded**  
and **failed**  
in the last two years  
so we can build a really strong **action** plan  
to support us in the **short**  
**and**  
in the **long** term.

**Articulation.** It is vital to have good articulation when speaking. *Articulation* means pronouncing words distinctly and clearly so that the audience can understand and hear you perfectly. Articulation is dependent on how well consonant sounds are pronounced. Consonant sounds give a voice its clarity and brilliance while vowel sounds give speech its richness and carrying power. Articulating words effectively makes you easy to understand. Be precise and controlled in your pronunciation.

**Time to Practice**

*1. Do the following exercises to develop your breath:*

✓ Breath as deeply as possible, making sure that you expand both the chest and abdomen as far as you can without straining any part of the body.

✓ Take a slow deep breath, relax the throat, and count from 1 to 10 at the rate of two or three numbers per second.

✓ Inhale and extend the count to 20, then 30, then as far as your breath supply will go. Do not force the last few counts, and always stop before your breath supply is exhausted.

✓ Use the following poem as an exercise in breath control as follows:

First, read each two lines on one breath, at a normal rate.

Then continue practice until you can read four, six, and finally eight lines on a single breath, always with an ample air reserve at the end of the last lines.

---

*Great rats, small rats, lean rats, brawny rats,  
Brown rats, black rats, grey rats, tawny rats,  
Grave old plodders, gay young friskers,  
Fathers, mothers, uncles, cousins,  
Cocking tails and pricking whiskers,  
Families by tens and dozens,  
Brothers, sisters, husbands, wives,  
Followed the piper for their lives.  
Robert Browning*

---

*2. Do the following exercises to develop your articulation:*

✓ Relax all your muscles of the jaw and shake your head until the jaw flops.

✓ Drop your head forward as if you were almost asleep. Then gradually begin to shake the head, using the muscles in the back of your neck. Increase the shaking until the jaw wobbles.

✓ Yawn gently but thoroughly, note how the muscles of the jaw and throat feel when relaxed. This is the muscle tonus necessary for speaking.

✓ Open your mouth as if to yawn, but instead leave the mouth open wide and say *high ho*.

✓ Read the following selection quietly, with open and relaxed throat:

a) Give a man a pipe he can smoke,  
Give a man a book he can read:  
And his home is bright with calm delight,  
Though the room be poor indeed.

James Thompson

b) ... I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence:  
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I –  
I took the one less travelled by,  
And that has made all the difference.

Robert Frost

✓ Practice humming on 'M', 'N' and 'NG' sounds in order to develop resonance in the voice. Feel the voice really coming forward into the mask of the face.

✓ Count from 1 to 10 and from 1 to 20 up the scale and back down again. This is a useful exercise for encouraging the use of pitch in the voice.

✓ Practice the following tongue-twisters to improve articulation:

a) Red leather, yellow leather...

b) Sharp teeth, big paws, soft fur, sharp claws...

c) Some people are money-wise, others are otherwise.

d) Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers

A peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked

If Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers

Where is the peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked?

✓ Read, and then learn by heart the following sections. Be prepared to recite them in public. Remember about proper breathing habits, relaxed throat, open mouth, and a conscious concept of resonance.

---

*We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.--That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed,--That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it.*

*American Declaration of Independence*

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*Lead us, Evolution, lead us  
Up the future's endless stair;  
Chop us, change us, prod us, weed us.  
For stagnation is despair:  
Groping, guessing, yet progressing,  
Lead us nobody knows where.*

*C.S. Lewis, Evolutionary Hymn*

---

*3. Learn to hum, chant, or sing in rising or falling pitch, saying:*

- a) "I can make my voice go really high" (*in rising pitch*)
- b) "I can make my voice fall really low" (*in falling pitch*)

*4. Vary the rate of speaking the following sentences so as communicate the indicated meanings:*

a) "I told her I couldn't come"

- slowly, expressing regret;
- faster, argumentatively defending your answer;
- still faster, meaning "I didn't want to go, and I get out of it."

b) "What do you think we ought to do?"

- very slowly, as though asked by a tired and confused person;
- normal rate, asking a simple question;
- fast, to mean "I'm in a hurry."

*5. Vary the emphasis of the following so as to communicate the indicated meanings:*

a) "There is no answer. You have asked me that question a thousand times, and my reply has always been the same. It will always be the same."

- mild emphasis, as though explaining it the thousandth time;

- sustained emphasis, meaning “Don’t ask me again!”
- short sharp emphasis, to communicate fear
- b) “Yes, I know about it. I’ve known it all the time.”
  - mild emphasis, merely to offer information;
  - prolonged emphasis, meaning, “I’m tired of hearing about it.”
  - explosive emphasis, meaning, “Don’t tell me I don’t know!”

**6. a) Practice chunking.** Divide these presentation extracts into chunks of meaning by marking the main stresses and pauses. Then practice saying them with maximum impact. The objective is not to find the right answer – in fact, there are many possible answers – but more to practice using your voice differently and more effectively. Compare the answers with your groupmates.

Extract 1

‘Are there any questions on that? Right, then the third point and the most important point for today is the issue of product stuffing. As you know we will need three maybe even four people to go out to North America in January. And to be honest I’m not sure that we’ve got three or four people who are ready for the task. This represents a major challenge to the project and we need to find a solution today.’

Extract 2

‘Let’s look at our promotion options in more detail. Firstly we can just advertise the products in the national press. But this is expensive and very untargeted. The second option is to advertise again but in specialist trade magazines. This is cost-effective and reaches the target client. Thirdly and finally we could promote the products with a special brochure to our main customers. Although this is the most expensive I think it will produce by far the best return.’

**b)** Now think of effective gestures and movements to accompany the extracts. Then say them again with these gestures and movements. Do it in front of a mirror so you can see how you would look to the audience.

7. Study the following selections to get the thought and feeling. Practice reading them aloud, using the principles of communicating the full meaning vividly and powerfully. Some selections require a slower-than-normal rate, some require an extreme range, some – unusual volume. All of them require breath control, resonance, and good articulation.

---

*Afoot and light-hearted I take to the open road,  
Healthy, free, the world before me,  
The long brown path before me leading wherever I choose.*

*Henceforth I ask not good-fortune, I myself am good-fortune,  
Henceforth I whimper no more, postpone no more, need  
nothing,  
Done with indoor complaints, libraries, querulous criticisms,  
Strong and content I travel the open road.*

**Walt Whitman**

---

***For Whom the Bell Tolls***

*No man is an island,  
Entire of itself.  
Each is a piece of the continent,  
A part of the main.  
If a clod be washed away by the sea,  
Europe is the less.  
As well as if a promontory were.  
As well as if a manor of thine own  
Or of thine friend's were.  
Each man's death diminishes me,  
For I am involved in Mankind.  
Therefore, send not to know  
For whom the bell tolls,  
It tolls for thee.*

**John Donne**

---

***Marc Antony's Speech at Caesar's Funeral***

*Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears;  
I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him.  
The evil that men do lives after them;  
The good is oft interred with their bones;  
So let it be with Caesar.*

**Shakespeare, Julius Caesar, Act III**

---

*'It is easier to love those who are far away. It isn't  
easy to love those who are right next to us. It is  
easier to offer a dish of rice to a poor person than to  
fill up the loneliness and suffering of someone  
lacking love in your own family.'*

**Mother Teresa**

---

*Tiger! Tiger! Burning bright  
In the forests of the night,  
What immortal hand or eye  
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?...*

**William Blake, The Tiger**

---

*I am the master of my fate:  
I am the captain of my soul.*

**William Henley**

8. Listen to a recording of your own voice and evaluate yourself using the scales below (ten is high, one is low). Ask other people to rate your voice using the same scale. Compare the results. Develop an action plan based on these two ratings.

Volume                    10 – 9 – 8 – 7 – 6 – 5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1

Notes: .....

Tempo                    10 – 9 – 8 – 7 – 6 – 5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1

Notes: .....

Tone                    10 – 9 – 8 – 7 – 6 – 5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1

Notes: .....

Chunking                10 – 9 – 8 – 7 – 6 – 5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1

Notes: .....

Articulation            10 – 9 – 8 – 7 – 6 – 5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1

Notes: .....

## 2 Making a Good Start

An effective speech depends greatly on how you begin and end. The introduction and conclusion are the parts of speech that the audience will keep in mind, so it is a chance to produce an impact.

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*Powerful speakers start powerfully!*

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Presentations with a poor opening seldom succeed. A good introduction attracts the listener's attention immediately and makes them interested in the rest of the speech. There is a number of variables which will determine the type of introduction you should go for:

- the business context of the event (is the mood positive or difficult?);
- the audience (colleagues or customers?);
- the objective (motivational or pressurizing?);
- your strategy (safe or sensitive?);
- your preferred communication style (formal or informal?).

Whatever the context you should create a first three minutes introduction that is stimulating, clear and with the right tone for the audience in front of you. It should include the information about what they can expect to hear in a presentation that helps the audience to follow the presentation easily.

There are the following steps to make the introduction effective:

**1. Get your audience's attention.** Do not attempt to start until everyone is quiet, has sat down, stopped talking and are listening. If the speaker starts before the audience has given their full attention, he will lose authority.

**2. Welcome.** This can be anything from a simple *Good morning everyone* to *Your Royal Highness*.

- *Good morning. Welcome to ...*
- *Hi, everyone.*

**3. Say a word of thanks.** Presenters often need to take time out to thank hosts or organisers. A word or two of acknowledgement to the person who has introduced you is



basic politeness. This brief statement will also allow your audience to get used to your voice and to get comfortable.

- *I should firstly like to say thanks to ...*
- *Thanks very much to ...*

**4. Frame positively.** Communication theorists tell us expressing positive expectations at the beginning of our message increases the chances it will be received positively. So, if you are happy to be given the opportunity to speak on an interesting topic, say so!

- *It's good to see so many here today.*
- *I am extremely happy to be here ...*
- *It's great opportunity for us today to ...*

---

**Remember: never apologise. This is negative thinking.**

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**5. Give the audience your credentials,** tell them who you are and why you are speaking about this particular subject. If you familiar to the vast majority, they may want to hear about the real you, the person, but do not waste much time.

- *Let me just start by introducing myself. My name is ...*
- *I'm in charge of ...*
- *Just a few words about myself: ...*
- *For those of you who don't know me ...*
- *Perhaps I should just introduce one or two people around the table.*

**6. Hook.** Hooks are techniques designed to grab the attention of audiences. Any beginning must be energizing as well. The purpose of the beginning is to establish a rapport (a relationship with the audience, especially one of mutual trust and emotional attraction). One technique is to ask a question which forced a show of hands – it's physical and fun. Use the 'opener' you prepared to get the attention of your audience, make them sit and listen.

Among the typical attention-getting openers or hooks there is:

- an anecdote (it must be relevant!) or any other form of humour.

*Ways to introduce humour* into your presentations:

1. Use a play on words in the presentation description or title to set the tone for introduction. You could maintain a light tone by displaying a fun visual (a cartoon or a photograph) for the audience to read as it comes into the room.

2. The personal introduction is a great moment to lighten the atmosphere by making a few jokes at your own expense. For example, if you're a presenter with a long list of book titles to your name, inform your audience that you're a unique writer – you have more book titles than readers.

Here is *an example* of humorous introduction:

'I'd like to say a few words about our next scheduled presenter. He is one of the foremost authorities on his subject. He has written extensively on the subject and is author of several best-selling books. He is also well known on the conference circuit as one of the most engaging presenters you will find. Unfortunately, he can't be here with us today so please welcome instead John Hansen.'

Humorous anecdote is a favourite starting device with many presenters. These usually make fun of the presenter's own failings or mistakes as an entry point into the presentation topic.

Here is an anecdote to introduce a presentation on the challenges of communicating across cultures:

'I was recently at a conference in London and I spotted this Swedish lady – I knew that from the badge – sitting alone on a sofa. She looked kind of alone so I thought, let's go socialize and make this person feel welcome. So, I went over and I started with the usual polite stuff such as 'How are you today? What did you do last night? How long are you staying? First time at the conference?' and so on. She didn't say much, so I just said politely 'You seem very quiet today.' She looked at me and said 'Yes, and you seem very noisy.' That's when I realized that English and Swedish conversation styles are very different.'

Collect and use other people's anecdotes. You get exactly the same effect if you tell someone else's story by starting *Somebody once told me about a time when they ...*

### *Humour can work*

Once when Barbara Bush was asked to speak at the Wellesley College graduation ceremony, a large number of the all-female graduates-to-be felt that she was not the appropriate speaker since her accomplishments had been a result of her husband's George Bush's presidency. However, in spite of the protests, the school kept Mrs. Bush on the program. Immediately after being introduced, Mrs. Bush said this: 'Someone in this audience may someday preside over the White House as the spouse of the President and I wish him well.' Her comment was met with overwhelming applause and she quickly won over the audience.

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*N.B.* Be careful with playing the role of incompetent. It is easy to overplay it and for it to be seen as a form of false modesty. Additionally, this form of 'laughing at oneself' may be more common in some business cultures than others. As ever, research your audience.

- a historical fact (e.g. In 1913 Henry Ford employed an innovative system in his factory that changed the nature of American history forever – the production line ...");

- a quotation (e.g. "As the Chinese philosopher Confucius said, "Choose a job you love and you will never have to work a day in your life." – beware of using hackneyed quotations though);

Quotations are a great way to introduce clever, humorous and very relevant insights on a number of business topics. You can find useful quotations on these websites:

- <https://quotesgram.com/thinkexist-quotes/>
- <https://www.brainyquote.com/>
- <https://www.thoughtco.com/>
- <https://wisdomquotes.com/>

- referring to some current relevant news item (e.g. "I wonder if you heard in the news last week about the new space mission accomplished by NASA scientists...");

- rhetorical question (e.g. "Are public speakers born or made? Can you make one?");

- figures / statistics (e.g. “If all employees in the western world gave their one hour’s salary, we could solve world property.”);

- unusual definitions (e.g. “An ambassador is an honest man sent to lie abroad for the good of his country” H. Wotton);

- comparison / analogy (e.g. “The women in Bolego village in Uganda have to walk 4 miles each way to collect water from the spring. Imagine walking from the Kremlin to the Palace of Sports just to collect a bucket of water.”).

However, be aware that hook techniques, while they promise to deliver a lot in terms of audience engagement, also carry a higher risk of failure than simpler and safer approaches to introduction.

- *To start, let me ask you a provocative question ...*

- *Take a look at this picture. What does it tell you about our company?*

- *I’d like to start with a story today.*

**7. Give the title of your speech.** This should be short and memorable.

- The title of today’s presentation is ...

**8. State objective.** You need to say it twice or three times in the course of the first few minutes so that people really get the message.

- *The target of this presentation is to present ...*

- *The objective today is to give some background about ...*

- *The main goal for us is ...*

**9. Structure.** Give the preview of your speech – go through its structure so that the audience is aware of what is to follow. Tell them the direction you are going to take and how long you will be speaking for.

In short, in the introduction you need to tell the audience:

*Who* you are,

*What* your speech is about,

*Why* they should be interested,

*How* you are going to talk about it.

- *I’ve divided / split my talk into four main parts / sections.*

- *Firstly, I want to ...*

- *Secondly / thirdly, we will move on to ...*
- *Then / next / after that / finally I will speak about ...*

**10. Mention logistics.** It may be useful to mention various logistical factors such as timing and refreshments, particularly with smaller audiences for whom you can be more flexible.

- *The presentation will last around ... minutes.*
- *We will have refreshments at ... and lunch at ...*
- *Are there any questions about logistics before we start?*

**11. Emphasize benefits.** This is the great weakness of most business presentations. People are quick to talk about objectives but so often forget to sell benefits: the What's in it for me? factor.

Treat the audience as a customer who will be convinced by benefits or solutions to their problems rather than by listening to your objectives. Here are some ways to develop a more audience-centered introduction to presentation.

Acknowledge customer problems personally and be solution-oriented

Start the presentation by showing your understanding of the solution your audience needs. If you make this understanding really personal, you will have even greater impact on your audience. Contrast the following:

*Usual start*

'I'd like talk through the figures from the last month with you.'

*Customer-focused start*

'Now we've had some problems in the last month. I know this has been a concern for many of you, Joseph particularly, I thought it would be important to look at the figures in detail so we can get things right for next month.'

Tailor the context to customer needs

Presenters usually miss the opportunity when introducing the content of the presentation to show how much it has been tailored to meeting customer concerns. Contrast the following:

*Usual start*

‘I’ve divided the presentation into three parts. Firstly, product features. Secondly, comments from your technical specialists. Finally, some thoughts about future cooperation.’

#### *Customer-focused start*

‘So, in line with your main concerns, I’ve decided that it is best if I talk about product features first. We have discussed this already, but it’s good to go over things to make sure you’re totally happy. Secondly, the comments of your technical people have been really helpful in identifying upgrades and we should look at these. I’ll end with a few comments on future cooperation, as I feel it’s important to make sure you feel confident about the product for the future, How does that sound?’

#### Stress common interest between presenter and customer

For some presentations aiming at announcing changes that create real pressures for the listeners (e.g. members of subsidiary organization), it’s vital to create a sense of ‘we’ early in the presentation to allow ears to really open and for the message to be heard positively. Stressing joint interest and joint benefit is a simple opening strategy to build bridges. Contrast the following:

#### *Usual start*

‘I want to look at the project schedule to clarify a number of things: firstly, the time line and important milestones; and secondly, I want to take clear the precise results and the level of quality of these results which this project has to deliver.’

#### *Joint-interest start*

‘Today, as agreed with everyone, we feel it is important to clarify the project schedule. As you know, this project is vital for the whole organization and will produce benefit here and in the headquarters in the terms of efficiency. I think we need to focus on two areas: firstly, we need to discuss the schedule in order to have a common understanding and a common commitment to the milestones; secondly, and what is critical to everyone, to talk about the kinds of results that we want to achieve.’

#### Promise to answer your customer’s questions

In order to deliver the right solutions to customers, we need to the customer’s problems. We get this knowledge by asking the right questions. A simple technique to

show your audience that you intend to answer their key concerns and questions is to place them right in the introduction, with a promise to deliver the answer.

Contrast the following:

*Usual start*

‘My objective today is to introduce the new handled PC, which we plan to launch at the end of the second quarter this year...’

*Customer-focused start*

‘Today we will be looking at our new handled PC. And I can see the questions in your eyes already. ‘Have you improved the battery life?’ – which many of you were so unhappy about. ‘Have you included Wi-Fi as a standard?’ – we had a lot of requests for this. ‘Can you solve the compatibility problem with our ISP?’ – this was the biggest request we had. ‘Will I be able to use it anywhere in the world?’ – this is important to many of our users. In fact, I’ll answer all of these questions and many more during the course of the presentation...’

- *I hope this presentation will enable you to ...*

- *What I hope I will give you today is ...*

- *The real benefit I’m hoping to deliver with this presentation is ...*

---

*Present benefits – not objectives!*

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**12. Demonstrate personal commitment.** Statements such as *I really want to...* show commitment to and solidarity with the audience, making it more open to your message.

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*N.B. Discard disclaimers and apologies!*

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Too many speakers use disclaimers or apologies for their comments before they even begin their speeches. Disclaimers are remarks that weaken or diminish the impact of what the speaker is about to say. Likewise, when the speaker apologizes for the speech beforehand, he or she makes an admission that the speech is not perfect before the members of the audience have the chance to judge the speech for themselves. Thus, a

speech can't be started with the words: *"I'm sorry I didn't have more time to prepare"*, or *"I'm not an expert on this topic"*. Comments like these reduce speaker's credibility and diminish the value of his / her opinions and feelings. Avoid these types of remarks.

- *I'm very much committed to ...*
- *I really want to support ...*
- *I believe totally that ...*
- *Speaking personally, ...*
- *My own view in this is ...*
- *I see this as ...*

**13. Clarify the role of audience.** You may want your audience to participate but this can be a behavior which is difficult to stimulate. Very often people view silent observation of presenters as a form of respect. Research your audience and plan accordingly.

- *If you have any questions, please feel free to interrupt.*
- *I'd be glad to take any questions in the end of my presentation.*
- *I'd like this to be interactive with discussion, rather than just a presentation.*

**14. Link to start.** Signal clearly that your introduction is over and that you are ready to start.

- *Ok. Let's begin with the first point which is ...*
- *Right. We can start by looking at ...*
- *Now it's time to turn our attention to ...*

Of course, not all of these opening elements are always used in the introduction. You can vary them and change their order in accordance with aim, topic and audience characteristics.



Picture 1 – Producing an impact on the audience



## Time to Practice

1. Match each of the highlighted sentences in this presentation extract to one of the opening elements on pages 24-32.

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‘Good morning everyone. Many thanks, Peter, for your very kind words of introduction. Perhaps I should start by saying how interesting it is for me to be here at the conference. *The morning sessions were fascinating and I hope I can build upon what you’ve heard so far*, and introduce some more interesting ideas to the discussion about global leadership.

*By the way how many people know what ‘global leadership’ means?* Ok, let me see, there are a few brave hands raised, but a lot more confused faces. So, this is my objective today, to look at the issue of global leadership, see if we can get to a definition and to some understanding of how companies can implement it across their organizations. My interest in this stems directly from a very personal need. *I am an HR director who was recently entrusted with creating a global leadership programme, so this whole field is very close to my heart.* And I know that many of you are also struggling with this problem. Some of you have already implemented programmes and I look forward to hearing your experiences. At the end of the next ninety minutes, I hope we will all have a greater sense of the challenges facing us when trying to implement global leadership and, because you are very pragmatic people, *I really want to pass on some new ideas of things that you could try when you’re back in the office.*

So, in terms of structure, I’ve tried to keep it simple. I’ve just divided the presentation into two parts: firstly, I want to look at definitions of global leadership and, secondly, then look at how to achieve it in major organisations. *As there are only around thirty people here, I think we can keep it fairly informal, so please feel free to ask questions or comment at any time.* As I said, we have ninety minutes and then we have a fairly long coffee break during which I hope we can continue our discussions. So, let’s move to the first issue, and very challenging issue: what exactly is global leadership?’

---

2. a) Here are some techniques for high-impact openings. Match each one with a presenter comment.

1. Make a controversial statement to wake people up
2. Introduce an amusing personal anecdote
3. Ask the audience a question
4. Get the audience to do something
5. Allow disaster to happen
6. Entertain with a trick
7. Find a great audio-visual
8. Pair up with someone to do a double-act
9. Offer prizes
10. Use a quotation to make your point

A) ‘Yes, I like the ‘Ask your partner approach’ right at the beginning. It can create a real buzz in the room and a real launch pad for the presentation.’

B) ‘ To kick off a presentation about cultural difference, I heard a guy from the UK express his shock at hearing an announcement on a Swiss train which was apologizing for the train being two minutes late. In the UK this would have been cause for celebration.’

C) I taught myself to juggle in a week and performed in front of audiences just to prove that anything is possible if you put your mind to it.’

D) ‘I was recently in Hong Kong and saw three presenters at the same conference animate their audience by showing them prizes they could win during the presentation in the first couple of minutes. The audience really didn’t know what was going.

E) ‘This is a high-risk approach. I heard of a company CEO who strolled up to the stage to start his presentation, fell flat on his face and lay there for two minutes. The audience really didn’t know what was going on until he stood up, walked to the microphone and said ‘Unless we talk serious strategic change today, this company is going to fall flat on its flat. And it doesn’t look nice, does it?’

F) ‘I’ve seen quite a few cases of people asking a colleague in the audience to ask pre-planned questions. It worked quite well once when the colleague pretended to be an unhappy customer and asked a series of very tough questions. The presenter used the

questions to focus his audience of sales reps on the issue of customer service and the fact that they were failing.’

G) ‘I once saw someone start a presentation about effective team building by asking his audience to forget everything they had ever read about team building.’

H) ‘I saw a recent presentation from a big consulting company with a photo from the World Cup with the English football team in tears after the penalty shoot-out. The caption read ‘Practice doesn’t make perfect. Call on the experts to get results.’

I) ‘I always have a few sentences from people like Albert Einstein or Peter Drucker peppering my presentations. One of my favourites is from Tom Peters. He said about managers ‘If you are not confused, you’re not paying attention.’ I like that, because I’m always confused.’

J) ‘This is a technique I see used frequently, especially rhetorical questions. I even saw one guy start his presentation with the question ‘Instead of listening to me, what would you rather be doing?’ He went on to talk about motivation.’

*b) Discuss in pairs: which of the above techniques do you personally prefer? Why?*

*3. Enjoy the samples below by testing if you know who said what.*

1. On leadership

‘A leader is best when people barely know he exists, when his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say: we did it ourselves.’

2. On questions

‘Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow. The important thing is not to stop questioning.’

3. On learning

‘Learning is not child’s play; we cannot learn without pain.’

4. On change

‘People are always telling me that change is good. But all that means is that something you didn’t want to happen has happened.’

5. On social skills

‘Conversation about the weather is the last refuge of the unimaginative.’

- a) Oscar Wilde (playwright)
- b) Meg Ryan (actress)
- c) Albert Einstein (scientist)
- d) Aristotle (philosopher)
- e) Lao Tzu (philosopher)

4. *Introductions can become repetitive. It is important to have a choice of words and expressions at your fingertips. Use one of the following expressions to replace each of the expressions in italics in this introduction.*

don't hesitate	a chance	I take care
I'm delighted	sections	go through
in more depth	my purpose is	divide

---

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. *It's a pleasure* to be with you today. My name's Gordon Matthews and *I'm in charge* of corporate finance at our headquarters here in Brussels. *We are here today to review* some key figures and to outline financial strategy over the next five years. So what I intend to do is to *break down* this presentation into three *parts*: first, financial review; second, the options facing us; and finally, the strategy I propose. If you have any questions, please *feel free* to interrupt me, but I should also say there'll be *an opportunity* to discuss issues *at greater length* after my talk.

---

5. *Analyze the introductions and conclusions of 5 video speeches:*

- Rank them as good, average or poor.
- Classify the methods used in the introduction (anecdote, shock opening, quotation, etc.)
- Consider the methods critically and decide what methods you would use if it were your speech.

6. *Assume that you are speaking on a controversial subject: gender inequality, globalization, religious sects, racial minorities, the death penalty, etc. Draft two introductions to get attention, one for the audience that favors your viewpoint and one for the audience that is hostile toward it.*

### 3 Producing a Final Effect with the Conclusion

*Short-term memory is electrical; long-term memory is chemical. We can only do three things to increase the transfer of our messages from electrical memory to chemical memory: increase the relevancy of the message, increase the frequency of its repetition, or both.'*

*Bryan and Jeff Eisenberg*

It is vital for speakers to end their presentations strongly. In the closing moments presenters create those final impressions, the real take-away value, so the message needs to be strong, highly memorable and absolutely focused on the main points the audience should carry out of the door. A conclusion has a single purpose, to leave a lasting effect, to give a final impetus to the proposition. The last thing you say is, as a rule, the most remembered.

As the Eisenbergs (professional marketing keynote speakers) noted, we remember best those messages which are important for us and which are repeated often enough to allow transfer to our long-term memory. In part, therefore, the closing sequence of a presentation needs to allow for repetition, through a summary of the content; and a focus on the most relevant issue, the concluding statement.

To end presentations effectively, observe five basic principles:

Be short – you will lose impact if you go on for too long at the end.

Be consistent – you will confuse if you start introducing new ideas.

Be clear – you will be effective if you stress the main ideas in simple terms.

Be tailored – you will satisfy your audience if you focus on their interests.

Be memorable – you will be remembered if you do something a little bit different.

A good conclusion has following parts to it:

#### 1. The signal

Signpost clearly that you are reaching the end because this is usually where you will have maximum concentration from the audience.

*- And in conclusion...*

*- Right, I think that brings me to the end of my presentation.*

- *Ok, that covers everything I wanted to say about ...*
- *So, that's all I have to say.*

## 2. The summary plus reflection

The next phase is a brief summary of the main objective(s) and message(s) of the presentation. This shouldn't just be the repetition of the introduction as this can appear to patronize the audience. Restate briefly the objective(s) and the key points of your speech as these are the main ideas you wanted to communicate, but add reflections. Stress key issues in more detail in a way not possible earlier. You can also draw upon any discussions or audience comments during the presentation to make the summary feel really comprehensive and to show that you have been listening to your audience. Look at an example of this last point:

'Ok, to summarise, I think that a decision to expand into Vietnam makes sense in two ways. Firstly, and you said very much the same thing in the discussion earlier, Sven, if we don't go now our competitors will establish themselves more strongly, which will give us problems in the future. Secondly...'

Remind your audience of your original purpose, and if relevant tell them what action you would like them to take or what attitude to change.

- *To recap briefly, ...*
- *To summarise the key points, ...*
- *Basically, we looked at three major points ...*
- *On the first issue, the key point I want to emphasise is ...*
- *Regarding the second issue, I think we all now see the importance of...*
- *The final point was ... and for me the big issue, as I said, is ...*

## 4. Grabber

Leave the audience with a final thought, something that they will remember even if they forget everything else. This can be a restatement of your original 'hook', or an addition to it. Another good way to end a speech is by posing a question to the audience, which they will want to consider after the speech has finished. It is also possible to use some suggested ways for opening the speech as well as for closing it, e.g. anecdote, quotation, comparison, etc.

## 5. The conclusion

As a rule, you should include two things in the conclusion: firstly, stress the benefits you've provided to your audience; secondly, look forward to the future and highlight what is going to happen next, either in terms of things people will experience or things people should do. So, concluding means stressing interests and focusing forward, concisely and positively.

- *To conclude, I'd like to say that ...*
- *I'd like to finish by saying ...*
- *In conclusion, I hope that this has given you ...*
- *As a final message, I would like to ask you to ...*
- *It seems to me, then, that we should ...*
- *I would therefore recommend / advise that ...*
- *I think we are now in a position to ...*

Concluding statements should communicate forcefully and memorably. As always, the style and content of the closing statements must be tailored to the type of audience. Here are eight techniques to make a lasting final impression on your audience.

### ***Eight techniques to finish presentation:***

#### *1. Push to action*

Your audience should leave the room in no doubt as to what they have to do and when.

#### *2. Demonstrate tangible benefits*

Communicate in clear and simple terms what the audience got by listening to you for the last hour or so.

#### *3. Offer inspiration*

Get people walking out the door with some energy, ready for the next challenge.

#### *4. Achieve the feel-good factor*

Put a smile on the face of your audience with some positive news.

#### *5. Praise*

Acknowledging a fact that people have done a good job is a great way to finish.

#### *6. Emphasise creativity*

Sometimes change is painful, so appealing to people's creative instinct to manage the challenge can be useful.

#### *7. Play the team card*

Never lose an opportunity to do that all-important bit of teambuilding.

#### *8. Be a leader when the environment is difficult*

Model the right mentality with a confident forecast of success in difficult times.

#### ***How to create a high impact conclusion:***

- Finish with a controversial statement to wake up people;
- Illustrate your key message with a fun party trick;
- Find a great audio-visual to pull everything together;
- Offer prizes to someone who can articulate the key message as a clever slogan;
- End the quotation from someone great and famous to illustrate your point.

#### 6. Linking to questions

The final phase is to open up questions. Come to a definite close so that the audience know you have finished speaking, e.g. 'Ladies and gentlemen, that concludes my speech'; 'Thank you all for your attention'. The link to questions is often quick and easy: 'Do you have any questions?', 'If you have any questions I will be pleased to answer them'. In more complex contexts, you may want to propose a sequence of topics and the types of questions to follow. For example, in international contexts you may wish to offer the possibility for everyone in the room to ask questions so that different subsidiary representatives can get information on topics relevant only to their local contexts.

- *Thank you for listening so attentively.*
- *Thank you for your attention.*
- *I hope that this has been useful.*
- *Now, I'd be glad to answer any questions.*

#### ***Some other useful considerations when preparing a conclusion:***

- Hold your position for three seconds at the end before you leave the performing area. Being in a rush to leave spoils the impression.



- Avoid losing energy at the end of the speech. Say your memorable concluding remarks slowly and clearly, maintaining eye contact with your audience. Be as dramatic, positive and confident as possible!

- Work out your timing carefully. Finish your speech before your audience stops listening to you.

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Jack Welch, in his early days as CEO of General Electric, dealt with the need for major changes in the company's strategy very directly.

He was frequently heard to finish presentations with a simple message to the company's workers: *Change ... before you have to.*

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### **Time to Practice**

*1. Discuss the following questions in pairs or in groups and then compare your answers with those of the presentation experts (Appendix 1).*

a) How useful is it to prepare notes to accompany each slide?

b) How do I handle audience members who are more expert than me in the subject?

c) What do I do if I forget what to say?

d) How should I react if someone walks out after a couple of minutes?

e) What happens if I start to get nervous after I've started?

*2. Analyze the introductions and conclusions of 5 video speeches:*

- Rank them as good, average or poor.

- Classify the methods used in the conclusion (question, comparison, quotation, etc.).

- Consider the methods critically and decide what methods you would use if it were your speech.

*3. Make full sentences for conclusion by matching the correct halves.*

a) Before we come to the end,                    1. there are four major features.

b) I'd be glad to answer                        2. we start the discussion now.

- |                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| c) To summarize,       | 3. by quoting a well-known saying.               |
| d) We can conclude     | 4. we should reduce our costs.                   |
| e) In my opinion,      | 5. any questions now.                            |
| f) I'd like to suggest | 6. I'd like to thank you for your participation. |

4. Complete this conclusion to a presentation to call centre managers about reorganization. Use phrases a-g below.

- a) our job is now to
- b) the major objective of my presentation today was to
- c) firstly, we looked at
- d) what I'd like to do now is to summarise briefly
- e) so, in conclusion
- f) this generated a lot of discussion and
- g) in the second part of the presentation

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'OK, I think that covers the last point if there are no more questions? OK, then \_\_\_\_\_<sup>1</sup> and the focus on next steps.

So, as I said right at the beginning, \_\_\_\_\_<sup>2</sup> look through the main options for the relocation of our call centres with you. We've seen the three options: \_\_\_\_\_<sup>3</sup> going offshore; and I think we agree that this is the solution with most problems, although offering the greatest cost savings. Secondly, there is the option to outsource the whole operation to a service provider such as CareCall. \_\_\_\_\_<sup>4</sup> I sense that many of you are against this because of the threat to jobs in the medium term. The final option, and the one which we all seem to favour, is to create a new service company of our own and run it as a profit centre. This preserves jobs but, as we have discussed, it will necessitate some cuts in salary.

\_\_\_\_\_<sup>5</sup> I looked to how to communicate the decision to employees with a communication plan. I think the mechanics are clear but be under no illusions that it will take a lot of hard work on our side to persuade our people that this is the right solution.

\_\_\_\_\_ <sup>6</sup> I think we have a commitment to a new organization that meets the needs you expressed and which the company has identified. And we have a plan to communicate the changes in the coming weeks which will support that new organization. \_\_\_\_\_ <sup>7</sup> communicate the plan and communicate it successfully so that the whole project runs to schedule. I ...'

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5. *Match these internal presentation extracts to the eight techniques to finish your presentation on pages 39-40:*

a. 'So, after this presentation you should feel that you now have the framework; you have the support and you have the freedom. You can now go and do the job that you wanted to do before you walked in here. Thank you.'

b. 'So, the figures which I have presented demonstrate that the company is doing well. I should say doing great! And I hope that makes your Friday afternoon run a little bit more smoothly. Thank you.'

c. 'So, to conclude, I have to say that these targets will not be easy to meet. The competition is even tougher. The customers demand more and more. But I'm very confident in the people around this table and very confident we'll succeed. Thank you.'

d. 'So, in conclusion, let's get out there and deliver. We've got a lot of customers who want our services, and who want them now. Thank you.'

e. 'To conclude I want to stress just one thing. This project will not succeed without your support. And as a vision, today we start the project as a new team in Paris. And I want to end this project as one of the most effective teams in the whole organization. Thank you.'

f. 'In conclusion, well, there really only is one conclusion. Everyone in this room has exceeded their targets so I have to a very big well done, and please, do it again next year. Thank you.'

g. Remember, you are the best today. You were the best yesterday. Go out and be the best tomorrow. Thank you.'

h. So, looking back at the last year, I think we can all agree that change has been hard. But we've done it. We've restructured, we've developed and we've

innovated, really innovated, to emerge much stronger than ever. The key to this was your energy and creativity which, I'm sure, will continue to be our competitive advantage in the future. Thank you.'

6. *Assume that you are speaking on a controversial subject: gender inequality, globalization, religious sects, racial minorities, the death penalty, etc. Draft two conclusions: one intended to persuade listeners to respect your viewpoint even though they disagree; another one intended to arouse listeners to high enthusiasm and determination.*

7. *Choose one of the greatest speeches of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Appendix 2) and analyze their structure and language. What do you think makes them so influential? What techniques did the authors use in the introduction and conclusion?*

## 4 Conversing with the Audience

### 4.1 Building rapport

Public speaking is a two way process which requires a ‘lively sense of communication’ at both ends. In this context *building rapport* is an essential international competence.

Strategies for *building rapport* quickly with your audience before you begin

#### 1. *Welcome positively*

Remember, it’s not only what you say, it’s how you say it. Blend friendly body language such as smile, strong eye contact and committed handshake with a few positive words.

#### 2. *Be curious – ask questions*

An individual will feel welcomed if you ask polite questions about travel and accommodation, for example.

#### 3. *Show knowledge*

Show that you know something about them and their professional situation. Sometimes it pays to do a little research beforehand.

#### 4. *Build a bond by finding common points*

Begin a process of connecting to people by signaling that you have points in common: people you may both know or something you have in common in your personal background.

### ***Rapport-building styles***

In order to manage relationships with different international audiences effectively, it’s important to be aware that alternative rapport-building styles exist.

Communication experts have identified two important rapport-building styles: the reactive style and the proactive style.

People with the *reactive style* prefer to be themselves, to react to circumstances and let things happen. They can come across to others as rather reserved and serious. Reactives don’t like what they see as superficial and false politeness – asking lots of questions, smiling, being very warm and friendly. They prefer to be open and honest,

even if this risks coming across as a little direct, even rude. Reactives like relationships to develop more naturally over time.

People with proactive style work hard to create an atmosphere of warm politeness, where people can communicate in an enthusiastic way to create a positive relationship quickly. This rapport-building style is characterized by the use of a lot of questions (to signal interest in people) and by an active style of listening which gives positive feedback to the speaker with phrases such as *Really?* or *That's interesting*. Conflict and negativity is to be avoided with the proactives who are happy to hide true feelings in favour of smiles and laughter to maintain a positive atmosphere.

Both presenter and the audience can have each of these styles.

Presenters must be sensitive to their own individual style and the general style of their audience. Proactive presenters who smile and want to create a relaxed and friendly atmosphere may be understood by reactive-style audiences as a little superficial, just adapting behavior to gain confidence; playing games and appearing friendly, when in fact there is another motive.

On the other hand, the proactive style audience will find the reactive style presenter to be cold, inflexible, impolite, possibly over-direct and maybe a little arrogant. Of course, these are generalizations but they are the kinds of feelings people often report about their international experience. Recognising and managing these people differences is a critical competence for international presenters.

## **4.2 Engaging audiences**

Some audiences demand more than information. They want to be entertained. Some speakers can communicate in ways which audiences find interesting and engaging with very little effort. Such speakers offer a great deal of variety in their communication style.

Look at these extracts from two presentations explaining the cancellation of a project to stakeholders. The first uses a narrower and neutral style based on short and

simple statements. The second uses a more engaging style with far greater variety of sentence type.

#### Version 1

‘So, to conclude, we have decided to scrap the project mainly because of financial and resource reasons which would have created difficulties for the organization. I think this decision will save us around 140000 each. We don’t think we have any other option. Do you have any questions?’

#### Version 2

‘Look, why did we decide to scrap a project? To be honest, we had other options. We could have simply postponed. We could have extended the deadlines. I said no. Two years ago we might have hesitated. Today we have to be more decisive. If we had hesitated we would have lost more money, we would have committed more resources and we would have created many major difficulties for the organization. So, come on, when you look at your next cost budget sitting in your office on a Friday afternoon, think of me a little, because I guess I saved each of you over 140000. That is a massive saving for each of you this year. It’s the biggest single saving you will make this year. When I mentioned the figures to my boss yesterday you should have seen her smile. So this decision was rational, logical and absolutely necessary, and I hope clear now to all of you as the key stakeholders. OK, thanks for listening to my sales pitch. I’m sure you have a few questions about this, as the project was very important to many of you. Jean? Peter?’

Version 2 is clearly much longer and requires more preparation, and more time to deliver, too. But the key point is that it engages the audience in the decision-making process.

Involve your listeners as much as you can, even if it is only asking them to imagine. Get your listeners to feel, to see, to experience, what you are talking about.

#### ***Strategies to develop interest and engagement***

Use ‘we’. Presenters who use ‘we’ can create a sense of solidarity with their audiences: *I think my presentation shows that we are making very good progress.*

Mind general tone. Beware of arrogance as a speaker. People will forgive your nervousness but they will be turned off by bravado or false modesty. Be enthusiastic about what you have to say. Unless you have a good time talking, your audience will not have a good time listening.

Invite and encourage participation by rhetorical questions. Rhetorical questions are hugely under-used by non-native speakers. Questions arouse attention. Question-answer structures create a real dynamic for an audience: *Why did we decide to scrap the project? To be honest we had other options.* Remember to pause before answering the question, but not for too long: *Do you know who children choose for their role models? Well, sport stars, rock singers, bloggers, anybody older who drives a sports car....)*

Rhetorical questions are questions phrased in such a way that the answer is inevitable: *Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery?*

Integrate relevant, personal anecdotes. Personal and amusing anecdotes can lighten and focus a presentation effectively:

‘I was asking my seven-year-old son the other day why he supported Manchester United. His answer was ‘Quality. Quality matters to me.’ And you know what, although I don’t agree with him about Manchester United, I agree with him about quality. Quality does matter.’

Simplify. ‘To be quite honest, we had no other option.’

Create a sense of urgency. Using informal conversational expressions such as *Look..., Listen... or Come on* can create a mood of urgency and impact during a presentation.

Make impacts tangible and personal. The second version connects to the daily reality of the audience to touch and stimulate personally: *...when you look at your next cost budget sitting in your office on a Friday afternoon...*

Use strong words and facts. Strong words and facts stand out more than neutral statements: *We have massive problems*, not ~~*We have a lot of problems*~~, or *It’s the biggest single saving you will make this year*, not ~~*You can save a lot of money*~~.



Contrast time frames. Contrasting time frames also creates a logical momentum: *Two years ago we might have hesitated. Today we have to be more decisive.*

Employ irony. Humour is a higher-risk strategy, but when used effectively it can raise a smile and energize the moment: *Sorry if I bored you with that presentation.*

Engage people with the use of names. Don't under-estimate the power of using people's names: *I'm sure you have a few questions about this as the project was very important to many of you. Jean? Peter?* Some may think it is unfair to call on people by name in the audience. But it certainly keeps people's attention if they believe they may be involved.

Check for understanding. While speaking watch the audience for signals that show the degree of their understanding. These signals tell you when your speaking is 'coming through' and when it is not. These signals can be expressed by foreheads, eyebrows, lips, hands or even feet. Respond to any signals (e.g. quizzical looks) by either changing your pace, or volume of your voice, by repeating a certain idea or going on to the next point.

Silence is golden. Assertive confident speakers know the importance of deliberate silence when they speak. Speakers who use well-placed pauses and avoid vocal filling ("You know?", "You know what I mean?", "Um!", etc.) are regarded as being confident and knowledgeable.

For some reason a lot of people are uneasy with silence and feel that every second needs to be filled with a sound. However, silence can be golden. You can use a moment of silence to think about what you want to say next or to recollect your ideas. Pauses between your comments also give your listeners time to consider what you've just said.

## **4.2 Storytelling**

Leaders and presenters create memorable stories to engage, to inform, to inspire, to influence, and to move audiences from a present situation to a future vision in a way which would be impossible with a simple explanation of facts and figures.

Let's regard two main story-telling techniques: the personal anecdote and the fantasy story.

*Personal anecdotes* are the most frequently used story-telling techniques. Anecdotes have the advantage of making the presenter seem human. Personal stories can connect audience and speaker at an emotional level with listeners encouraged to experience reality through the eyes, ears and feelings of the storyteller.

Let's take a look at some different anecdote types which you can use to engage and to influence.

1. *An insight into personal values*

Telling a short story about yourself, for example how you faced a difficult choice, an embarrassing moment or how you achieved success unexpectedly, can be a perfect way to reveal personal values and establish a basis for others to know, respect and trust you.

2. *A learning experience*

Telling a story which shows how you gained insight into a current problem is a common device to promote acceptance of a solution which you are advocating. Sharing a learning experience, particularly if it is personal and even painful, is a powerful way to back up a solution you are promoting.

3. *A moment of confusion*

Telling a story about a misunderstanding you once experienced – either you misunderstood someone or they misunderstood you – can be an interesting way to ask an audience not to misunderstand you. The anecdote should promote open thinking to what might be rather unpleasant content in your presentation.

4. *A tale of persistence*

Telling a story about perseverance, of persistence in the face of hardship, of success against all odds, is a great way to raise spirits at difficult times and motivate people to continue believing with a “Never say die” attitude. These stories tell to rely on anecdotes from famous historical or contemporary figures, but work better if they touch on an element of the presenter's own life story.

Plan your own insight into personal values story using this structure:

- explain a past situation and a difficult choice you were facing;
- tell the audience why the choice was difficult;
- tell them what choice they made, and the results of that choice;
- say what that decision-making process taught you about your personal values;
- demonstrate how this learning process is relevant to the current working context.

### ***The Fantasy Story***

For the more adventurous, there's always the possibility of being a modern day Hans Christian Andersen and creating your own fairy story. Here's a four-step model to enable you to develop a truly memorable perspective on business problems through the use of fantasy story-telling.

#### 1. Do it at the right time

Telling a story is a higher risk presentation style. It requires performance skills and an audience ready and willing to participate in the game. If the audience is not ready, such a technique can leave you exposed and looking rather foolish. So, by all means plan to integrate a story into your presentation, but judge the mood of the audience on the day. If you don't feel you've created the necessary rapport to tell the story, play safe and drop it. If you do go for it, you may want to introduce an occasional touch of irony as you go through the story, just to avoid any feeling that you might be taking this story-telling business too seriously.

#### 2. Create a scenario

You need a situation with a hero or heroine facing a monumental challenge. Remember, it's the eventual victory against huge odds which is the dynamic of a good story so we need passion and emotion built into the situation early. However, don't waste too much time in the set-up with boring detail or you'll lose the audience towards the happy ending.

#### 3. Narrate with passion

If the story has drama, you are going to need dramatic skills. Particularly important will be voice, creating excitement with whispered descriptions and dramatic

pauses, releasing the tension with increases in speed and volume, supported by dramatic gestures and movement.

#### 4. Build to a climax

Of course, the moral of the story always comes at the end. But don't labour it or you risk patronizing your audience. Aim for a simple one-line statement to finish which allows the audience to get the point with maximum impact. Then move swiftly back to the business content of the presentation.

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#### *The Echo of Life*

A man and his son were walking in the forest. Suddenly the boy trips and, feeling a sharp pain, he screams, 'Aaaaaa!' Filled with curiosity he shouts, 'Who are you?' but the only answer he receives is 'Who are you?' This makes him angry, so he shouts. 'You're a coward!'

He looks at his father asking, 'Dad, what is going on?' 'Son, he replies, 'pay attention!' Then he shouts, 'I admire you!' The father shouts. 'You are wonderful!' and the voice answers, 'You are wonderful!'

The boy is surprised, but still can't understand what is going on. Then the father explains. 'People call this 'echo', but truly it is life! Life always gives you back what you give out. Your life is not a coincidence, but a mirror of your own doings.'

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### **4.3 Some activities to try in your presentations**

#### *Who am I?*

This is a fun activity with smaller audiences. Label each corner of the room as an animal, e.g. tiger, eagle, shark and squirrel. Then ask audience members to go to the corner which best describes their personality. This could form a simple get-to-know exercise with people forming groups and introducing themselves. It can be extended to the theme of the presentation. For example, in a presentation on leadership, you could link the qualities of the various animals to qualities of leadership. Alternatively, you could ask the group members to take up a position defined by how their customers and suppliers see them. This is a very good way to start a discussion on business stakeholder relationships. Use it as a great ice-breaker or mid-talk energizer.

### ***What do you think?***

For many people in business networking at presentations is as important as the talk itself. Encouraging exchanges between audience members can prove very popular. Here are some simple tasks to be done in pairs or threes to support networking:

A definition-style task: *Give three words you associate with customer service!*

A hypothetical task: *What would you do if...?*

An experience survey: *Have you ever ...?*

A direct question: *What is the best way to ...?*

You can use these tasks as simple ice-breakers or as activities to find out the opinion of the audience members on a key topic before you begin speaking. A more anonymous way to get thoughts from an audience is to ask them to write down opinions onto cards. These cards are then passed around the room with audience members adding more opinions. After a few minutes of fun, the presenter says stop and asks people to read out what is written on the cards in their hands.

### ***Group dynamics***

You can split people into groups to exchange their opinions on some questions relevant to the topic (e.g. tell the rules that their international team should follow over the next twelve months). This activity can be effective with very large groups, allowing a real exchange of ideas. Groups can include a slogan, a pledge, a logo or even a small dramatized role play depending on the task.

### ***And the winner is ...***

A little completion can create a great deal of energy. Short quizzes, particularly at the end, can produce a strong feel-good factor to finish off with. It is vital to have fun prizes not only for the winner but for second and third places!

### ***Five turn-offs for audiences***

1. Task which are too difficult;
2. Tasks which are irrelevant;
3. Tasks which are too childish;
4. Tasks which are focused too closely on sensitive topics;
5. Tasks which require too much time for the briefing and debriefing.

## 5 Handling questions

The question-and-answer session is the most stressful part of a presentation, especially for non-native speakers. Questions provide a chance to expand the information, reinforce the message, to have a direct dialog with the audience. These are some practical tips to help you deal with questions productively.

- Be well prepared. To anticipate possible questions, assume the role of your hypothetical listener. Ask possible questions to yourself and get ready with the answers.

- Stay in control. If you lose control, your audience will lose interest and they will have a poor image of you as a speaker. You shouldn't allow too long and pointless questions or get involved in an argument. (e.g. "Please, stop me any time if you have any questions"; "Before I start, can I ask you to hold any questions you have until the end of my speech?"; "I don't quite understand what you mean. Could you rephrase your question, please?"; "I hope you don't mind if I don't get into it right now. I'd be happy to talk about it after the meeting").

- Be attentive with tricky questions. Do not assume that questioners are being hostile. It is important to accept all questions in a positive way – and not be defensive. Regard all questions as supportive and you'll find them easier to deal with. When in doubt, send the question back (e.g. "That's a good question, thank you"; "I'm glad you asked that question"; "Oh, thanks for reminding me about that"; "Before I get into this, how would you answer the question yourself?") or avoid giving an answer (e.g. "Perhaps we could deal with that later"; "Can we talk about that on another occasion?"; "I'm afraid that's not my field"; "I don't have the figures with me"; "I'm sure Mr (...) could answer that question"; "That's interesting but I prefer not to answer it today").

- Check the answer. If the question is long, complex or difficult, it is important to make sure that your questioner is satisfied with your answer. (e.g. "Does that answer your question?").

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*PLAN, PRACTICE, PERFORM*

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- Ending a question and answer session. Here is some useful language to end the question and answer session:

- ✓ If there are no more questions, we'll finish there.
- ✓ We only have time for one more question, please.
- ✓ I'm afraid that's all the time we have. Thank you.
- ✓ I'm sorry to say we're run out of time. Thank you.

Let us regard how to deal with questions in a more detailed way. There is a five-step *racer model* to handle questions:

R = Respond

A = Answer

C = Check

E = Encourage

R = Return to presentation

Let's look at all these steps one by one.

R Respond

When someone in the audience asks you a question, the first thing to do is respond. There are two main choices.

*Choice 1*

Firstly, you can respond with some form of feedback: *That's an interesting question; That's a good question; Thanks for that question.* Not only does this maintain a positive framework for the question phase, but it gives you a little more thinking time.

If you want to use a more neutral feedback phrase, you can say something like *Yes, I understand; Yes, many people ask that question* or simply repeat some of the key words of the question.

If someone asks you, *When do you think prices will increase?*, begin with a simple response *Ok, prices.* It's a form of politeness and it tells the questioner that you are focused on their question.

## *Choice 2*

The other form of response is asking for clarification. Doing this avoids the risks of giving information that does not answer the actual question.

Clarifying questions should become a reflex for international presenters with either a quick reformulation: *So, if I understand you correctly you're asking...* or some form of more direct clarification: *Sorry, what do you mean? Are you asking about...?*

And clarification should not only be at the level of content, but also at the level of motivation: *Sorry, why do you ask that question?* Very often we need to know what is behind a question in order to give the right answer.

## A Answer

The only advice here is to keep answers short, simple and focused on the actual question.

## C Check

After answering a question, presenters frequently fail to invite more questions quickly. As a result, there can be a rather uncomfortable silence as the audience realizes the answer is over and people wonder whether it's all right to ask another question. Remember, the audience is a customer, the answer is a product and so presenters should ask a simple checking question to see if the customer is happy with the answer, for example *Did I answer your question?, Is that OK?, How do you see it?, Do you need more detail?*

## E Encourage

If the presenter has satisfied the first questioner, it's time to move quickly, proactively and professionally to the next question with *Are there any more questions?* Sometimes, it may be necessary to direct questions at named individuals to stimulate the audience to get involved: *Peter, you have strong views on pricing. Any comments on what I said?*

## R Return to presentation

If no more questions are forthcoming, move proactively on and return to your presentation, either to continue, *Fine, if there are no more questions, let's move on to the next section,* or to end, *Good, if there are no more questions, I think we can finish here.*



### ***Racer in action***

*Audience:* Do you think customers will pay ten percent more for our products?

*Presenter:* It's a very good question. My belief is that they will, if we offer added services such as I outlined today. But they won't if we don't. Does that answer your question?

*Audience:* Yes, thank you.

*Presenter:* Good, any more questions?

*Audience:* How are we going to tell the customer about these price increases?

*Presenter:* Why do you ask?

*Audience:* Well, I'm worried that if don't explain the reasons behind the increases, just increase prices in the brochure, we will lose customers.

*Presenter:* Yes, and I agree with you. We need to define a very clear communication strategy to support this marketing initiative. But that is for the next meeting, all right?

*Audience:* Fine.

*Presenter:* Any more questions? No? Right, then let's go to the second point...

### **5.1 Dealing with aggressive comments and questions**

Strong and dominant personalities are the norm in senior management, so handling aggressive, hostile and confrontational audiences is an essential part of being an effective international presenter. How comfortable would you feel handling the following questions and comments?

- You're not telling the truth here.
- I don't think you have the expertise for this.
- What you just said is wrong.
- This approach is unprofessional.

Deal with such comments and questions in two stages: firstly, investigate the real meaning behind what has been said; secondly, select a communication strategy to manage the moment.

### ***Analyzing reasons for conflict***

Psychological insecurity. Aggression often stems from psychological roots involving insecurity with aspects of personal identity. Individuals who are very critical of others may actually strongly fear criticism from others. They may also become unstable in the face of aggression so it is wise to handle them gently.

Pressures and anxieties generated by business context. Business worries can play enormous pressures on individuals leading them to react defensively when presented with, for example, a series of change processes which will lead to job losses. Consider that their comments can be partly justified.

Relationship failure. Trust has broken down when individuals begin to question your credibility and trustworthiness.

Difference of opinion. Genuine differences of opinion are not only predictable but essential in the business world to generate creative insight. It is important not to lose sight of the positive value of disagreement or skepticism.

Power play. Business relationships are often driven by power games between individuals. It is essential to identify when this is happening in order to maintain personal standing.

Communication style. Internationally what individuals actually term as a conflict varies enormously. What you see as honest and direct feedback may seem aggressive and confrontational to others. Assessing communication style is always important in analyzing conflict.

### ***Developing strategies for dealing with conflict***

Conflicts are managed affectively by presenters who recognize the reasons for conflict, who stay in control of their own emotions and who develop effective communication strategies. When a difficult situation arises, a presenter firstly has to decide whether to deal with it during the presentation in front of a group, or privately in a later face-to-face meeting.

This is an important decision as working through real conflict may be painful and take time. However, whether handling things face-to-face or one-to-one, conflict must be first handled using the Clarity-Analyze-Recognize (CAR) process:

**C** Clarify what is person trying to say to you

*Sorry, what do you mean exactly? or You mean that...*

**A** Analyze the facts and feelings behind the situation with follow-up questions

*Can you explain a little bit more the background to your comment?*

**R** Recognize the other person's feelings and point of view

*Right, I see what you are saying. For you...*

After the CAR process, a presenter must decide on a strategy to deal with a conflict.

Here are some typical strategies to choose from.

**H** Hit back when people attack. Being strong in front of aggressive types is essential.

**A** Agree with criticism, doubt or fear is justified. If you don't, you lose credibility.

**R** Reach a compromise to save face. Both of you may have a legitimate viewpoint.

**D** Defend when you feel you are right, but go through the CAR process first.

**E** Explain misunderstanding if that is simply the reason for the conflict.

**R** Retreat and avoid conflict if you feel a battle can't be won or is best fought later.

## **5.2 Typical awkward situations**

Let's look at eight more typical awkward situations which you may face as a presenter during question time.

1. The questioner wants information and you don't know the answer

Don't say "I have no idea". It's honest but not helpful or professional.

Do offer to find the information at a later date if you don't know at the time.

2. The questioner asks something outside the scope of presentation

Don't just reject a question and make the questioner feel stupid.

Do reject the question sensitively and offer to discuss at a later date.

3. The questioner hasn't listened and asks for something you already explained

Don't sound irritated if you have to repeat information you already gave.

Do use this as an opportunity to reinforce the original message.

4. The questioner wants information about something you want to explain later

Don't lose the thread of your presentation by giving key information too early

Do give the audience positive feedback but postpone discussion until later.

5. The questioner touches on a very political topic

Don't get drawn into sensitive topics or discussions.

Do show diplomacy and give a balanced answer without strong judgments.

6. The questioner is just difficult to understand

Don't guess what people are trying to ask you or will answer the wrong question.

Do take time to clarify and summarise.

7. The questioner identifies that you have said something factually incorrect

Don't get angry or try to deny that you were wrong.

Do thank and acknowledge the person for helping your audience get the right facts.

8. The questioner asks too many questions and stops other people speaking

Don't end up having a long conversation with just one member of the audience.

Do be firm and insist that other people should have a chance to ask questions too.

### **Time to Practice**

*1. Put the questions and answers in these three dialogues in the correct order.*

**a)**

A: I'd like to ask you about next year's promotion campaign.

B: We've got a meeting next week to decide. I'll let you know straight away, if that's OK.

A: Excuse me, could I interrupt?

B: Sure, that'll be fine.

B: Sure, What exactly would you like to know?

A: Well, could you tell me at this stage whether you have fixed a budget?

B: Of course.

**b)**

A: Would you mind telling us when you're going to retire?

B: When is it?

A: May I ask a question?

B: That sounds fine. I'll look forward to it.

B: Not at all. I'm planning to stop work just after Christmas.

A: Oh good! We'd like to invite you to our Christmas party. Can you come?

A: It's on the 24<sup>th</sup> from seven onwards.

B: Go ahead.

c)

A: I see what you mean. Yes, of course, we've looked at all the options and we think this is the best one.

A: Are there any questions?

A: I'm afraid that's all we have time for now. Perhaps, I'd like to talk about that later.

B: Well, you know, other possibilities such as relocating to a cheaper area.

B: Yes, I wonder if you have considered any other options?

A: I'm not sure what you're getting at.

B: But surely relocation would be better for the staff?

2. *Look at these sentences used by a presenter to build a rapport with his audience before a presentation in India. Match them to the correct rapport-building strategy 1-4.*

1. Welcome positively

2. Be curious – ask questions

3. Show knowledge

4. Build a bond by finding common points

a) Maybe you know Peter Ronzoni? Peter and I worked together a lot last year.

b) Where are you staying?

c) Is this your first time in Dehli?

d) Did you fly in this morning?

e) So, you worked on the ESE project. I heard it went really well.

f) You're from Mumbai? Really? I visit Mumbai quite regularly.

g) I think that SAP is being implemented in your office right now, is that right?

h) It's really good to meet you.

3. Match the two halves of these extracts from a presentation about quality management. Identify which strategy from page 47-49 each extract presents.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. So, why does this organization need to improve quality?                                   | a. Customers want quality.  |
| 2. Next time you're sitting there on a Friday afternoon having to write a customer proposal, | b. Think about adding 10% more quality to make sure the customer accepts it.  |
| 3. You may not agree with me about this.   | c. Tomorrow this won't be possible.   |
| 4. I can say it in three words.  | d. Basically, because our customers are demanding more and more of it.  |
| 5. In the past it was possible to offer lower quality if the price is right.                 | e. John and Dave, I know you have very strong views. But let's take a bit of time today to talk through some alternatives to improving quality. |

4. You are going to role-play a TV interview. Working with a partner, decide which role to take – interviewer or interviewee – and read your role card. Prepare your questions and answers before you start. If possible, record your performance and use it for feedback.

---

**INTERVIEWER**

A news story has just broken. Hammond Electronics Inc. (an American multinational) is going to close its plant in Southern Germany and move to Portugal. The closure will result in more than 2000 job losses. Your job is to interview the Human Resources Manager at Hammond European headquarters in Brussels. Cover the following question areas:

- a. reasons for relocation
  - b. effects of relocation
  - c. policy of company for European production
  - d. future in Germany
-

---

### INTERVIEWEE

You are the Human Resources Manager at Hammond Electronics Inc. (an American multinational). You are based at the company's European headquarters in Brussels. Hammond has just announced that it will close its plant in Southern Germany and move to Portugal, with the loss of 2000 jobs in Portugal. Your job is to answer questions about this decision. Prepare your answers in the following areas:

- a. reasons for relocation
  - b. effects of relocation
  - c. policy of company for European production
  - d. future in Germany
- 

5. *Match the comments from a presenter to one of the HARDER strategies.*

- a) I think there's a little misunderstanding. When I said this, I didn't mean...
- b) Actually, I think if we look at things in more detail you'll see what I mean.
- c) OK, maybe we should turn to the next topic and come back to this later.
- d) To be honest, I don't feel that such negative comments are very useful.
- e) Perhaps, we have to accept that we are both right on this one.
- f) I accept what you are saying and I can hear your frustration.

6. *Take a look at these presentation extracts taken from a briefing given to a project steering committee. Match the extracts to the eight typical awkward situations on page 59-60.*

#### Extract A

Audience: Could you say something about the resource situation in Spain?

Presenter: Yes, if I may, I'll come to that in around ten minutes because I'd like to deal with Sweden first. But I will certainly with this.

#### Extract B

Audience: You mentioned an investment level of €8m, I think the figure is €12m.

Presenter: Absolutely. You're right. I do apologize. €8m was the original figure but we revised this to €12m at the mid-project meeting. Thank you for clarifying that.

#### Extract C

Audience: So why do we have this delay in Greece?

Presenter: Yes, it's an important question. As I explained a little earlier, the main issue is personnel. We don't have enough people and enough qualified people. What I didn't say is that we have planned a meeting in August to try to correct this situation.

Extract D

Audience: So, what is the projected number of users in the Italian subsidiary?

Presenter: It's a good question but, unfortunately, I don't have these figures with me. I will check and come back to you. In fact, I'll check and forward the figure to everyone tomorrow. Is that OK?

7. *Think of some more challenging situations which are difficult to handle during the question time. Write a two-lined dialogue like in exercise 6. Let your groupmates guess the number of awkward typical situation on page 60.*

8. *Practice recording and listening to yourself giving a short speech.*

- Choose a topic of your interest.
- Record yourself while speaking fluently about the topic for at least sixty seconds.
- Listen to the recording.
- Analyze how you sound. Become aware of any distracting vocal habits (e.g. up talk, disclaimers or vocal fillers).

9. *Give a short presentation based on the text below. Use this assessment form to evaluate each other's use of language. (If possible, record your performance and use the recording for feedback and self-assessment).*

---

	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
Sentence length				
Style				
Linkers				
Emphasizers				
Minimizers				

---

There are some important things to remember when giving a presentation. One of the key elements, in my opinion, is the contact with the audience. This can be achieved



through a variety of techniques. For example, keeping an eye contact as much as possible is a very important factor. In fact, if you are speaking to a very large audience, it's a good idea to pick out two or three members of the audience and establish eye contact with them.

Another way of keeping contact is to establish is to encourage the audience to interrupt and ask questions during the presentation. This may depend on time you have allocated but, in principle, it is better to deal with the question at the time it arises rather than later. There are many other factors but eye contact and audience participation will count for 60 % success in establishing strong relationship with your audience.

---

**10.** *Practice giving a speech in front of the class.*

Instructions: Go to the front of the class. You will be assigned a simple topic of human interest, such as one of the following: dieting, an important political event, my most unusual friend, etc. Without preparing, speak about the topic for sixty seconds. Concentrate on speaking fluently and avoiding pauses, hesitations, and other vocal fillers. Don't worry about organization this time.

Make a list of questions on your presentation. Prepare answering them in front of the class.

## 6 Group discussions

“Conversation isn’t just crossfire where you shoot and get shot at!”  
Philip Roth, American novelist

Discussion is found in many places and many levels. There are many types of discussion. We will focus on the following three types of public discussion – *the Informal Group Discussion, the Panel Discussion, and the Debate.*

### 6.1 Informal Group Discussion

There are usually not more than twenty participants, often sitting in a circle, or in some form of close group, and discussing a subject of mutual interest. There is no audience and there are no speeches. The group simply converses under the guidance of a chairperson. This type of discussion is often difficult to keep within bound and to keep profitably through the various steps of the problem. Members may spend too much time on some early interesting aspect, and so never get very far into the problem. Or they turn up a new subject entirely, drop the old one and follow the new one. If the chairperson holds the reins too tightly, or interrupts too often, the spontaneity and the spirit of discussion can be lost.

#### *The Commandments of Group Discussion*

1. Prepare for the discussion by researching quotation, facts, statistics, and examples. Write possible contributions for each step of the discussion on note-cards so that you can refer to them as needed during the discussion.
2. Do not remain silent all the time; use your right to state an opinion. Even if there are older people present, or people in higher positions, your participation is appreciated and expected. The general feeling is that if someone doesn’t say anything, it’s because he or she has nothing to say.
3. Don’t dominate the discussion. Give your opinions, but don’t talk too long. After a while, be quiet and give someone else a turn. Make it ‘fair play’.

4. Reach out and share your ideas with all the participants. Be sure that all members of the group can easily hear you, even when you are talking to one particular person.

5. Address other participants directly using their names, rather than toss an idea into thin air, or pick up another speaker's point without referring to them. It gives the discussion a personal touch, and gives it movement.

6. If you don't understand something, ask about it. This is not seen as weakness, but as a sign of interest and involvement.

7. You do not have to be absolutely sure of your idea in order to offer it. You can say that you *think* or *feel* a certain way but you are not sure about it. Your idea is probably not completely correct but it could lead to other good ideas from other member of the group.

8. If you can't think of any idea to offer, ask a question about the topic. Asking questions is considered participation.

9. Learn to disagree without being disagreeable. If you find yourself getting upset, take a deep breath and keep quiet for a while. If you want to introduce a contrary point of view, you could start by saying: "I see your point. However, ..."

10. Listen! Open yourself to the ideas and opinions of others, observe different ways people express themselves. Discussions can be a lot fun and a wonderful way to learn about the world.

It's good to remember that a discussion is not a contest. There are no scores; there really are no 'sides' in a discussion. Think together and purposefully talk it out. This desire must be stronger than the desire to win an argument, to prove yourself clever or witty.

Learn to think and feel and talk in terms of group welfare, and to cooperate with others in thinking on the problem.

## 6.2 Managing a Discussion

*Read this dialogue in a real estate agency and then study the points below.*

A: Can you help me? I'd be interested to know something about property prices in this area.

B: Yes, of course. But first, could you tell me a little more about your present situation?

A: I've been living in rented accommodation for several years. Now I'm wondering whether it's a good time to buy somewhere for myself.

B: Okay. What sort of price were you thinking of?

A: Oh, you know, nothing too expensive.

B: Could you be a little more specific? We have some small one bedroom apartments that start at around € 120,000. Was that the kind of thing you had in mind?

A: Possibly. But I'm not ready to think about individual properties just yet. I wanted to know more about the market in general. There are a lot of stories in the newspapers about house prices, and they worry me.

B: Okay. If I understand you correctly, your worries are probably these: you don't want to buy at the top of the market and see your house fall in value, but equally you don't want to miss the chance if the prices are going to continue to rise.

A: Yes, exactly.

B: This is of course a concern for all our clients, but you know, it's very difficult to time the housing market. Newspaper stories can make forecasts, but no one really knows.

A: I see what you're saying, but you must have some idea. I read one article that said that house prices are going to crash.

B: I don't think that's true. Prices have stabilized recently, but they're not going to crash.

A: Really? Do you think so? My friend bought an apartment near here last year for € 165,000, and now other apartments in the same block are going for less than € 150,000.

B: Well, of course it all depends. There are many factors that can cause these short-term changes. But there's another way of looking at this. If prices have dropped temporarily, then now is a good time to buy.

A: But going back to what you said earlier, have prices stabilized, or are they actually falling? I disagree with you about now being a good time to buy if they are still falling.

B: In certain areas they are still falling. But I think we are losing sight of the main point. You are living in rented accommodation, and the rent you pay could be going to repay a mortgage. And you would have your own home.

A: That makes sense. But it's a difficult issue.

B: You're absolutely right. But while you're here, why don't I give you an idea of what's available in your price range?

A: Okay.

B: Right. I'd like to start by writing down one or two personal details, and then we can move on to looking at some of the properties we have on the market.

*Find in the dialogue:*

- five phrases asking for more information.
- one phrase showing the speaker is going to check using their own words.
- three phrases for full agreement.
- one phrase using *Yes, but ...* for half agreement.
- one phrase using two open questions to show polite disagreement.
- two phrases for simple disagreement.

Pay attention to the phrases:

- *What sort of price were you thinking of?*
- *Was that the kind of thing you had in mind?*

These questions are interesting for two reasons:

- First, they use "vague" language: *sort of, kind of*.
- Second, they use past tenses (were/ was/ had), even though the time reference is present.

The past forms create an indirect, distant feeling.

They combine with the vague language so that the client feels that he/she is under no pressure.

Look back at the dialogue again. There is a battle for control of the topic:

- *B* tries to change the focus:... *there is another way of looking at this.*
- But *A* resists: ... *going back to what you said earlier...*
- *B* deals briefly with this resistance: *In certain areas...* but then tries to block further discussion with: *I think we`re losing sight of the main point.*
- *B* manages the conversation so that they move on from the opening to begin a sales conversation about specific properties. For *B*, this is the main topic.

The following list gives expressions, which can help you to argue politely and persuade people to agree with you:

***Presenting a strong opinion***

*Of course, ...*

*I really think that...*

*I`m convinced that...*

*I strongly believe that...*

***Full agreement.***

*That makes sense. You`re absolutely right. Yes, I would agree with that.*

***Half agreement***

*I see what you`re saying, but...*

*I agree with you up to a point, but...*

***Polite disagreement***

*Well, of course, it all depends.*

*I`m not sure I agree with that.*

*I`ve got mixed feelings about that.*

*Really? Do you think so?*

*Don`t you think that...?*

*I`m afraid I disagree with you, Nina. I understand what you`re saying, but...*

*I can see your point, but I think you`re overlooking something*

*I can understand your concerns about (that), but ...*

### ***Simple disagreement***

*I don't think that's true.*

*I disagree with you about...*

*That's not how I see it.*

### ***Beginning the main topic***

*Right, let's get down to business.*

*Why don't I give you an idea of...?*

*I'd like to start by...(-ing)*

### ***Moving from point to point***

*So that's decided, then. Shall we move on?*

*Okay, let's go on to the next point.*

### ***Changing the focus***

*There is another way of looking at this.*

*Perhaps we should also consider...*

### ***Returning***

*Going back to what I / you said earlier ...*

*Let me back up. ( AmE).*

### ***Interrupting***

*Could I just interrupt for a moment?*

### ***Blocking***

*I think we're losing sight of the main point.*

*Sorry, if I can just finish, I was saying that ...*

### ***Buying time***

*It's a difficult issue.*

*I'll have to think about it.*

*Could I get back to you on that?*

*Why don't we come back to that later*

### ***Asking for more information***

*I'd be interested to know something about...*

*Could you tell me a little more about...?*

*Could you be a little more specific?*

*What (exactly) do you mean by...?*

*What sort of price were you thinking of?*

*Was that the kind of thing you had in mind?*

### ***Asking for repetition***

*Could you go over that again, please?*

### ***Checking by using your own words***

*So, if I understand you correctly...*

*So, basically what you're saying is...*

### ***Checking the other person's understanding***

*Does that answer your question?*

*Does that make sense?*

### ***Responding***

*Yes, exactly.*

*Yes, that's right.*

*Not exactly.*

*Well, let me put it another way.*

*No, that's not what I meant.*

*No, what I'm trying to say is...*

### ***Persuading***

*Isn't (nature important to our lives)?*

*Wouldn't you agree that ...?*

*Don't you think that...?*

*I'm sure that you would agree that...*

*You agree (that it is a problem), don't you?*

## **Time to Practice**

*1. Without looking back at Useful language, think of just one word to fill each gap.*

a) There is another \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ at this.



- b) Right, let`s get down to \_\_\_\_\_.
- c) \_\_\_\_\_ back to what you said earlier.
- d) I think we`re losing \_\_\_\_\_ of the main \_\_\_\_\_.
- e) Could I \_\_\_\_\_ interrupt for a \_\_\_\_\_?
- f) Could you be a little more \_\_\_\_\_?
- g) What exactly do you mean \_\_\_\_\_`more expensive?
- h) Sorry, if I can \_\_\_\_\_ finish, I was saying that...
- i) Could I \_\_\_\_\_ back to you \_\_\_\_\_ that?
- j) Was that the \_\_\_\_\_ of thing you had in \_\_\_\_\_?
- k) Does that make \_\_\_\_\_?
- l) Well, let me \_\_\_\_\_ it another way.

2. *Match each phrase in exercise 1 with one of the uses 1-12.*

1. You want to change the focus. – a)
2. You want to block the other person`s change of focus and return to the main issue.
3. You want to interrupt.
4. You want to block an interruption and continue.
5. You want to begin the discussion.
6. You want to return to an earlier point.
7. You want to buy time after a question.
8. You want more detailed information because the other person is being vague and general.
9. You want to clarify one particular word or concept.
10. You want to clarify what you just said by saying it again more simply and clearly.
11. You want to clarify what the other person wants, using vague language to avoid putting them under pressure.
12. You want to check the information you gave was clear.

3. Cover exercise 1 with a piece of paper. Then fill in the gaps using the prepositions in the box.

1. Right, let's get \_\_\_\_\_ business.
2. Okay, let's move \_\_\_\_\_ the next point.
3. There is another way \_\_\_\_\_ looking \_\_\_\_\_ this.
4. Going \_\_\_\_\_ what you said earlier.
5. I think we're losing sight \_\_\_\_\_ the main point.
6. Could I get \_\_\_\_\_ you \_\_\_\_\_ that?
7. Could you tell me a little more \_\_\_\_\_ it?
8. What sort \_\_\_\_\_ price were you thinking \_\_\_\_\_?
9. What exactly did you have \_\_\_\_\_ mind?
10. Could you go \_\_\_\_\_ that again please?

4. Find a phrasal verb (eg take off or look forward to) in exercise 3 that means:

1. start doing something seriously get down to
2. stop doing one thing and begin doing another \_\_\_\_\_
3. return a subject \_\_\_\_\_
4. speak to someone at a later time \_\_\_\_\_
5. repeat something in order to understand it \_\_\_\_\_

5. Match the beginning with the end of each phrase.

- |                           |                     |
|---------------------------|---------------------|
| a) You're absolutely      | a point, but        |
| b) Yes, I'm in favour     | I see it            |
| c) That might be worth    | right               |
| d) I agree with you up to | agree to that       |
| e) I can see one or two   | so?                 |
| f) I'm sorry, I can't     | of that.            |
| g) Really? Do you think   | problems with that. |
| h) That's not how         | trying.             |

6. Write each phrase letter from exercise 5 in the grid below.

**With someone**

**About something**

**Agreement**

**Half agreement**

**Polite disagreement**

**Disagreement**

7. Complete each mini-dialogue using the phrases below.

Can I get back to you on that? Yes, exactly.

I think we're losing sight of the main point.

Shall we move on? Let me put it another way.

1. A: Yes, I think that would work very well.

B: So that's decided, then. \_\_\_\_\_

2. A: Are we going to have a hot buffet at the product launch or just finger food?

B: \_\_\_\_\_ Some major issues are still unresolved – like the advertising campaign.

3. A: The price is okay, but what about shipping times? Can you deliver by the end of April?

B: I don't know right now. \_\_\_\_\_

4. A: So are you saying you want me to transfer to the Madrid office?

B: \_\_\_\_\_ It would be a great opportunity for you.

5. A: So are you saying I have to transfer to the Madrid office?

B: Well. \_\_\_\_\_ You don't have to, but it would be a great opportunity for you.

8. The words offer, suggestion and proposal are often misused. Match each with an explanation:

1 \_\_\_\_\_ - an idea or plan, perhaps quite tentative and vague

2 \_\_\_\_\_ - an idea or plan, more formal and definite, and usually one that a group has to consider

3 \_\_\_\_\_ -a statement saying you will give something to someone (used mainly in negotiations)

*9. Match each item on the left with one of the right that has a similar meaning.*

- |                      |                               |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 put forward        | take up (a suggestion)        |
| 2 accept             | think of (a suggestion)       |
| 3 reject             | make (a suggestion)           |
| 4 come up with       | dismiss (a suggestion)        |
| 5 take part in       | tackle (an issue)             |
| 6 come to            | bring up (an issue)           |
| 7 raise              | be involved in (a discussion) |
| 8 deal with          | open it up for (a discussion) |
| 9 reconsider         | reach (a decision)            |
| 10 throw it open for | reassess (a decision)         |
| 11 a sensible        | feasible (suggestion)         |
| 12 a sensitive       | reasonable (suggestion)       |
| 13 a realistic       | ridiculous (suggestion)       |
| 14 a minor           | difficult (issue)             |
| 15 an absurd         | side (issue)                  |
| 16 a constructive    | in-depth (discussion)         |
| 17 a hard            | fruitful (discussion)         |
| 18 a detailed        | initial (discussion)          |
| 19 an easy           | tough (decision)              |
| 20 an exploratory    | straightforward (decision)    |

*10 Cover exercise 9 with a piece of paper. Then fill in the missing letters.*

1. She was the only person to c \_ \_ \_ u \_ w \_ \_ \_ a fea \_ \_ \_ le suggestion.
2. I think we should ta \_ \_ u \_ his suggestion – it sounds very rea \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ le to me.
3. He p \_ \_ fo \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ a ri \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ ous suggestion about going to the CFO and asking for a bigger budget.
4. I need to b \_ \_ \_ g u \_ a rather sen \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ e issue.
5. It's a difficult issue, but we'll have to t \_ \_ \_ le it one day.

6. I've been inv\_\_ved i\_ the expl \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ ry discussions, and now we`re ready to call a formal meeting.

7. I thought the conference was going to be waste of time, but in fact I t\_\_k p \_ \_ \_ i\_ some very fr \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ l discussions.

8. You`ve all read my summary, so now I think we can o \_ \_ \_ it u\_ f \_ \_ a more in-d \_ \_ \_ h discussion.

9. We finally r \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ ed a decision, but it was a t \_ \_ gh one to make.

10. It should be a relatively str \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ rd decision.

*11. Put a tick if the sentence is grammatically correct. Put a cross if it is not.*

1. I suggested a different idea.

2. I suggested him a different idea.

3. I suggested a different idea to him.

4. I suggested using another approach.

5. I suggested to use another approach.

6. I suggested we should look at alternatives.

7. I suggested it we should look at alternatives.

(Note: *propose* and *recommend* have the same patterns)

*12. One item in each group does not collocate with the verb. Cross it out.*

1 hold

a meeting / all the cards / an opinion / a proposal / sb responsible for sth

2 take

part in a discussion / an effort to do sth/ a decision / up a suggestion / another

approach

3 reach

an agreement / a compromise / a dead-end / a decision / a demand

4 raise

awareness of the issue / a difficult challenge / the matter late / an important

objection / an interesting question

5 meet

a challenge / a deadline / an issue / a need / an objective

### 6.3 Panel Discussion

The panel is composed of a chairperson and a small group, usually from two to six, who discuss a problem before an audience. They sit at a table where the audience can see them easily. Audience members are invited to pose questions to individual presenters or to the group as a whole.

The chairperson and the panel members should prepare carefully for the discussion. They must understand the problem-solving nature of discussion and be grounded in the steps of logical thinking.

There are no formal speeches. Panel members sometimes talk to one another, sometimes they address the chairperson, and at other times they talk directly to the audience. No one talks for more than a minute or two at a time. All must talk loud enough for people in the audience to hear.

When the panel has explored the problem, the chairperson gives a brief summary of what has been said and then can open the discussion to members of the audience.

Panel members usually demonstrate *different communication styles*.

Developing as a speaker is, to a large extent, a matter of finding your own style. Style is, to put it simply, the rendering of your personality in your speech. It is the mark that identifies your speaking as uniquely yours.

Joseph Wolfe, an expert in interpersonal relations, described three communication styles: *the aggressive style, the submissive style, and the assertive style*.

People who use the *aggressive style* of communication appear to be somewhat belligerent. They deliver their messages in loud, hostile voices, which convey the impression that they believe their opinions and feelings are more important than anybody else's. Intentionally or unintentionally, aggressive communicators tend to embarrass, insult or intimidate their listeners in order to get their way.

People who use the *submissive style* of communication appear to put themselves last and seem to consider themselves inferior to others. This style encourages others to disregard their needs and to take advantage of them. Intentionally or unintentionally,

submissive communicators often don't get what they want because they don't stand up for themselves.

People who use the assertive communication style appear to have a healthy self-image. They express their wishes in a clear and direct way that conveys the impression that they expect their rights to be respected and that they, in turn, respect the rights of others. Assertive speakers appear to be positive, fair, and self-confident.

The following chart illustrates the key characteristics of the three interpersonal communication styles:

<i>Style</i>	<i>Characteristic</i>
<b>aggressive</b>	I'm important. You're not important.
<b>submissive</b>	I'm not important. You're important.
<b>assertive</b>	We're both important.

### **Time to Practice**

1. *Read the following situations. Think of assertive, submissive, and aggressive responses to each one. Which response do you think is the most productive?*

1. Your teacher returns your exam after grading it. She marked an answer wrong that you are sure is correct.

2. You and your friend are seated in a crowded movie theatre. All seats are taken. The loud conversation of the couple sitting next to you is distracting.

3. Your roommates are pressuring you to move with them into a more expensive apartment. You really can't afford to pay more rent; besides, you like your current apartment. You are worried that they'll resent you if you don't agree to their request.

4. You're next in the line at a checkout counter and are in a hurry to leave. Somebody says, "Excuse me, I'm late for an important meeting. May I go ahead of you?"

5. A smoker asks if you object to his or her smoking in the room. You are allergic to smoke.

6. You are riding in a bus where two people are discussing loudly very private things. Everybody around, including yourself, look embarrassed.

7. You are eating dinner alone in a café. At the next table someone is winking at you and this bothers you.

8. You have just finished your meal at the restaurant. Your waiter brings the check, but you realize you don't have enough money with you to pay the bill.

*2. Work in small groups. Have a discussion on one of the topics below or any current general / business news item. When you finish, write the script for a part of the discussion that was interesting. Feel free to add other points – it is a language exercise, not a memory exercise.*

- Computer games and children
- Fast food
- Genetic engineering
- Clean energy
- Working from home
- The future of Russia (or China )
- Euthanasia
- Transport issues in my city
- My favourite leisure technology
- UFOs
- Destruction of the environment
- Immigration
- Global warming
- Emotional intelligence
- The uses of location-based (satellite) technology
- Save the tiger! Save the panda! Why? We manage OK without the dinosaur

## **6.4 Debate**

A debate is a formal argument. It is a meeting, especially in public, in which a question is talked about by at least two people or groups, each expressing a different opinion.



Participants choose a controversial topic, which is an issue that many people are concerned about. Then a statement called *a proposition* is created. Two teams form; one team agrees with what the proposition says, the other team disagrees. The team, which agrees, is called *'pro' side*; the team, which disagrees, is called *'con' side*. Each team researches the issue, gathers facts, organizes arguments, and prepares a strategy.

The debate is organized in a way to give each side a chance to *convince* the audience that its argument is logical and supported by facts, and *refute* (ask questions, prove wrong) the argument of the other team showing it is illogical or unsupported by enough facts. At the end of the debate, each team member gives *a rebuttal* (fixes and repeats his or her argument) as a summary.

There are the following discourse markers:

### ***Convincing***

*Remember that* (we must ae the forest's important plants and animals.)

*Decide that* (saving nature is more important than making money.)

*Recognize that* (each family should be able to decide who will stay at home and who will go to work.)

### ***Refuting***

*Just because* (men haven't traditionally looked after children) *doesn't mean* (men can't).

*Although that example may be true, it's not generally the case. By contrast ...*

*It's not the same situation. You can't compare things that are so different.*

*There could be another explanation for that. For example...*

*I'm not sure* (you have all the facts). *For instance, a survey says ...*

### ***Rebutting / Summing up***

*To conclude,* (logging companies should stop cutting down the rain forests).

*To sum up,* (men and women are both able to take care of children.)

“Summing up” is your last chance to convince the audience that your team’s opinion is the correct one. You want the audience to remember your most important points.

### **Preparation**

Before the debate, all participants decide on the topic to be debated. The scope of topics is usually limited to social, political or philosophical controversies. Then they form a proposition, or a statement that can be argued.

Possible debate topics:

1. English should be the official language of the world.
2. Students caught cheating should be expelled.
3. In the not too distant future computers will replace teachers.
4. Nobody needs Shakespeare nowadays.
5. The death penalty is sadistic.
6. Abortion is a murder.
7. Smoking should be banned in all workplaces and all public places, including outdoors.
8. Terminally ill patients should be helped to die if that is what the patients want.
9. Developing nuclear power is essential.
10. Arranged marriages work out better.
11. The Russian president should continue his current economic policy.
12. Are political and scientific values of space exploration worth the cost?
13. Do flying saucers really exist?
14. Is it easier for men for women to live in our culture?
15. Older people are a burden on society.
16. The fashion industry is nothing more than a big money-making business.

Alternatively, two debating groups can be given two different motions, which are the direct opposites of each other. Some examples of motions are given below:

1. Love your country.

Patriotism is outdated.

2. Everyone should be equal.

Equality is neither possible nor desirable.

3. Children are little savages, tamed by the environment.

Children are basically innocent and good, spoiled only by their environment.

4. Prisons should be abolished.

More prisons should be built.

5. Nature gives us best things in life.

Civilization saves us from the cruelty of nature.

6. Riches make for happiness.

Money can't make you happy.

7. Religion is the opium of the masses.

Religion is the greatest force for moral good.

8. With age comes wisdom.

Older is not necessarily wiser.

9. We learn through our mistakes.

We learn by doing things right.

10. Marriage is a perfect institution.

Marriage should be abolished.

11. Seize the moment.

Haste makes waste.

12. Better to be thought a fool than to open your mouth and remove all doubt.

Have the courage of your convictions.

(from 'Discussions that work', by Penny Ur)

### **Procedure**

Each group has to work out and note down all possible arguments in favor of its motion, including defenses against points that might be brought up by the opposition. It also has to work out the presentation of this material (who will put each argument and how), using every member of the group.

A time-limit is set for the groups to prepare their cases – ten to fifteen minutes is usually enough – then group members rearrange their sitting to suit the procedure: in a circle, or in conventional rows.

The full debate then ensues. The participants of two teams take turns giving main speeches and rebuttals. In the main speeches, the speakers focus on presenting evidence to convince the audience to agree with them. In the rebuttals, they focus on attacking the

opponents' position and trying to disprove their evidence. When the speakers have finished, the audience decides which side has won the debate by voting.

The chairperson is the only one to regulate participation and to keep to the procedure:

- 
1. **Proside** team explains its first point.
  2. **Conside** team members discuss briefly among themselves, and then argue against **Proside** team's point.
  3. **Conside** team explains its first point.
  4. **Proside** team members discuss briefly among themselves, and then argue against **Conside** team's point.
  5. The debate continues this way until both teams make their main points. They have to volley back and forth countering each other's arguments.
- 

Debaters may wish to adopt the traditions of a more formal parliamentary procedure with main and subsidiary speakers for and against the notion. This procedure is the following:

---

*The Proposer's speech (in favor of the proposition).*

*The Opposer's speech (against the proposition).*

*1<sup>st</sup> Secunder's speech (giving more argument in favor of the proposition).*

*2<sup>nd</sup> Secunder's speech (giving more argument against).*

*The Audience ask **questions** (indicating their wish to speak by showing a "?" card).*

***Free discussion** follows.*

*The Proposer's team **summarizes** its points.*

*The Opposer's team **summarizes** its arguments.*

*Final **voting** takes place.*

***The announcement of the results** of the vote constitutes the end of the debate.*

---

Participants learn to disagree politely and keep their emotions under control.

One of the most significant skills in debates is the ability to recognize mistakes in the reasoning of your opponents. Here are several important questions to ask yourself as you listen to statements and prepare questions:

A. What are the sources? Are they recent? Are they reliable?

*Poor evidence:* "According to my dad, murderers deserve the death penalty."

*Refuting:* “I’m not sure about your sources. According to experts on the justice system...”

B. Are there enough examples? Are there enough facts?

*Lack of evidence:* “Based on survey (of three), all Americans agree that nuclear power is dangerous.”

*Refuting:* “I’m not sure you have all the facts. For instance, a survey of 3000 Americans reported in Time magazine says ...”

C. Is the statement true in all cases? Are the examples typical?

*Generalization:* “All homeless people are alcoholics. You can see them in the streets downtown.”

*Refuting:* “Although the homeless you see downtown may be alcoholics, it’s not generally the case. You just don’t see all homeless mothers and kids.”

D. Could there be another cause? Could there be another explanation?

*Unclear cause:* “The number of homeless people using shelters dropped by 25% in the last three months, so the government’s policy is working.”

*Refuting:* “There could be another explanation for that. For example, it has been summertime.”

E. Are the subjects being compared the same? Are there important differences?

*Poor comparison:* “Gun control has worked well in Japan and so it would work well in the United States.”

*Refuting:* “It’s not the same situation. You can’t compare cultures that are so different.”

## **6.5 The Leader’s Role in Group Discussion**

The leader of a discussion group ought to prepare:

✓ *Talk in advance with other formal participants.* This will enable the leader to learn their viewpoints and to know in advance what direction the discussion is likely to take. It will also enable the leader to find out whether the other participants fully understand what is expected of them.

✓ *Prepare a discussion outline.* Even if the discussion turns in a wholly unexpected direction, it is better to have the outline at the start.

✓ *Open the meeting with remarks that are brief and to the point.* When a discussion group meets, it wants to get going. A leader can dull this zest by long and rambling opening remarks. It should be kept short and to the point.

✓ *Keep the discussion moving.* The moment the talk begins to repeat itself, the good leader cuts off that topic and moves to the next one. If the discussion wanders from the point, the leader brings it back. If someone tries to monopolize the time, the leader tactfully cuts them off. If the leader faces the talkative person who has strong opinions but no facts, he will ask courteously but definitely for evidence.

✓ *Make occasional summaries.* After the discussion has run for a while, or some phase of it has been completed, the leader should present an interim summary so that participants can see where they stand now. Make the summaries brief and impartial. A good leader often asks the group to check him/her for accuracy, to make sure that he/she has not misstated a viewpoint, and to add points she/he overlooked.

✓ *Bring out all viewpoints on the subject.* A good leader studies the faces of the group and notes whether they seem to be in disagreement. The leader then specifically invites opposing arguments, or even suggests one or two to encourage the other side to follow up.

✓ *Close the meeting by the summary of the whole discussion.* Such a summary is not in the form of a set of resolutions, but is rather an attempt to state the consensus of the group. A good summary sends the participants away with the feeling that they have got somewhere, that the discussion has helped to solve, or at least to understand, the problem involved.

### **Useful language for the leader**

#### ***Inviting participation***

What do you think about that?

Do you have any information to add?

Now that you have stated your opinions, will you give us the evidence that they are based on?

Thank you very much I think we now understand your views. Can anybody else offer evidence to support this opinion?

I see by faces some of you have opposing opinions. Would one of you care to state their views?

***Getting participants back on track***

This is very interesting, but let us get back to our subject, namely ...

Let us get back to this point later.

That's an interesting comment, but let's finish what we are currently discussing.

Let us now move on to ...

Let me just pose a question here ...

***Interim summary / providing transitions between each step***

I'm sure you agree that we have presented some rather compelling proof that this problem exists. We will now discuss several causes of this very serious problem.

So that's the general picture of ... and now let's look at...

***Concluding remarks***

Some believe that ... others believe that ...

I would welcome any comments, suggestions.

Thank you all for a fine debate.

**Time to Practice**

*Decide what is wrong with each of the following statements below. Challenge the reasoning and refute the statements.*

1. He did poorly in his academic work, so he will do poorly as a professional businessman.

2. I know you can catch AIDS from sharing food because my roommate told me so.

3. Russians believe the president should not be re-elected. I interviewed six people and 100 percent of them said the president was doing a bad job.

4. Female animals naturally take care of the young while the male provides food and protection; women were meant to stay at home.

5. Cigarettes, marijuana, cocaine, alcohol are all common drugs, so the laws should be the same for them all.

6. Dogs have needed to be leashed for years, so cats should be, too.

7. Germany re-united successfully, so Korea can, too.

8. George Soros came to America as a poor immigrant and became rich.

Therefore, the American Dream is true.

9. A couple of my American friends live on pizza. American eating habits are terrible.

10. The high percentage of blacks in professional sports is proof of their physical superiority.

## **6.6 Bad Listening Habits and Their Cures**

Be careful to avoid the following bad listening habits:

✓ *Being distracted by the speaker's appearance or delivery*

Some people do not listen to what the speaker is saying because they are concentrating on the person's speech patterns, gestures, posture, clothes, or appearance.

✓ *Deciding the topic is boring*

Some people decide in advance that they will be bored by what the speaker is going to talk about and use this prejudice as an excuse not to listen.

✓ *Faking attention*

Some people pretend to be listening, but their minds are on other things. They might be looking directly at the speaker and even nodding their heads in agreement when, in fact, they are actually daydreaming, thinking about their own problems, or planning what they want to say in response to speech.

✓ *Looking for distractions*

Some people allow themselves to be distracted by surroundings. They might look out the window or at the wall, play with a pencil, or observe how people in the room are dressed.

✓ *Concentrating on unimportant details*



Some people concentrate on specific details and miss the speaker's main points.

✓ *Reacting emotionally to trigger words*

Some people's ability to listen decreases when they hear the words that cause positive or negative emotional reaction.

### ***How to Listen Effectively***

✓ Get ready to listen. Seat yourself where you can see and hear, take a comfortable posture, focus your eyes on the speaker and your mind on what he/she is about to say.

✓ Switch off emotional attitudes.

✓ Start listening on the first sentence. You hear a speaker's words only once. If you don't get them straight the first time, you don't get them at all. In listening, there is no backtracking.

✓ Get the central idea. Every speech worth listening to has a unity and an organization of parts. Find, first, the unity, the central idea. If when the speech is over, you cannot state briefly, what the theme was, you have not listened actively enough.

✓ Get the chief supporting ideas in their relation to the whole. Watch for the cue phrases that introduce the major parts and signpost the speech. Especially watch the summary that often comes at the end of the speech to pick up points and relationships you missed the first time.

✓ Weigh and consider. Learn to listen critically, weighing and judging and modifying old opinions. *Critical listening* is listening for getting meanings. It is listening with an 'open mind' for facts or ideas or to form opinions. Criticism, of course, is not disagreement. It is not listening to doubt or scorn, but to weigh and consider.

### **Time to Practice**

1. Write your own positive and negative trigger words in the chart below. Discuss your responses in small groups.

	Negative trigger words	Positive trigger words
Specific words		Frontier, ...
People	Madonna, ...	
Topics		Human relations, ...

2. Watch three television discussions and report on the following:
  - the type of each discussion and the techniques used;
  - the kind of audience for which each seemed to be especially adapted;
  - how you would have discussed the problem differently if you had been a participant;
    - how the leader could have been more effective.
3. Assume that you are to lead a campus discussion:
  - What subject would you select?
  - What kind of discussion would you hold (a panel discussion, a debate, etc.)?
  - Whom would you invite to take part?
  - What plan of preparation would you follow?
4. Organize a public debate for your fellow students on one of the suggested topics on page 81-83 or any other. Follow the instructions in this section. You can also use the transcripts of group discussions as an example (Appendix 3).

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## Appendix 1. Keys

### *Unit 3, Exercise 1, p.41*

- a) ‘I never prepare notes for each slide. Personally, I think it looks a little unprofessional if I have to read a card to remember what I want to say.’
- b) ‘If there are experts in the room, view them as a resource and not a threat. Involve them at the right time, as your audience may appreciate hearing their views. Remember, your first concern is delivering benefits to the audience, not promoting your own status.’
- c) ‘If your mind goes blank, take a few minutes to summarize what you have said and ask for questions or comments. It’s always a good idea in the planning phase to have a series of back-up questions. And don’t forget, pick on a friendly member of the audience to ask, if possible, to ensure that you get an answer.’
- d) ‘Let them go. They have probably got a very good reason to leave.’
- e) ‘Nerves are not necessarily a bad thing. However, if nerves do hit you, then get pragmatic. Re-focus on the content and on explaining points of interest to the audience. You can always go to back-up questions, if necessary.’

## **Appendix 2. Great Speeches of the 20<sup>th</sup> century**

### **Patrick Henry: “Give me Liberty or Give me Death!”**

Patrick Henry (1736-1799) was a prominent figure in the American Revolution, known and remembered primarily for his stirring oratory. Along with Samuel Adams and Thomas Paine, he was one of the most influential (and radical) advocates of the American Revolution.

This famous speech was given by Patrick Henry at St. John’s Church in Richmond, Virginia, on March 23, 1775. It is credited with having single-handedly convinced the Virginia House of Burgesses to pass a resolution delivering the Virginia troops to the Revolutionary war. In attendance were Thomas Jefferson and George Washington. Reportedly, the crowd, upon hearing the speech jumped up and shouted “To arms! To arms!”

#### *Give me Liberty or Give me Death*

«No man, Mr. President, thinks more highly than I do of the patriotism, as well as abilities, of the very worthy gentlemen who have just addressed the House. But different men often see the same subject in different lights; and, therefore, I hope it will not be thought disrespectful to those gentlemen if, entertaining as I do opinions of a character very opposite to theirs, I shall speak forth my sentiments freely and without reserve. This is no time for ceremony. The question before the House is one of awful moment to this country. For my own part, I consider it as nothing less than a question of freedom or slavery; and in proportion to the magnitude of the subject ought to be the freedom of the debate. It is only in this way that we can hope to arrive at truth, and fulfill the great responsibility which we hold to God and our country. Should I keep back my opinions at such a time, through fear of giving offense, I should consider myself as guilty of treason towards my country, and of an act of disloyalty toward the Majesty of Heaven, which I revere above all earthly kings.

Mr. President, it is natural to man to indulge in the illusions of hope. We are apt to shut our eyes against a painful truth, and listen to the song of that siren till she transforms us into beasts. Is this the part of wise men, engaged in a great and arduous struggle for liberty? Are we disposed to be of the number of those who, having eyes, see not, and,

having ears, hear not, the things which so nearly concern their temporal salvation? For my part, whatever anguish of spirit it may cost, I am willing to know the whole truth; to know the worst, and to provide for it. I have but one lamp by which my feet are guided, and that is the lamp of experience. I know of no way of judging of the future but by the past. And judging by the past, I wish to know what there has been in the conduct of the British ministry for the last ten years to justify those hopes with which gentlemen have been pleased to solace themselves and the House. Is it that insidious smile with which our petition has been lately received? Trust it not, sir; it will prove a snare to your feet. Suffer not yourselves to be betrayed with a kiss. Ask yourselves how this gracious reception of our petition comports with those warlike preparations which cover our waters and darken our land. Are fleets and armies necessary to a work of love and reconciliation? Have we shown ourselves so unwilling to be reconciled that force must be called in to win back our love? Let us not deceive ourselves, sir. These are the implements of war and subjugation; the last arguments to which kings' resort. I ask gentlemen, sir, what means this martial array, if its purpose be not to force us to submission? Can gentlemen assign any other possible motive for it? Has Great Britain any enemy, in this quarter of the world, to call for all this accumulation of navies and armies? No, sir, she has none. They are meant for us: they can be meant for no other. They are sent over to bind and rivet upon us those chains which the British ministry have been so long forging.

And what have we to oppose to them? Shall we try argument? Sir, we have been trying that for the last ten years. Have we anything new to offer upon the subject? Nothing. We have held the subject up in every light of which it is capable; but it has been all in vain. Shall we resort to entreaty and humble supplication? What terms shall we find which have not been already exhausted? Let us not, I beseech you, sir, deceive ourselves. Sir, we have done everything that could be done to avert the storm which is now coming on. We have petitioned; we have remonstrated; we have supplicated; we have prostrated ourselves before the throne, and have implored its interposition to arrest the tyrannical hands of the ministry and Parliament. Our petitions have been slighted; our remonstrances have produced additional violence and insult; our supplications have been disregarded; and we have been spurned, with contempt, from the foot of the throne! In vain, after these things,

may we indulge the fond hope of peace and reconciliation. There is no longer any room for hope. If we wish to be free — if we mean to preserve inviolate those inestimable privileges for which we have been so long contending — if we mean not basely to abandon the noble struggle in which we have been so long engaged, and which we have pledged ourselves never to abandon until the glorious object of our contest shall be obtained — we must fight! I repeat it, sir, we must fight! An appeal to arms and to the God of hosts is all that is left us! They tell us, sir, that we are weak; unable to cope with so formidable an adversary. But when shall we be stronger? Will it be the next week, or the next year? Will it be when we are totally disarmed, and when a British guard shall be stationed in every house? Shall we gather strength by irresolution and inaction? Shall we acquire the means of effectual resistance by lying supinely on our backs and hugging the delusive phantom of hope, until our enemies shall have bound us hand and foot? Sir, we are not weak if we make a proper use of those means which the God of nature hath placed in our power. The millions of people, armed in the holy cause of liberty, and in such a country as that which we possess, are invincible by any force which our enemy can send against us. Besides, sir, we shall not fight our battles alone. There is a just God who presides over the destinies of nations, and who will raise up friends to fight our battles for us. The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone; it is to the vigilant, the active, the brave. Besides, sir, we have no election. If we were base enough to desire it, it is now too late to retire from the contest. There is no retreat but in submission and slavery! Our chains are forged! Their clanking may be heard on the plains of Boston! The war is inevitable — and let it come! I repeat it, sir, let it come.

It is in vain, sir, to extenuate the matter. Gentlemen may cry, Peace, Peace — but there is no peace. The war is actually begun! The next gale that sweeps from the north will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms! Our brethren are already in the field! Why stand we here idle? What is it that gentlemen wish? What would they have? Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!» [14]

*Patrick Henry – March 23, 1775*



## **Abraham Lincoln. The Gettysburg Address**

This famous speech was made by Abraham Lincoln on November 19, 1863, in the town of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, at the dedication of the Soldiers' National Cemetery. Lincoln expressed the grief for the soldiers killed in the American Civil War, and addressed the principles that they died for, in words that are often remembered by Americans. Lincoln's "few appropriate remarks" summarized the war in ten sentences and 272 words, re-dedicating the nation to the war effort and to the ideal that no soldier at Gettysburg – Federal or Confederate – had died in vain.

The text of the address is carved into the stone of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C.

### **The Gettysburg Address**

"Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth, on this continent, a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived, and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battle-field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting-place for those who here gave their lives, that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this. But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate—we cannot hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they here gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth." [15]

*Abraham Lincoln – November 19, 1863*

## **John F. Kennedy. Inaugural Speech**

On the January morning of 1961, when John F. Kennedy assumed the presidency and stood to give his inaugural speech, America was divided, its citizens torn by fears of war. Kennedy's speech, called the finest since Lincoln at Gettysburg and the most memorable of any twentieth-century American politician, did more than reassure: it changed lives, marking the start of a brief, optimistic era of struggle against "tyranny, poverty, disease, and war itself". In his speech Kennedy managed to distill American dreams and empower a new generation.

### ***Inaugural Speech***

«Vice President Johnson, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Chief Justice, President Eisenhower, Vice President Nixon, President Truman, Reverend Clergy, fellow citizens:

We observe today not a victory of party but a celebration of freedom - symbolizing an end as well as a beginning - signifying renewal as well as change. For I have sworn before you and Almighty God the same solemn oath our forebears prescribed nearly a century and three-quarters ago.

The world is very different now. For man holds in his mortal hands the power to abolish all forms of human poverty and all forms of human life. And yet the same revolutionary beliefs for which our forebears fought are still at issue around the globe - the belief that the rights of man come not from the generosity of the state but from the hand of God.

We dare not forget today that we are the heirs of that first revolution. Let the word go forth from this time and place, to friend and foe alike, that the torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans - born in this century, tempered by war, disciplined by a hard and bitter peace, proud of our ancient heritage - and unwilling to witness or permit the slow undoing of those human rights to which this nation has always been committed, and to which we are committed today at home and around the world.

Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and the success of liberty.

This much we pledge - and more.

To those old allies whose cultural and spiritual origins we share, we pledge the loyalty of faithful friends. United there is little we cannot do in a host of cooperative ventures. Divided there is little we can do - for we dare not meet a powerful challenge at odds and split asunder.

To those new states whom we welcome to the ranks of the free, we pledge our word that one form of colonial control shall not have passed away merely to be replaced by a far more iron tyranny. We shall not always expect to find them supporting our view. But we shall always hope to find them strongly supporting their own freedom - and to remember that, in the past, those who foolishly sought power by riding the back of the tiger ended up inside.

To those people in the huts and villages of half the globe struggling to break the bonds of mass misery, we pledge our best efforts to help them help themselves, for whatever period is required - not because the communists may be doing it, not because we seek their votes, but because it is right. If a free society cannot help the many who are poor, it cannot save the few who are rich.

To our sister republics south of our border, we offer a special pledge - to convert our good words into good deeds - in a new alliance for progress--to assist free men and free governments in casting off the chains of poverty. But this peaceful revolution of hope cannot become the prey of hostile powers. Let all our neighbors know that we shall join with them to oppose aggression or subversion anywhere in the Americas. And let every other power know that this Hemisphere intends to remain the master of its own house.

To that world assembly of sovereign states, the United Nations, our last best hope in an age where the instruments of war have far outpaced the instruments of peace, we renew our pledge of support - to prevent it from becoming merely a forum for invective--to strengthen its shield of the new and the weak - and to enlarge the area in which its writ may run.

Finally, to those nations who would make themselves our adversary, we offer not a pledge but a request: that both sides begin anew the quest for peace, before the dark

powers of destruction unleashed by science engulf all humanity in planned or accidental self-destruction.

We dare not tempt them with weakness. For only when our arms are sufficient beyond doubt can we be certain beyond doubt that they will never be employed.

But neither can two great and powerful groups of nations take comfort from our present course--both sides overburdened by the cost of modern weapons, both rightly alarmed by the steady spread of the deadly atom, yet both racing to alter that uncertain balance of terror that stays the hand of mankind's final war.

So let us begin anew--remembering on both sides that civility is not a sign of weakness, and sincerity is always subject to proof. Let us never negotiate out of fear. But let us never fear to negotiate.

Let both sides explore what problems unite us instead of belaboring those problems which divide us.

Let both sides, for the first time, formulate serious and precise proposals for the inspection and control of arms--and bring the absolute power to destroy other nations under the absolute control of all nations.

Let both sides seek to invoke the wonders of science instead of its terrors. Together let us explore the stars, conquer the deserts, eradicate disease, tap the ocean depths and encourage the arts and commerce.

Let both sides unite to heed in all corners of the earth the command of Isaiah--to "undo the heavy burdens . . . (and) let the oppressed go free."

And if a beachhead of cooperation may push back the jungle of suspicion, let both sides join in creating a new endeavor, not a new balance of power, but a new world of law, where the strong are just and the weak secure and the peace preserved.

All this will not be finished in the first one hundred days. Nor will it be finished in the first one thousand days, nor in the life of this Administration, nor even perhaps in our lifetime on this planet. But let us begin.

In your hands, my fellow citizens, more than mine, will rest the final success or failure of our course. Since this country was founded, each generation of Americans has

been summoned to give testimony to its national loyalty. The graves of young Americans who answered the call to service surround the globe.

Now the trumpet summons us again--not as a call to bear arms, though arms we need--not as a call to battle, though embattled we are-- but a call to bear the burden of a long twilight struggle, year in and year out, "rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation"--a struggle against the common enemies of man: tyranny, poverty, disease and war itself.

Can we forge against these enemies a grand and global alliance, North and South, East and West, that can assure a more fruitful life for all mankind? Will you join in that historic effort?

In the long history of the world, only a few generations have been granted the role of defending freedom in its hour of maximum danger. I do not shrink from this responsibility--I welcome it. I do not believe that any of us would exchange places with any other people or any other generation. The energy, the faith, the devotion which we bring to this endeavor will light our country and all who serve it--and the glow from that fire can truly light the world.

And so, my fellow Americans: ask not what your country can do for you--ask what you can do for your country.

My fellow citizens of the world: ask not what America will do for you, but what together we can do for the freedom of man.

Finally, whether you are citizens of America or citizens of the world, ask of us here the same high standards of strength and sacrifice which we ask of you. With a good conscience our only sure reward, with history the final judge of our deeds, let us go forth to lead the land we love, asking His blessing and His help, but knowing that here on earth God's work must truly be our own. » [16]

*John F. Kennedy – January 20, 1961*

### **Dr. Martin Luther King. I have a dream**

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s most famous speech was a defining moment of the American Civil Rights Movement. The speech was delivered on the steps at the Lincoln

Memorial in Washington, D.C. on August 28, 1963. It was part of the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom.

King had originally prepared a short and somewhat formal recitation of the sufferings of African Americans attempting to realize their freedom in a society chained by discrimination. Encouraged by shouts from the audience, King drew upon some of his past talks, and the result became the landmark statement of civil rights in America – he spoke powerfully and eloquently about a dream of all people, of all races and colors and backgrounds, sharing in an America where blacks and whites would coexist harmoniously and as equals.

*“I have a dream”*

«I am happy to join with you today in what will go down in history as the greatest demonstration for freedom in the history of our nation.

Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand today, signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This momentous decree came as a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice. It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of their captivity.

But one hundred years later, the Negro still is not free. One hundred years later, the life of the Negro is still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination. One hundred years later, the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity. One hundred years later, the Negro is still languishing in the corners of American society and finds himself an exile in his own land. So we have come here today to dramatize a shameful condition.

In a sense we have come to our nation’s capital to cash a check. When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men, yes, black men as well as white men, would be guaranteed the unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this promissory note insofar as her citizens of color are concerned. Instead of honoring this sacred obligation, America has given the Negro people a bad check, a check which has come back marked “insufficient

funds.” But we refuse to believe that the bank of justice is bankrupt. We refuse to believe that there are insufficient funds in the great vaults of opportunity of this nation. So we have come to cash this check — a check that will give us upon demand the riches of freedom and the security of justice. We have also come to this hallowed spot to remind America of the fierce urgency of now. This is no time to engage in the luxury of cooling off or to take the tranquilizing drug of gradualism. Now is the time to make real the promises of democracy. Now is the time to rise from the dark and desolate valley of segregation to the sunlit path of racial justice. Now is the time to lift our nation from the quick sands of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood. Now is the time to make justice a reality for all of God’s children.

It would be fatal for the nation to overlook the urgency of the moment. This sweltering summer of the Negro’s legitimate discontent will not pass until there is an invigorating autumn of freedom and equality. Nineteen sixty-three is not an end, but a beginning. Those who hope that the Negro needed to blow off steam and will now be content will have a rude awakening if the nation returns to business as usual. There will be neither rest nor tranquility in America until the Negro is granted his citizenship rights. The whirlwinds of revolt will continue to shake the foundations of our nation until the bright day of justice emerges.

But there is something that I must say to my people who stand on the warm threshold which leads into the palace of justice. In the process of gaining our rightful place we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred.

We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline. We must not allow our creative protest to degenerate into physical violence. Again and again we must rise to the majestic heights of meeting physical force with soul force. The marvelous new militancy which has engulfed the Negro community must not lead us to a distrust of all white people, for many of our white brothers, as evidenced by their presence here today, have come to realize that their destiny is tied up with our destiny. They have come to realize that their freedom is inextricably bound to our freedom. We cannot walk alone.

As we walk, we must make the pledge that we shall always march ahead. We cannot turn back. There are those who are asking the devotees of civil rights, "When will you be satisfied?" We can never be satisfied as long as the Negro is the victim of the unspeakable horrors of police brutality. We can never be satisfied, as long as our bodies, heavy with the fatigue of travel, cannot gain lodging in the motels of the highways and the hotels of the cities. We cannot be satisfied as long as the Negro's basic mobility is from a smaller ghetto to a larger one. We can never be satisfied as long as our children are stripped of their selfhood and robbed of their dignity by signs stating "For Whites Only". We cannot be satisfied as long as a Negro in Mississippi cannot vote and a Negro in New York believes he has nothing for which to vote. No, no, we are not satisfied, and we will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream.

I am not unmindful that some of you have come here out of great trials and tribulations. Some of you have come fresh from narrow jail cells. Some of you have come from areas where your quest for freedom left you battered by the storms of persecution and staggered by the winds of police brutality. You have been the veterans of creative suffering. Continue to work with the faith that unearned suffering is redemptive.

Go back to Mississippi, go back to Alabama, go back to South Carolina, go back to Georgia, go back to Louisiana, go back to the slums and ghettos of our northern cities, knowing that somehow this situation can and will be changed. Let us not wallow in the valley of despair.

I say to you today, my friends, so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal."

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.



I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day, down in Alabama, with its vicious racists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of interposition and nullification; one day right there in Alabama, little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers.

I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.

This is our hope. This is the faith that I go back to the South with. With this faith we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day.

This will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with a new meaning, "My country, 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. Land where my fathers died, land of the pilgrim's pride, from every mountainside, let freedom ring."

And if America is to be a great nation this must become true. So let freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire. Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York. Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania!

Let freedom ring from the snowcapped Rockies of Colorado!

Let freedom ring from the curvaceous slopes of California!

But not only that; let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia!

Let freedom ring from Lookout Mountain of Tennessee!

Let freedom ring from every hill and molehill of Mississippi. From every mountainside, let freedom ring.

And when this happens, when we allow freedom to ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, "Free at last! free at last! thank God Almighty, we are free at last!"» [17]

### **Appendix 3. Transcripts of Group Discussions**

*Panel Discussion Transcript (Topic: "Nature or nurture?")*

*Raquel:* Okay. Nature. Nurture. One thing that every ... uh, one likes to talk about is how personalities are formed, the nature / nurture controversy. What do you think causes differences in how people develop? Is it genetics or is it environment?

*Adrian:* I think it's both.

*Raquel:* Peter, you're nodding.

*Peter:* Year. I guess as, as a parent of, uh, young children who are ages seven to ... seven to thirteen, um, you always... it's kind of a scary thing because you ... you try to do your best to bring your children up the right way, to teach them the right things. But you never know how they're going to turn out. And, uh, so it's kind of confusing and it's scary in the same way as to, uh, you know, how you'll hope they'll turn out and, uh, you never know. So I ... I think there, there is ... you know, it can be some of each.

*Raquel:* Right. So, in your case you create an environment that you think will, will foster a certain behaviour but then ...

*Peter:* And you keep your fingers crossed.

*Raquel:* ... but then they go to another environment and they can be influenced by what they see or experience.

*Adrian:* I think ... I'm sorry ... But I think it's very important, that aspect of your home atmosphere. And I truly believe that, uh, if you have communication, real honest communication, uh, with your kids, I think that that will ultimately bring some good to, to, to them and, and the way they, they will go through life ...

*Raquel:* You're talking ...

*Adrian:* ... no matter what.

*Raquel:* I'm sorry.

*Adrian:* Yes. No ...

*Raquel:* No, you were talking about children. How about, let's take it a little away from children, but siblings. Did you have brothers and sisters, Tom?

*Tom:* Yes.

*Raquel:* And ... and how, how were you alike and how were you different?

*Tom:* Um, my brothers ... Uh, I have two brothers, both younger than I, and we're very, very different. And my own view is, is that I do agree that I think it is a combination of both nature and nurture. But I tend to think, from my experience and observation, that there is more to the nature side of it than sometimes is, is readily apparent. And I know many people who have almost defied their environments in terms of what they've been able to accomplish because of the fact that it was their... their nature to do so. And they ... in other words, there was something inside them that really was even more powerful than the negative influences of the environment.

*Peter:* You keep hearing a lot about the success stories of people who grew up in adversity, and uh, didn't have much but they became very successful and very productive citizens. But then you also hear about the ... the people who, uh, came out of ... had every advantage in the world and, and grew up in very good families and something went wrong, so it's hard to, to say what exactly made that happen.

*Adrian:* I think that there are more layers to it than we really know. And uh, everything plays role in that. It's not just two things; I think there are more things than that. That's my personal thought.

*Raquel:* Very, um ... very thought-provoking stuff. One quick question for you, Peter. Back to children, you have three children. How do you think they're like you and how do you think they're different?

*Peter:* Well, uh ... gee, I ... in, in a lot of ways I can see so many ways that ... where they're different from I am and, and, and the same as I am. Um, they're, uh...

*Raquel:* Take one for example. Say, your oldest child.

*Peter:* OK. He's, um, probably very ... uh, he's more, more studious than I was when I was younger. Um, he's very athletic, which is ... I enjoyed sports. Um, and, uh, I think he's understanding values that, uh, I've cherished and, and that I've hopefully have imparted on him, like being considerate of other people ... things like that, so ...

*Raquel:* So, he obviously was able to get a little bit of the nature and the nurture.

*Peter:* Yeah. Yeah. Exactly.

*Raquel:* Very interesting subject. I wish we had more time, especially for some of your themes, but we've got to stop right here. Thank you so much.

### ***Formal Debate Transcript***

*(Veronique and Toshi are debating against Wu-Mei and Sami)*

*Moderator:* Today we will debate the following **proposition** "The city should provide more shelters for the homeless". Let's begin with **Pro argument №1**.

*Veronique:* What should be done for the homeless? Our team strongly believes that we need to build more shelters. *The City Herald* stated last month that the two shelters we have in this town are overcrowded. The people in charge of the local shelter estimate that over 50 percent of the homeless sleep on the streets. The city should spend money now on buying or building the shelters that are needed.

*Moderator:* Let's hear **Con argument №1** now.

*Wu-Mei:* Temporary shelters are short-term solutions. The homeless are still homeless. The city shouldn't waste its money on "bandaids". There could be a better solution. The most important thing is to build houses and provide job training for the homeless.

*Moderator:* **Pro argument №2**, please.

*Toshi:* I can understand what you're saying, Wu-Mei. Building new homes does sound perfect, however, it is not realistic. It is expensive and the city doesn't have enough money to do that. And this article in *Time* magazine shows that many of these people have real problems. They are alcoholics, drug addicts, and mental patients. So, this shows that they can't take care of homes. They can't even take care of themselves.

*Moderator:* **Con argument №2**, now.

*Sami:* I'm afraid I disagree with Toshi. Just because some of the homeless people are alcoholics or mental patients doesn't mean they are all are, or even that most of them are. Although that example may be true, it's not generally the case. More and more of the homeless people are families. According to *The New York Times*, in many places 50 percent of the homeless coming to shelters are single mothers with children. Shelters are no solution for them. How can you look for a job and raise children when you have

nowhere to live, just a shelter to rest in at night? You even need an address to qualify for government assistance! And ...

*Moderator:* I'm sorry, Sami, but your time is up. We now have **question time**. Would the Con side like to start?

*Wu-Mei:* Veronique, I understand what you're saying, but wouldn't you agree that shelters are just a temporary solution?

*Veronique:* Shelters are an important, immediate solution. You can't worry about long-range solutions until people have a place to sleep.

*Toshi:* Wu-Mei, your point about "bandaids" wasn't clear. Could you go over that again?

*Wu-Mei:* Temporary shelters are a short-term solution. They don't cure the illness, they just cover it up, like a bandaid. The homeless are still homeless.

*Moderator:* Does the Pro side have any questions?

*Toshi:* Wu-Mei, how much money would it cost to build housing or give training to every homeless person?

*Wu-Mei:* Well, I don't mean we should build individual housing for each homeless person; of course, that would be too expensive. But we need to think about long-term solutions.

*Moderator:* Does either side have more questions?

*Sami:* Toshi, do you believe all homeless people are like the alcoholics or strange people we see on the streets?

*Toshi:* I strongly believe that many do have serious problems. The February 4<sup>th</sup> edition of *Time* magazine states that "When many of the mental institutions had to close because of lack of money, patients ended up on the streets".

*Veronique:* Sami, wouldn't you agree that without enough shelters these people will sleep on the street tonight?

*Sami:* Of course, they need a place to sleep, but the city will spend all of its money on symptoms and nothing on helping people change their lives. Rehabilitation centers would help end the need for shelters.

*Moderator:* It's time for Rebuttals now. Is the **Pro rebuttal** ready?

*Veronique:* To conclude, the homeless people need a roof over their head now. Think about tonight. Not later. It may be a short-term solution, but the people out there on the streets are thinking about tonight. Decide that we should build more shelters. Thank you.

*Moderator: **Con rebuttal №1?***

*Wu-Mei:* To sum up, we need to use our money to start a real change. Remember that shelters are a waste of money because the homeless still have no homes and no hope. Realize that we need houses and help, not temporary shelters. We can't help everyone, but we can make a true start. Think about giving homeless families a new start by building homes and rehabilitation centers. Thank you.

*Moderator: **Pro rebuttal №2?***

*Toshi:* The city only has a limited amount of money. We can't make most people live on the streets while we find the perfect solution for a few others. Many of the homeless will never be able to work or take care of their own home. Shelters are a solution for everyone. Remember that other projects, like homes and rehabilitation centers, don't help enough people and are expensive.

*Moderator: **Con rebuttal №2?***

*Sami:* We need to change our image of the homeless, and the image they have about themselves. Many homeless people can be helped. Remember that retraining and a place of their own will take away their need for shelter not only for tonight, but for every other night, too. It's a long-term solution that is good investment. Decide against the temporary solution of more shelters.

*Moderator:* Thank you all for a fine debate.