

David Zarefsky

Public Speaking

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS



Eighth Edition

Public Speaking

Strategies for Success

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Public Speaking

Strategies for Success

EIGHTH EDITION

David Zarefsky

Northwestern University

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For My Students

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To the Student

I was fortunate to have an excellent education in both high school and college. I had many stimulating and useful courses, interesting and challenging teachers, and rewarding and enjoyable experiences. But if I had to single out the *most* important course I had, without a doubt it would be public speaking. I think my experience was not unique and I hope yours will be similar.

You may be taking this course because you want to improve your voice or physical delivery, or to overcome speech anxiety, or to organize your thoughts better, or to learn how to do good research. You may have picked this class because a friend is in it, or because it meets at a convenient time, or even because it is required. I'm willing to predict that if you take the course seriously and work at it, you not only will achieve your goals but will go far beyond them. I know I did.

I wanted to become more comfortable in speaking before a group and to learn how to use my voice effectively and how to control distracting mannerisms. I accomplished those goals but also learned how to think analytically, how to organize ideas, how to do research, how to assess an audience, how to inform and persuade. It was not long before I realized that these skills and habits were valuable not just in public speaking, but in every other course and, indeed, in almost every aspect of life. When my daughter and my son each took a public speaking course, they experienced very similar results and, of course, I greatly enjoyed observing the positive effect the course had on each of them.

For over 2,500 years, men and women have studied the art of public speaking, both because it is valuable in its own right and because, in the best sense of the term, it is a liberal art—one that frees and empowers people to reach their potential. It does so by providing the knowledge, cultivating the skills, and modeling the habits of effective thought and expression that can be applied to any area of life. You are the latest link in this chain of public speaking students that extends from the ancients to the present day. I hope that this book, and the course of which it is a part, will help you to have a similar experience.

The title of this book is *Public Speaking: Strategies for Success*. That title has a double meaning. First, this book is about strategies for success in public speaking. Second, the premise of the book is that public speaking will provide you with strategies for success in life. It does not promise fame or fortune, of course, but it does offer a blend of reflective judgment and carefully chosen action that should enable you, whatever your experience, to enjoy a life well lived.

I have used the term *strategy* to emphasize that public speaking is about choices. It is an art and not a science. When you speak, you will be faced with situations that offer both opportunities and constraints. You will need to decide how to work within this situation to achieve your goals, and your plan for doing so is a strategy. And even as you make choices in response to a situation, the pattern of your choices actually helps to define what the situation is. It affects you, but you also affect it.

Thinking strategically about public speaking means avoiding the belief that there is an all-purpose magic formula that will always produce a good speech. You will have to make judgments each time you speak about what your goals should be and the best way to achieve them. With experience and practice, you should find choices easier to make. Although, as you will see, there are some general norms and expectations, a speech is good not because it follows some formula, but because it deals effectively with a specific situation. A speech that is good in one context may be weak in another. It is always necessary to get down to cases.

For that reason, you will find many examples and case studies in this book. Some come from student speakers and some from speakers in the “real world.” Some are actual situations and some are hypothetical ones that I have designed to illustrate important principles. Some describe what speakers actually did, and some ask you what you might do. Just as lawyers learn the law, in part, through the case method, so you will cultivate and sharpen the skills of public speaking by trying them out on specific cases.

Case material will be provided not only by this book, but also by your class. You will have the opportunity not only to present speeches, but to listen to many as well. Listening to speeches is important, not just a necessary evil to be endured while you wait your turn to speak. You develop habits of analysis and memory, you see a large array of choices other students make in specific situations, and you gain skill in assessing whether strategies succeed or fail and in deciding whether or not they are strategies that you might wish to use. Your role as listener is just as important as your role as speaker.

At the same time, *Public Speaking* does not study cases in a vacuum. It draws on underlying theory to explain these situations. Theory does not refer to that which is impractical; nor does it refer to a lot of fancy terms or ideas that seem isolated from reality. Rather, it helps to explain what happens when speakers and audiences engage one another. Although sometimes the theory and practice of public speaking are studied in isolation, the premise of *Public Speaking* is that they need to be integrated at every step. Theory informs our understanding of practice by enabling us to explain what is happening in particular situations. And practice applies and modifies our understanding of theory. What you learn about theories of arrangement, for instance, will help you to organize a speech, but your experience in organizing speeches will also contribute to your thinking about theories of arrangement.

More than 50 years have passed since I first enrolled in a course in public speaking. Now you are starting the same journey. This book, your own experience, and the interaction with other students and your instructor are all vital parts of the course. Participate fully and try to get as much from the course as you can. I hope that, like me, you will find that you not only achieve your original goals, but actually transcend them and I hope that a course in public speaking contributes as much to your life as it has to mine.

David Zarefsky

To the Instructor

If you are using this textbook for the first time, welcome. If you are a previous user, I am grateful for your support and enthusiasm, and I hope you will like the approach of this eighth edition.

Public Speaking: Strategies for Success is based on the premise that successful public speaking is *strategic*. It involves understanding the circumstances in which one speaks, making deliberate choices about how to deal with these circumstances, and planning in order to achieve one's speaking goals. The key elements in a strategic approach to public speaking are *critical thinking* and *strategic planning*, skills emphasized throughout this book. Equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills, students can learn to make skillful and intelligent choices in public speaking situations throughout their lives.

A consequence of a strategic perspective is the recognition that public speaking is not a science with universally applicable principles, nor a set of formulas that can be applied mechanically or by rote. It is more complicated than that, involving subjective judgment and human choice. We do our students a disservice if we pretend otherwise. Instead, by equipping them with necessary knowledge and skills, we should help to prepare them to make these choices skillfully and intelligently. My experience is that students respond well to this approach.

To say that the subject matter is complex, though, is certainly not to say that the textbook must be dull, tedious, or unreadable. I have tried to make the text readily accessible to students without compromising the integrity of the subject matter.

The title of the book, *Public Speaking: Strategies for Success*, has a double meaning. The book offers a strategic perspective that should lead students to become more successful public speakers. And the art of public speaking provides many of the strategies for students to succeed in many different walks of life. I hope that this book will help you to empower your students to achieve those goals.

New to This Edition

Revel™

Educational Technology Designed for the Way Today's Students Read, Think, and Learn

When students are engaged deeply, they learn more effectively and perform better in their courses. This simple fact inspired the creation of REVEL: an immersive learning experience designed for the way today's students read, think, and learn. Built in collaboration with educators and students nationwide, REVEL is the newest, fully digital way to deliver respected Pearson content.

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Rather than simply offering opportunities to read about and study communication, REVEL facilitates deep, engaging interactions with the concepts that matter most. For example, when learning about public speaking anxiety, students are prompted to

complete a self-assessment (McCroskey’s Personal Report of Public Speaking Anxiety) to gauge their own communication style and explore ways to improve their skills. By providing opportunities to read about and practice communication in tandem, REVEL engages students directly and immediately, which leads to a better understanding of course material. A wealth of student and instructor resources and interactive materials can be found within REVEL. Some favorites include:

- **Short Speech Excerpts**

Abundant in-text speech excerpts let students listen to audio clips while they read, bringing examples to life in a way that a printed text cannot.

- **Videos and Video Quizzes**

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- **Interactive Exercises**

Features like our “Rhetorical Workout” exercise are now fully interactive allowing students to respond and complete the activity immediately within the REVEL product.

- **Instant Assessment**

Each main heading of the book has a built-in end-of-section quiz to instantly test students on what they have learned. The end of each chapter features a longer quiz that covers all of the previous chapter content. Students receive instant feedback and grades are reported to the professor. Additionally there are shorter “assessment activities” such as video self-check quizzes throughout many of the chapters.

- **Integrated Writing Opportunities**

To help students connect chapter content with personal meaning, each chapter offers two varieties of writing prompts: the Journal prompt, which elicits free-form topic-specific responses addressing topics at the module level, and the Shared Writing prompt, which encourages students to share and respond to each other’s brief responses to high-interest topics in the chapter.

- **Key Term Pop-Ups and Flash Cards**

Important terms are highlighted within the text; brief definitions pop up when students click on the term. At the end of each chapter all of its key terms are compiled into interactive flash cards that students can use as a study aid.

For more information about all the tools and resources in REVEL and access to your own REVEL account for *Public Speaking: Strategies for Success* Eighth Edition, go to www.pearsonhighered.com/revel.

Chapter Updates

In addition to the immersive learning experience offered by REVEL, we’ve refined and updated the content in this new edition. In its eighth edition, *Public Speaking: Strategies for Success* maintains its solid foundations of strategy, practical skills, rhetorical theory, diversity, ethics, and civic participation, while revising and updating key areas to reflect the needs of today’s beginning speakers. Some key areas revised in this edition include:

1. *Expanded treatments of informing and persuading:* Storytelling has been added as an informative strategy (Chapter 13) and there is more in-depth coverage of emotional appeals in persuasion (Chapter 14).
2. *Updated coverage of technology:* Updated discussions of technology-related issues in public speaking include such areas as social media and the public forum, speaking for the camera, mediated audiences, search engines, databases and catalogs, and audiovisual media and multimedia presentations, including additional advice for creating slides.

3. *Reworked and expanded material in the in-chapter boxes and end-of-chapter resources:* These provide a greater variety of simulation opportunities and place greater emphasis on making conscious choices and adapting to changes in the rhetorical situation.
4. *Examples:* Along with a variety of updated and revised examples in the text, new examples of complete preparation and presentation outlines from a student speech are included and extensively annotated, and a new student speech is in the appendix. Additionally, examples have been visually distinguished throughout the text to better highlight them for student learning.
5. *Revised appendix of sample speeches:* Featuring a more focused collection of student and public speeches, the appendix includes the full text of a new student speech utilizing a mix of deliberative and ceremonial strategies, and a new speech by a public figure: President Barack Obama’s 2015 speech on the 50th anniversary of the voting rights march in Selma, Alabama. There also is a “For Further Study” section recommending additional speeches for analysis and discussion, annotated with notes on what students should look for when reading or listening to the speeches.
6. *New and updated research:* Every chapter includes new or updated research to keep the text current on topics from technology issues and speech anxiety to gestures and language choice.

Public Speaking Teaches Strategic Planning

Far too often, students leave a public speaking class with nothing more than a recipe for how to prepare and deliver a seven-minute speech in class. Certainly, being able to prepare and deliver that classroom speech well is a start. The goal of this book, however, is to help students also learn how to apply the skills required for that seven-minute classroom speech to the range of public speaking situations they will encounter beyond the classroom throughout their lives. Students should recognize how often they will find themselves participating in speaking situations, whether as a public speaker or as an audience member. They need to think through and about the public speaking process and to develop strategies to achieve their goals.

CHOOSE A STRATEGY The *Choose a Strategy* boxes in each chapter present students with a case study allowing them to decide how the skills and concepts discussed can be adapted to a concrete rhetorical situation. Although these open-ended situations usually have no “correct” solutions, they train students to size up a situation, understand its opportunities and constraints, assess ideas, and reason with an audience in mind.

Public Speaking Teaches Rhetorical Theory and Critical Thinking Skills

Grounded in the tradition of the art of rhetoric, this text provides students with a beginning knowledge of rhetorical theory as they learn how to speak in public. Theory and practice are integrated as a seamless fabric, explaining clearly what students should do and why.

A full chapter, Chapter 8, focuses on reasoning in the context of the entire speaking situation (not limited to persuasive speeches).

Choose a Strategy: Organizing Your Speech

The Situation

You have been asked to speak about your town to a group of foreign exchange students, to help them navigate your city. You decide that you want to tell them about some local landmarks, describe the city’s layout, and give them some advice about safety.

Making Choices

1. What different organizational patterns might you use for the speech? Which one seems best at first glance?
2. Even though you have three different main ideas, you might think that one of them is the most important. How does that choice affect your organization?

3. What kind of supporting material would be important to include—and where in the speech should you include it?

What if . . .

How would your organizational decisions change if the following were true?

1. Most of the students are from rural areas and might be unfamiliar with city life.
2. Crime that targets foreigners is a major problem in your city.

Rhetorical Workout

Learn About Your Listeners

Your friend Zizhou has just won a major award from your university. You have been asked to give a toast at a dinner celebration in his honor. Many members of Zizhou's family, whom you have not met before, are traveling to the event from Hong Kong, their hometown. The dean of students, several professors, and some of your friends will be attending as well. As you prepare your speech, you want to understand more about your audience.

1. Based on the description alone, what assumptions can you make about your audience? Are they likely to be culturally heterogeneous or homogeneous? How do you know?
2. How can you learn more about your audience? Would a formal survey be helpful in this situation? What might you like to know?
3. Your older sister recently gave a toast at her friend's wedding. What advice would you ask of her? How is your situation different from hers?

4. What are the goals of your toast? How might audience composition affect how you approach these goals?
5. Toasts can range from formal to informal, personal to impersonal, and funny to serious. How does the composition of your audience affect where your toast fits on these ranges? How would your toast differ if the audience were composed solely of professors, or of your peers?
6. Assume your audience is heterogeneous by age, origin, gender, socioeconomic status, and levels of education. How will you figure out common belief values held by such a diverse audience?
7. A local television station would like to run a story on Zizhou's accomplishments, and they have asked audio and video of your toast in their broadcast. Consider the television viewers as part of your audience. How will this affect your preparation?

RHETORICAL WORKOUT The *Rhetorical Workout* feature in each chapter offers students a focused, step-by-step application of public speaking concepts. Each workout strengthens the student's public speaking skills just as a physical workout strengthens the muscles.

REJECTING THE THESIS

Critical listeners recognize that a speaker's thesis will have to address other matters. Believing that a budget surplus would be consistent with another belief you hold for increased spending, the surplus would

be intended to help you understand what a speaker is asking

Checklist 4.2

Critical Thinking about a Speech

1. Are the main ideas identifiable?
2. Are the links among the ideas reasonable?
3. Are the ideas supported where necessary?
4. How does accepting or rejecting the thesis affect my other beliefs?

CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS Practical applications of critical thinking skills are emphasized throughout, such as active listening skills, topic analysis, and reasoning. These and many other applied concepts are recapped through the Checklists.

Public Speaking Stresses Analysis, Research, and Evaluating Sources

Potential Deficiencies in Evidence

Several factors can make evidence deficient. Poor evidence may be:

- *Unavailable for inspection:* In some cases, the evidence is kept secret and its quality cannot be assessed.
- *Inaccurate or uncertain:* Some evidence may be false or misleading. It may report inaccurately or out of context. The source of the evidence may be unknown.
- *Not credible:* The source may not be credible, whether because of inexperience or bias.
- *Not from a relevant expert:* The source may be speaking outside his or her field of expertise, as when a distinguished scientist offers opinions about the salary structure in baseball.
- *Inconsistent:* The evidence may be internally inconsistent—for example, one part of the evidence might assume that college students have significant discretionary income while another part of the evidence assumes that their budgets are strapped.
- *Contradicted:* The evidence may be contradicted by the best evidence from other sources.

The investigation and research process is covered in detail, with specific advice and guidance for analyzing a thesis to discover new subtopics and approaches. Emphasizing critical evaluation of sources, the research chapter helps students learn how to choose effective supporting material, how to judge if a source is credible, and how to cite sources. Evaluation of Internet sources receives special attention.

In addition, Chapters 7 and 15 incorporate the information technology that students know and use today, both for research and for presentation aids. With the distinction between electronic and printed materials becoming more blurred, each chapter offers a unified perspective, treating research sources and visual aids without regard to their medium.

Public Speaking Integrates Theory and Practice

An approach that views public speaking as a set of formulas or rules to be followed is of limited value. Few actual speaking situations will match exactly those for which the "rules" were written; students need instead to be able to adapt to the particular situations in which they find themselves. To do that, they must understand the theory behind the rules. Recognizing this fact, some books try to "import" theory, including all the latest specialized terms and jargon. This book instead integrates theory into the underlying discussions of practice, not by highlighting obscure writers or technical terms, but by explaining clearly what students should do and why. The book is solidly grounded in rhetorical theory, but no prior knowledge of that field is either required or assumed. Theory and practice are treated as a seamless fabric.

Public Speaking Features a Variety of Challenging Examples and Applications

Because public speaking is situation-specific, this book includes a large number of cases and examples encompassing a wide range of topics and issues. Some examples come from actual speaking situations, and others are hypothetical examples to illustrate points in the text. Also, some examples compare speeches in the classroom with speeches in the field, and there are both brief examples and some extended examples that can be followed throughout an entire chapter. The examples emphasize a need to analyze and respond to audiences as an integral part of the strategic thinking process. Both historical and contemporary examples are featured. In keeping with the book's emphasis on civic engagement, many of the examples come from the realm of public affairs.

An Example of Rhetorical Proof

After introducing a speech about the effect of tax increases on a family's budget, student Catherine Archer claimed

Taxes have taken a bigger bite out of the average paycheck each year. Just look at the record. Our state sales taxes have gone up faster than our income. Local property taxes have gone through the roof. And now the federal government is proposing to raise gasoline taxes again. Where does it all stop?

After the speech, she invited questions from the floor. "What about Social Security?" one woman asked. Catherine replied

Thank you. That's still one more example of a tax that has gone up faster than income. In fact, many people today pay more in Social Security tax than in their income tax.

come taxes, I want to
t were passed by Con-
ss also has cut taxes on

Choose a Strategy: Presenting Your Speech

The Situation

You are applying for a very competitive summer internship at a nonprofit organization, and the selection committee has asked you to make a short presentation about the project you plan to work on over the summer. In their instructions for the presentation, the selection committee wrote that the event is "informal" and that you will present to the entire staff of the organization. They also wrote that your presentation should take about five minutes and that you should expect about ten minutes of Q&A with the audience.

Making Choices

1. Which presentation mode do you plan to use? Why? What are the benefits and drawbacks of this mode?
2. What do you think "informal" means in this context, and what kind of information can help you figure it out? How will

the answer affect your message, your delivery, and how you dress?

3. How will you prepare for the event? How will you prepare to answer the audience's questions?

What If . . .

How would your presentation strategies change if the following were true? Would your mode of presenting change? Would your practice strategies change? Why or why not?

1. You are presenting to just the selection committee and the head of the organization.
2. You have fifteen minutes to speak with no Q&A.
3. The presentation is a surprise part of the interview process and you have only ten minutes to prepare. You have worked at the nonprofit before and you already have a good relationship with the staff.

Public Speaking Emphasizes Ethics and Respect for Diverse Audiences

Every aspect of public speaking is affected by the need to be ethical and to understand and respect diversity in audiences.

Some textbooks have a single chapter on ethics, as if it could be studied in isolation. In contrast, this book reflects the view that ethical issues are involved in virtually every aspect of public speaking.

A QUESTION OF ETHICS Most chapters include the feature *A Question of Ethics* to highlight ethical issues students should consider as they prepare their own speeches or listen to the speeches of others. Although some ethical standards—such as avoidance of plagiarism or racial stereotyping—are clear-cut, many involve subjective and case-specific judgments. For this reason, many of the ethical issues are presented as problems about which students should think and deliberate. The book avoids overly simplistic answers so that students will think carefully about the complexities of the situation.

A Question of Ethics

Ethics and Quality

Maintaining a high standard of ethics and responsibility also affects the quality and effectiveness of your speech. Identify what you think is an example of unethical speaking, whether from politics, media, or popular culture. How did the ethical

breach affect the
make the speech
quences beyond
a more ethical ap
her goals?

STRATEGIES FOR SPEAKING TO DIVERSE AUDIENCES Far from being a "buzzword" or an emblem of "political correctness," diversity of audiences on virtually every dimension is a fact with which today's speakers must be prepared to deal. It is a condition that affects every aspect of public speaking. Accordingly, throughout the book diversity is reflected in precepts and examples, and every chapter includes a feature entitled *Strategies for Speaking to Diverse Audiences* that includes tips on how that chapter can be applied in an increasingly diverse environment.

Strategies for Speaking to Diverse Audiences

Respecting Diversity Through Persuading

Successful persuasion meets listeners where they are and adapts to the opportunities and constraints of a situation. These factors are all more complex when an audience is diverse. Here are strategies for success in persuading diverse audiences:

1. With diverse audiences, identification is both more important (since it cannot be taken for granted) and more difficult (since you must acknowledge the variety of your audience members' beliefs and commitments). Identify with your listeners before moving them to a new commitment.
2. Consider the diversity of values and commitments. For instance, "family values" in Mexico include the expectation that children live with their parents until they are married, whereas this is much less common in the United States.
3. Consider how different cultures may present you with different constraints or opportunities. If your emotional appeal relies on a culturally specific value, then you may need to plan ahead and think about other possible strategies you might use.
4. Suggest actions that are appropriate and doable for your specific audience. Calling on an audience to solve the Israel-Palestine conflict not only is asking for too much but may alienate certain audience members who think you are trivializing the issue.
5. Establish a positive ethos that invites trust from members of a diverse audience.

Public Speaking Emphasizes the Public Forum

Rhetorical Workout

Find the Public Forum in Your Neighborhood

You and several of your neighbors would like to plan a neighborhood rummage sale. You set up a meeting to talk about when to have the sale and how to work together to promote it. Let's look at what makes this meeting a public forum.

1. What are the issues or problems affecting the group collectively? What kinds of issues might affect you and each of your neighbors individually? Outside of your group, who might be affected by what you decide?
2. Why is cooperative action needed in your meeting? Is it important for every person to participate in the decision? Why or why not?

3. In the public forum, a decision requires subjective judgment, which means there is no one obvious solution and the participants may all have different opinions. How might this factor play out in your neighborhood meeting?
4. Why is a decision needed in your meeting?
5. Suppose you have recently moved in and don't know your neighbors very well yet. How can your speaking and communication skills help you contribute to the meeting and the group's decision?

This book grounds public speaking in the concept of the public forum and illustrates these speaking situations with both historical and contemporary examples. Beginning speakers will learn what makes a healthy public forum and how to apply strategies to situations outside of the classroom—on campuses, in communities, and in other realms of public affairs.

The Public Forum

1.4 Define the public forum and describe how studying public speaking will prepare you to participate effectively in it.

The word **public** in “public speaking” is important in at least two respects. First, it designates speaking that is open and accessible by others. A person who speaks publicly is inviting others to listen carefully and to think about and appraise the message. The speaker's goal is that of informed choice, not forced compliance, on the part of the audience.

Second, speaking is public when it affects people beyond the immediate audience. If you urge classmates to lobby for higher student activity fees, your remarks will have consequences for people who are not even present to hear you. If you explain how to examine the terms of a lease before signing it, listeners can follow your directions in

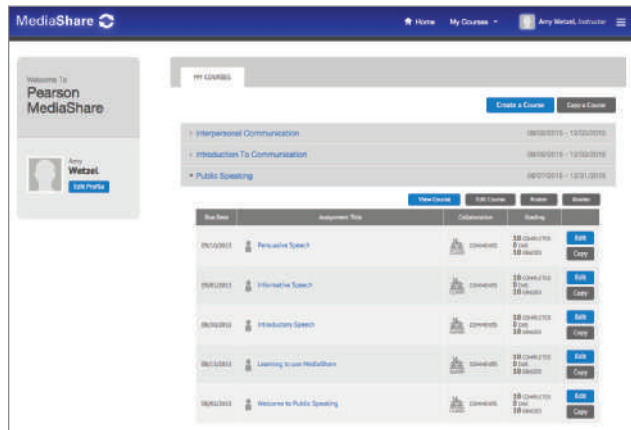
These features have distinguished this book from the very first edition. They are retained and improved in this new edition.

Instructor and Student Resources

Key instructor resources include an **Instructor's Manual** (ISBN 0-13-420221-X), **Test Bank** (ISBN 0-13-420219-8), and **PowerPoint Presentation Package** (ISBN 0-13-420220-1). These supplements are available at www.pearsonhighered.com/irc (instructor login required). MyTest online test generating software (ISBN 0-13-420216-3) is available at www.pearsonmytest.com (instructor login required).

For a complete listing of the instructor and student resources available with this product, please visit the *Public Speaking: Strategies for Success* e-Catalog page at www.pearsonhighered.com/communication.

Pearson MediaShare



Pearson's comprehensive media upload tool allows students to post video, images, audio, or documents for instructor and peer viewing, time-stamped commenting, and assessment. MediaShare is an easy, mobile way for students and professors to interact and engage with speeches, presentation aids, group projects, and other files. MediaShare gives professors the tools to provide contextual feedback to demonstrate how students can improve their skills.

Structured like a social networking site, MediaShare helps promote a sense of community among students. In face-to-face and online course settings, MediaShare saves instructors valuable time and enriches the student learning experience by providing contextual feedback.

- Use MediaShare to assign or view speeches, outlines, presentation aids, video-based assignments, role plays, group projects, and more in a variety of formats including video, Word, PowerPoint, and Excel.

- Assess students using customizable, Pearson-provided rubrics or create your own around classroom goals, learning outcomes, or department initiatives.
- Set up assignments for students with options for full-class viewing and commenting, private comments between you and the student, peer groups for reviewing, or as collaborative group assignments.
- Record video directly from a tablet, phone, or other webcam (including a batch upload option for instructors) and tag submissions to a specific student or assignment.
- Set up Learning Objectives tied to specific assignments, rubrics, or quiz questions to track student progress.
- Embed video from YouTube to incorporate current events into the classroom experience.
- Set up quiz questions on video assignments to ensure students master concepts and interact and engage with the media.
- Sync slides to media submissions for more robust presentation options.
- Import grades into most learning management systems.
- Ensure a secure learning environment for instructors and students through robust privacy settings.
- Upload videos, comment on submissions, and grade directly from our new MediaShare app, available for free download from the iTunes store and Google Play; search for Pearson MediaShare.

Pearson MediaShare is available as a standalone product, as part of MyCommunicationLab, or in a package with REVEL.

Conclusion

After more than 50 years' experience, I believe that public speaking is the most important course in the curriculum because of the immense contribution it can make to students' lives. Good luck as you work to make that happen. I hope that this book will help you.

David Zarefsky

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Reviewers for the Eighth Edition

Articulating this perspective on public speaking in a textbook that is accessible to students has been a stimulating challenge. All or part of the manuscript was read by Tressa Kelly, University of West Florida; Naomi Johnson Tsigaridas, Longwood University; Jane Pierce Saulnier, Emerson College; Lisa Menegatos, University of Nevada, Las Vegas; Mary Switzer, Cal Poly Pomona State University; Doug Battema, Western New England University; Elizabeth Nelson, North Carolina State University; Linda Freeman, University of Minnesota

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Chapter 1

Welcome to Public Speaking



✓ Learning Objectives

After studying this chapter, you should be able to:

- 1.1** Identify the principal things you will learn in this course and how they will benefit you outside the classroom.
- 1.2** Describe public speaking as a communication process in which the speaker and listeners jointly create meaning and understanding.
- 1.3** Name the elements of a rhetorical situation and explain the steps by which a speech affects the situation.
- 1.4** Define the public forum and describe how studying public speaking will prepare you to participate effectively in it.
- 1.5** Identify the principal ethical obligations of listeners and speakers.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

Why Study Public Speaking?

Public Speaking and Communication

The Rhetorical Situation

The Public Forum

Ethics: Respect for Audience, Topic, and Occasion

Welcome to Public Speaking, one of the most important courses you will ever take. If that sounds like too strong a claim, consider what these students had to say after taking a public speaking course:

- I used to be terrified of speaking in public. I've learned that solid preparation is the key to overcoming my fears. I still get nervous, but now I know how to control my nervousness and focus on communicating with my audience.
- This class has taught me to be a better listener. I'm more aware of weak arguments, fuzzy logic, and unsupported claims. I think critically about what I am being persuaded to do and why.
- Before taking this class, I used to be the most boring speaker! My speeches were well researched, but my delivery was poor. Now I make eye contact with my audience members and use my voice and pauses to set a tone and emphasize key points.
- I've learned more about the structure of speeches, especially the importance of an attention-grabber at the beginning of my speech and a preview of my main points to give the audience a "road map" of what I'm going to say.

These students noticed right away that a public speaking course helped them to develop or to refine their communication skills. You will notice a difference by the end of your course, too—and as you move beyond the classroom, you will find that the knowledge and experience you gain from the course also help you to be a more successful worker and a more effective citizen.

Why Study Public Speaking?

1.1 Identify the principal things you will learn in this course and how they will benefit you outside the classroom.

You may have enrolled in this course because you expect to be making public presentations and you want to learn how to do that better and more easily. Maybe your goal is to speak more forcefully or to be less nervous. Perhaps you want to become better organized, to learn more about how to prepare a speech, or to think more clearly and more critically. You may even have chosen the course because it meets at a convenient time, is a requirement for graduation, or has a good instructor.

Develop Specific Communication Skills

Whatever your reasons for studying public speaking, this class will enable you to develop or improve a variety of communication skills, such as how to:

- Listen carefully and critically in order to understand and evaluate what others say.
- Decide what you want to speak about.
- Select what to say.
- Find the material for a speech by examining your own experience, consulting with others, using the Internet, and visiting a library.
- Think critically about what you read and observe so that you will reason soundly when addressing an audience.
- Organize a speech to make it clear, coherent, sensible, and effective.
- Use language skillfully to convey both meaning and mood.
- Use your voice and your body to present yourself and your message in an effective, compelling way.
- Overcome speech anxiety and use any nervousness to your advantage.
- Use visual aids to enhance your message.

- Adapt general principles to your speaking situation, with emphasis on the dimensions of informing, persuading, and entertaining.
- Understand and benefit from reactions to your speeches so that the audience's response helps you improve your skills.

This set of skills has been studied and taught for about 2,500 years (in different ways over the years, of course), so you are taking part in a very old and valuable academic tradition.¹

Focus on Critical Thinking and Strategic Planning

Besides improving these specific skills as a communicator, you also will be applying and refining two invaluable general skills that are emphasized throughout this book: critical thinking and strategic planning.

CRITICAL THINKING Public speaking is in large measure an exercise in **critical thinking**, the ability to form and defend your own judgments rather than blindly accepting or instantly rejecting what you hear or read. Critical thinkers can analyze and understand various points of view, and they can quickly recognize the difference between fact and opinion.

Facts, as we will see in detail later, are statements that—at least in theory—can be *verified* by someone else. If a speaker says that the world's population has doubled every 25 years, that statement can be tested by checking population statistics. In contrast, **opinions** are *subjective* statements that presumably are based on experience or expertise. If a speaker asserts that the world's population is growing too fast, that opinion cannot be verified externally; it stands or falls depending on the insight and judgment of the person who offers it.

As a listener, critical thinking will help you to recognize a speaker's unstated assumptions. As a speaker, it will help you to form precise statements that embody your thoughts. Overall, critical thinking will place ideas into a broader context, showing how they relate to other things that you already know or believe.

STRATEGIC PLANNING A speaker operates in a world of choices, including whether to speak, when to speak, what to say, how to phrase a point and how to

critical thinking

The ability to form and defend your own judgments rather than blindly accepting or instantly rejecting what you hear or read.

opinions

Subjective judgments based on experience or expertise, not capable of being verified by someone else.



As one in a group of speakers, this advocate must make his message distinctive and adapt it to the audience. These tasks require good strategic planning.

strategic planning

The process of identifying your goals and then determining how best to achieve them.

explain or defend it, how to organize the message, what tone to give it, and exactly how to relate a message to the audience. Some speakers make these choices unconsciously, without real thought (and relying on luck). But effective speakers make their choices *strategically*; through **strategic planning** they identify their goals and then determine how best to achieve them.

Apply What You Learn

Public speaking combines theory and practice that you can apply to your daily life. As you study creative and critical thinking, sensitivity to audiences, and effective speech presentation, the skills you learn will:

- Help you critically evaluate messages and appeals of all kinds.
- Make you more sensitive to people and situations.
- Enable you to recognize and adapt to diverse audiences and complex occasions.
- Increase your self-confidence and your willingness to engage in serious dialogue with others.²

Outside the classroom, these attributes will enhance your personal, professional, and civic life. Sensitivity to others and to their perspectives will help you in personal relationships as well as when, for instance, you speak to neighborhood groups, Scout troops, parent-teacher associations, or religious organizations. Employers and career counselors often put “good communication skills” at the top of the list of qualities they seek in people.³ The reason is simple: Each year our economy becomes more dependent on information and the ability to communicate it.

Your study of public speaking also will help make you a more competent, more active citizen. You will be better able to understand public issues and controversies, to decide what you think about them, and to participate effectively in addressing them—whether on your campus, in your neighborhood, or in the larger public forum.

Public Speaking and Communication**1.2 Describe public speaking as a communication process in which the speaker and listeners jointly create meaning and understanding.**

In one sense, we all know what public speaking is: a speaker transmits a message orally to an audience. But this simple view does not explain just how the speaker and listeners participate in **communication**, interacting to build connections whereby they can understand each other and recognize common interests.

Early theories of communication viewed public speaking as a series of one-way messages sent from speaker to audience. In fact, however, the audience participates along with the speaker in creating shared meaning and understanding. The speaker’s ideas and values are tested and refined through interaction with the audience, and listeners’ knowledge and understanding are modified through interaction with the speaker. Thus, public speaking is a *continuous* communication process in which messages and signals circulate back and forth between speaker and listeners.

The Audience’s View

From the audience’s point of view, each listener comes to the speech with a framework of prior knowledge, beliefs, and values, and each listener “decodes,” or interprets, the speaker’s message within this personal framework. In a large or culturally diverse audience, the frameworks used by listeners may vary greatly.

To a particular listener, some ideas will be more important, or *salient*, than other ideas. In a speech about carrying weapons on campus, for example, some listeners will be focused on personal liberty, others on campus safety, and still others on the

communication

Interaction that builds connections between people that helps them to understand each other and to recognize common interests.

dangers of gun violence. The speech may support, challenge, or modify any of these frameworks, but each listener's framework will shape how he or she interprets and understands the speech. Audience members work actively to assess what the speaker says against what they already know or believe, and they constantly make judgments about the message and convey them back to the speaker through facial responses and other nonverbal clues.

The Speaker's View

From the speaker's point of view, knowing about the audience is crucial in preparing and delivering a speech. A speech about campus social life, for example, would be different for an audience of prospective students than for an audience of alumni, or even for an audience of current students. Even if the basic points of the speech were the same, the nature of the audience would affect how they are developed and explained and what tone or attitude the speaker projects. In preparing the speech, the speaker would analyze the audience and try to match listeners' expectations appropriately. Moreover, as listeners respond during the speech (by frowning, nodding approval, looking puzzled, etc.), the speaker would constantly modify how key points are organized and phrased and would try to acknowledge or respond to the audience's concerns.

The Interplay

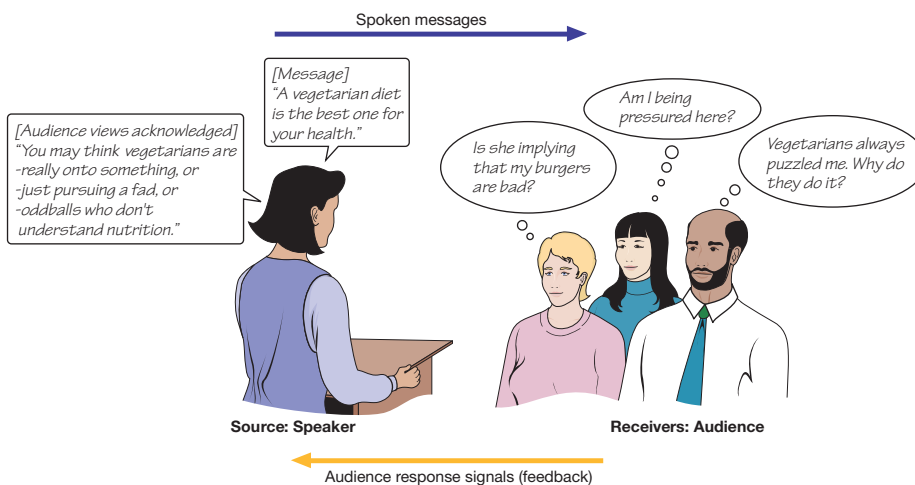
Figure 1.1 depicts this interplay between speaker and audience. Suppose that you plan to speak about the benefits of a vegetarian diet. In preparing the speech, you'll remember that some listeners think vegetarianism is healthful; others think it is a passing fad; others come from cultures in which eating meat is prohibited, so that vegetarianism is not a matter of choice; and still others associate vegetarianism with eccentrics who don't really understand nutrition. As you speak, you'll be watching for **feedback**, responses from the audience that signal how they are reacting to what you say. Most responses will be nonverbal, such as frowns or nods of agreement. Feedback might prompt you to acknowledge that some people doubt the merits of vegetarian diets; you might even admit that you had doubts yourself but now are a committed vegetarian. Throughout the speech—from its preparation through its presentation—you will be sensitive to how well your ideas match your audience, and you'll use feedback to improve the fit as you speak.

You may convince some audience members to change their beliefs; others may interpret your message in ways consistent with their beliefs; and if the discrepancy

feedback

Responses from the audience to the speaker, often in the form of nonverbal cues.

Figure 1.1 Public Speaking as a Communication Process



between their beliefs and your message is too great, some listeners will reject your message. In any case, the audience will be actively involved as you speak, interpreting and testing what you say against their own beliefs and values, and letting you know their reactions. In short, the speaker and listeners simultaneously participate in creating the message.

The Rhetorical Situation

1.3 Name the elements of a rhetorical situation and explain the steps by which a speech affects the situation.

Public speaking occurs *in a specific situation*. Unlike great dramatic or literary works, which “speak to the ages,” the principal test of a good speech is whether it responds most effectively to the needs of the situation in which it is presented.⁴

situation

The particular context in which a speech takes place.

The **situation** is the specific context in which a speech is given. Compared with poems and stories, which are read long after they were written, most speeches have a short life span. For example, student Jeremy Johnson’s first speech to his classmates concerned an important and timely issue:

Almost every week, there are new reports of genocidal violence in the Darfur region of Sudan. Innocent civilians, women and children among them, are killed or raped every day by marauding bands of Janjaweed militia whose goal is ethnic cleansing of the non-Arab peoples in their region. The crisis of Darfur is one of the greatest human catastrophes of our time—worse than Bosnia, Kosovo, Rwanda, or even Iraq. But our government and our attention have been so preoccupied with other wars and conflicts around the world that we have forgotten the people of Darfur and have abandoned our international human rights ideals.

Although Jeremy’s speech probably could be appreciated long after the violence in Sudan subsides, it was created in response to a particular event and was designed primarily to be heard by a particular audience.

rhetoric

The study of how messages affect people.

The study of how messages affect people has long been called **rhetoric**. This ancient discipline is concerned with the role that messages play in:

- Shaping, reaffirming, and modifying people’s values
- Binding people closer together or moving them farther apart
- Celebrating significant events
- Creating a sense of identity among people
- Conveying information and helping people to learn
- Nurturing, strengthening, or changing people’s beliefs
- Leading people to take (or not to take) action

rhetorical situation

A situation in which people’s understanding can be changed through messages.

A **rhetorical situation**, then, is a situation in which people’s understanding can be changed through messages.⁵ The following example shows how student Katie Jacobson responded to a rhetorical situation posed by recent armed robberies on her university campus:

It’s easy to feel safe on our familiar campus, but crime is on the rise, and the university is partly to blame. Poor lighting both on and off campus provides many shadows for crimes to take place unseen. University police seem more interested in patrolling weekend parties than making weeknight walks between dorms and the library. And campus shuttle services are unreliable late at night, forcing students to walk through dangerous, unlit areas. We need to contact the university administration and let them know that they should take our safety seriously.

But it's not just up to the administration. We also need to take our personal safety seriously. Take self-defense classes. Lock your bikes. Familiarize yourself with the emergency telephone boxes on campus. Don't leave valuables in plain sight. Be careful where you publish your personal identification information. Show the university officials that you are doing what you can to be safe; then ask them to do what they can.

Katie's message addressed a particular audience and asked its members to consider a specific problem and solution. The speech was timely—Katie knew that the recent robberies would be on her audience members' minds. The message also affected how students thought about the problem and how they understood possible solutions, both those that university administrators could effect and those that students could implement.

Figure 1.2 shows the four basic factors that determine the success of any rhetorical situation: the audience, the occasion, the speaker, and the speech itself. Each of the arrows goes in two directions. That is because each of the factors affects our understanding of the rhetorical situation, but our understanding of the situation also affects how we view each of the factors. As we will see, rhetorical situations both impose constraints and create opportunities.

The Audience

Unlike a poem or a novel, a speech is presented for a specific audience, and its success in achieving its goals depends on the reactions of those listeners. This is why audience analysis, discussed in Chapter 5, is so important. The audience helps to create the rhetorical situation by affecting, among other things, your choice of what to emphasize in the speech, what level of knowledge to assume, how to organize the speech, and what your specific purpose will be.

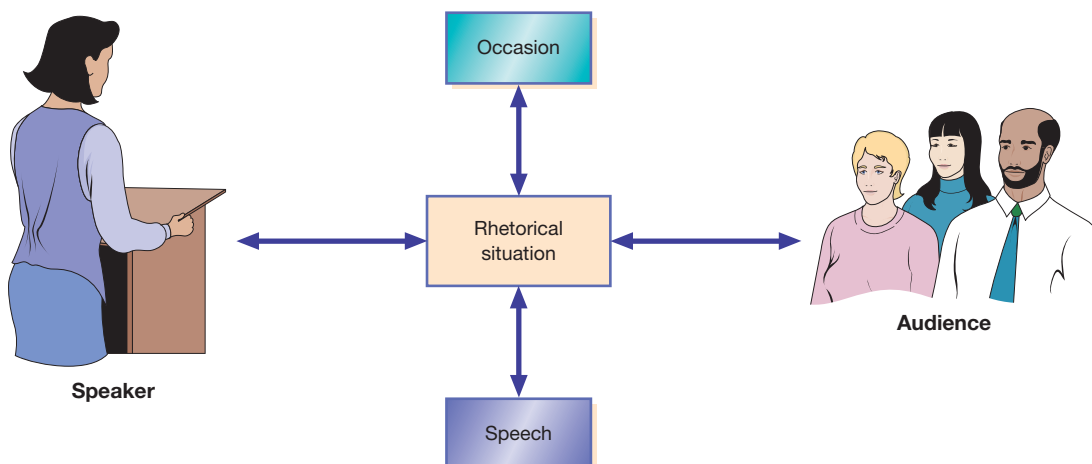
Most speakers, most of the time, want to present their ideas in ways that achieve **identification** with the audience; that is, they try to find common ground between what they know about the audience and what they want to say.⁶ Without distorting their own message, they try to emphasize the elements that are most likely to strike a responsive chord among audience members. Thus, an African American speaker who is addressing a mostly white audience might emphasize their shared American dream.

Sometimes, though, a speaker may deliberately *avoid* identification with the audience and may even try to antagonize listeners. The same African American might point out that the American dream is *not* shared equally by all citizens. Such a tactic may suggest that the speaker is a person of high integrity who will not hold back punches simply to gain the audience's approval. Or the strategy may be intended to influence some other audience that is overhearing the speech.⁷ Whether the goal is to

identification

Formation of common bonds between the speaker and the audience.

Figure 1.2 Determinants of the Rhetorical Situation



identify or to criticize, however, knowledge of the audience is critical in assessing the rhetorical situation.

Sometimes, audience members are prepared to incorporate what the speaker says into their systems of beliefs. At other times they may be skeptical or downright hostile. The degree of interference they offer to the speaker's purpose is an important factor when assessing how the audience contributes to the nature of the rhetorical situation.

Audiences also provide important feedback. If listeners frown or stare blankly when you make an important point, they may not understand you. To respond to the rhetorical situation, you will want to explain that point further. If listeners appear lost, you may want to summarize your main points before moving on. If you've said something that you think is funny but no one laughs or smiles, you might either rephrase the comment or decide to let it pass. And when listeners nod supportively, you should feel more confident and reassured. Audience feedback will let you know whether you have assessed the rhetorical situation accurately and responded to it appropriately.

You can also get valuable feedback by placing yourself in the role of an audience member. If possible, review a video of your speech. At first, you may feel uncomfortable watching a recording of yourself; you may be oversensitive to details that no one else would notice. But do not worry about these details. Instead, try to view yourself as the audience saw and heard you. Watching a video after the fact allows you a critical distance that helps you to assess aspects you can improve before giving your next speech.

The Occasion

The occasion is the place and event where the speech is given. It may be a community meeting, a classroom speech assignment, a business presentation, a local fundraising reception, an informal group gathering, or any other time and place where people assemble and relate to one another.

Some speech occasions are **ceremonial** (this is also known as *epideictic*, and is discussed in Chapter 16), such as presenting or accepting an award, introducing someone, delivering a eulogy, or commemorating an event. Others are primarily **deliberative**, such as making an oral report, delivering a sales presentation, advocating a policy, or refuting another person's argument. Ceremonial speaking focuses on the present and is usually concerned with what is praiseworthy in the subject. Deliberative speaking focuses on the future and is usually concerned with what should be done.

Many occasions combine ceremonial and deliberative elements. For example, a chief executive officer (CEO) who has been newly appointed in the wake of a fiscal scandal in the company will likely have to speak to the company's employees and stockholders. The occasion is deliberative in that the CEO speaks about the state and the direction of the company in light of the financial circumstances. The occasion is also ceremonial, though, because the CEO's presence demonstrates both a new chapter in the company's history and a personal interest in the well-being of the workers and stockholders, and also because the speech seeks to reassure and reaffirm the company's dedication to employees and investors.

Similarly, the president's State of the Union address is a ceremonial ritual prescribed by the U.S. Constitution. But, especially in recent years, it's the occasion when the president is expected to persuade the public to support, and the Congress to enact, the administration's legislative proposals. This expectation makes the State of the Union a deliberative occasion as well.

A third category of speech occasion, traditionally known as **forensic**, is concerned with rendering judgments about events in the past. Although this is the dominant form of speaking in courts of law, it plays only a small role in public speaking elsewhere.⁸

Whatever the occasion, the audience arrives with ideas about what is and what is not *appropriate behavior*. Such expectations have developed over time, and they limit what a speaker can do in responding to the rhetorical situation. For example, listeners

ceremonial

Speaking that focuses on the present and is usually concerned with praise.

deliberative

Speaking that focuses on the future and is usually concerned with what should be done.

forensic

Speaking that focuses on the past and is usually concerned with justice.

expect a eulogy to offer a favorable view of the deceased, and they normally would think it inappropriate for a speaker to dwell on the person's failings. On the other hand, an after-dinner speech is usually expected to be lighthearted; a speaker who instead presents a highly technical lecture would not be responding appropriately to the occasion.

Simultaneous events further define the occasion. For example, the fact that a presidential campaign is under way helps to define the occasion for a speech about health care reform. The retirement of a popular athlete helps to set the stage for a speech about retirement trends in industry. And if listeners only last week were urged to give up tobacco, that may affect their judgments about a speech that now asks them to give up red meat.

Another way to think about the occasion is to note that it presents the speaker with an **exigence**—a problem that cannot be avoided but that can be solved, or at least managed, through the development of an appropriate message. Of course, the exigence is not always clear-cut. In designing the speech, often the speaker will play a major role in describing what the exigence is. In any event, satisfactorily addressing the exigence is the goal of the speech.

“A commencement speech about school reform, delivered at Western State University in June 2016” is an example of an occasion; “growing unease about the quality of public education” is the rhetorical situation to which this speech was a response. The speech responds to the rhetorical situation of growing unease among people about the quality of public education, but the expectation that a commencement speech will inspire the graduates also helps to define the rhetorical situation.

The Speaker

The same speech delivered by different speakers can produce quite different reactions and effects. Your interest in the subject—as made evident through voice, delivery, and the vividness of your imagery—helps to determine how the audience will react to the speech. Your *ethos* affects whether listeners will pay attention and will regard you as believable. Fortunately, many of the skills that enable speakers to contribute positively to a rhetorical situation can be learned. Previous public speaking experience will also affect your comfort level, and the ability to respond to audience feedback will make you more flexible in any rhetorical situation.

Speakers have a purpose in mind. The three most general purposes of speeches are to inform, to persuade, and to entertain.

- **Informing** provides listeners with new information or ideas.
- **Persuading** influences listeners' attitudes and behavior (either to strengthen existing beliefs or to support new ones).
- **Entertaining** stimulates a sense of community by celebrating common bonds among speaker and listeners.

Although these general purposes may seem to be completely separate, they often coexist in a single speech—as when a speaker aims *both* to share new information and also to use that information to influence attitudes and behavior (or to stimulate a sense of community). For this reason, in Chapter 6 we will classify purposes in a more detailed way. For now, though, focus on the general purposes and realize that you must have (1) something about which to inform the audience, (2) some position you want to persuade them to take, or (3) some subject with which to entertain them. Therefore any speaker also has one or more specific purposes. Here are some examples:

GENERAL PURPOSE: Informing

SPECIFIC PURPOSE: Explaining the main steps in the construction of the college library.

GENERAL PURPOSE: Persuading

exigence

A problem that cannot be avoided but that can be solved, or at least managed, through the development of an appropriate message.

informing

Providing listeners with new information or ideas.

persuading

Influencing listeners' attitudes and behavior.

entertaining

Stimulating a sense of community through the celebration of common bonds among speaker and listeners.