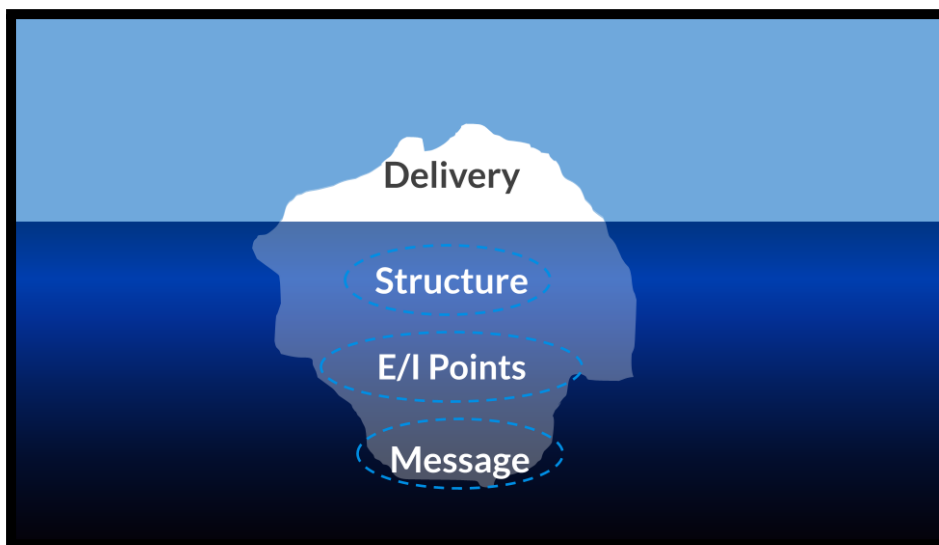


How to Write an Effective Speech

Most speakers fall into the trap of the speech iceberg.

This is when one watches an impressive speech and focuses on the superficial qualities they are able to perceive, instead of breaking the speech open to understand its inner workings.



The elements underneath the water are the Message, E/I Point and structure.

If for the next year, you focus on mastering these three elements, you will be light years ahead of most speakers.

MESSAGE

The message is the core of any speech. Always. Always. Always.

This is the core purpose of a speech: to add value to an audience's life. The Message is a thesis statement that answers:

What do you have to say about life and how it should be lived?

Because of this, at its essence...

A speech is a short guide to life.

Yes, you can make a speech that makes the audience laugh. Yes, you can make a speech that makes the audience cry. You *can* be entertaining. But entertainment is not the *core purpose* of a speech. Entertainment is just an *after-product*.

What is the key to a powerful message?

BRUTAL, UNCENSORED HONESTY.

Yet, this is where 90% of speakers fail at.

Most mediocre speeches have messages that are either non-specific or disingenuous. To an audience, that is *poison*.

Which set of messages do you find the most compelling?

Set A: "Follow your dreams"; "The key to good childhood is positivity"; "Motivation is the key to success"

or

Set B: "Following one's dreams is actually misguided career advice that results in starving artists"; "Crying is healthy and part of growing up"; "Motivation is the human's brain excuse for lack of discipline".

I bet you picked set B. Even if you don't agree with those points, you are still more interested in listening to how the speaker will illustrate them.

Honesty = Originality.

Why? Because there are not enough speakers being honest. And if you're honest, originality will naturally come.

If you can reach honest and original messages, you'll be light years ahead of 90% of speakers. Speakers who are only worrying about whether their eye contact is good or not.

Your message is something that you should be able to write down in a *single sentence*.

Write your messages in single sentences. Do this for every speech you have. It forces you to be clear about it and say it with as few words as possible. If you can't write your message in a single sentence, that might be because you don't understand your own message, or you don't even have one.

EMOTIONAL/INTELLECTUAL POINTS (E/I POINTS)

If your message is the theory, your E/I points are the *application* of that theory.

These are the points that aim to illustrate why your message is true. This is the meat of your speech.

How to make good E/I points?

1. Specificity
2. Acknowledging opposing arguments
3. Focus

I. Specificity

Half of the speeches you see could be significantly improved just by nailing this aspect.

You would think that, in order to relate to dozens or hundreds of people, you would have to make your speech as general as possible. However, in reality, it's the complete opposite. There is this bizarre reverse relation where the more specific you are in your stories or points, the wider the general audience that is able to relate to it.

There are two easy ways you can achieve specificity:

- a) Personal Experience

What is more emotionally honest to you:

"Easter is a time of celebration of family and life. Easter is not just about buying and eating chocolate or making egg hunts. We should get past this and associate it with family.

Or

"When I was seven, every Easter, my father and I would go to the swiss alp of Rigi in order to ski down the slopes. I used to go into the kid's track because I was not old enough to ski down the bigger slopes. But nevertheless, he taught me how to pizza-shape my skis and how to stop by tilting my torso. Every time I think of easter, I don't think of chocolate. I think of snow. I think of bending my knees as I zoom past another slope. I think of my father. And I hope people can associate Easter with something different from what you can buy at a store".

I'm sure it's the second. Maybe I am not able to relate exactly to go hiking with my father in the swiss alps. But I am able to associate the EMOTION of your story with something that is EMOTIONALLY similar to me. Maybe I relate your swiss alp story with me fishing with my grandpa during Easter time in Brazil. Someone else will relate it to having a picnic with their brother at the beach. And so on.

b) Research

This can come in the form of statistics, historical events, current events, interviews with famous people (or with someone you know), scientific studies or more.

If you want to talk about a certain topic, but you do not have enough experience to do so with SPECIFICITY, go research. People can tell if you have done research or if you're just drawing from common knowledge. Go research.

Not only does research make your arguments stronger as you have concrete evidence to back them up, but it will give you specificity that you would never be able to reach only with your general knowledge.

II. Deeply Acknowledge the Opposing Side.

If your message is that "waking up early regularly can lead to a more productive work life" you need to keep in mind there will be a lot of people that will say "But I'm a night owl, I know I am way more productive at night than in the morning". This is an opportunity to make your message stronger by acknowledging this criticism instead of pretending it does not exist.

How? Very simple:

1. Bring up the opposing arguments
2. Disprove them

"You might think that you are a night owl and because of that, waking up early won't work for you. But actually, there is no such thing as early birds or night owls. There are only people who have practised waking up early and those who haven't. You are not biologically programmed to be more productive at a certain time of day. Therefore, with a week of waking up early, you can train

your brain to be productive in the mornings. Your productivity is malleable, not fixed".

This will make your message STRONGER because you show that it stands on its feet in the face of criticism.

If your speech is a story, this can be achieved by having a character that believes the opposite of the message. They will act in a way that challenges the message and its validity. In order to disprove them, we can have them fail or pay a price for their actions, showing that their beliefs are flawed.

II. Focus

The name says everything.

You need to see your speech with a laser focus lens. You have 5 - 7 minutes to fully get a message across. That is not a lot of time.

EVERY E/I point you use must either support or challenge your message. Otherwise, they should NOT be included.

If a point in your speech is not serving your message, it is taking attention away from it.

And we cannot afford this in such a short period of time. Either CUT the E/I point, or REPURPOSED it in order to be aligned with the message, either supporting or challenging it.

STRUCTURE

Good structure is not about LENGHT. I won't be telling you how long to stay in each section. Good structure is about PURPOSE.

HOOK

- Be exciting, intriguing, scary, funny, or creative.
- Hint at the topic.

SET-UP

Answer the BURNING QUESTION everyone in your audience will always have:

Why should I care?

Answer this question clearly and as *strongly* as you can.

E/I POINTS

I won't tell you how many points to include here, this is up to you. However, what you should ensure, is that each one of your points has a sense of ESCALATION. In other words, if you have an entertaining speech, each moment in your story must be more exciting/funnier/scarier/more touching than the one that came before. In an informative speech, each point you bring up needs to be more interesting or persuasive than the last one.

This way, your speech only gets better and better.

REPRISE

In musical theatre, a reprise happens around the end of the musical, where various melodies and songs from before all come back together in a very satisfying way.

Thus, in a speech, **the reprise is when you bring all of your points together in order to find what is in common with them so you can derive your message.**

Bringing back elements that were already established is extremely satisfying for an audience. This is the "aha-a! moment" for the audience. Where all the pieces of the puzzle fit and they can see the image formed. Because of (1), (2), and (3), I can say that... MESSAGE.

CLOSING

Keep it short and punchy. Otherwise, the audience will get "ending fatigue". A bad ending can kill an otherwise good speech.

Here are some classic kinds of endings:

1. End with an emotional punch. This can be the climax to an emotional scene, a final killer joke, or a final scary moment.
2. Loop back to the start. Audiences love when things that were established earlier come back. And nothing is more satisfying when your beginning connects with your ending.
3. Call to action. This is when you end your speech by inviting your audience to partake in the same journey as you. It leaves them with a sense of excitement and they keep your message in mind long after the speech is over.

DELIVERY

By delivery are the SURFACE-LEVEL elements we experience when watching a speech. Body Language, Voice, Moving on the stage, Eye contact, Slides, Props, and Interaction with the audience.

Thus, the **ONLY** purpose of delivery is to *support* your message, your E/I points, and your structure. And that's it. The End.

For example, if you have a positive uplifting message about life, your body language should also be positive and uplifting. Your walking on stage can help emphasize your structure, as you move around according to each part of your speech. Your slides are there to help clarify your intellectual points with the use of images, graphs, and videos.

However, delivery is NOT here to wow your audience. Delivery is NOT here to mask the fact that your message is bad and maybe people won't notice it because you have good body language.

And remember:

The best speakers are NOT the ones who are the most confident on stage. The best speakers are the ones who can add the most value to their audience.