

LESSON-2

INTRODUCING YOURSELF AND OTHERS

A speech of introduction is often the first assignment in a public speaking class because it helps warm the atmosphere, creates a sense of community, and provides an opportunity to develop credibility. Of course there is no way to tell your entire life history or another person's history in a short speech. You have to be selective. What you should avoid is relating a few superficial facts, such as where you went to high school or what your major may be. Such information reveals very little about a person and is usually not very interesting.

The method of introducing yourself or others that has worked best for our students over the years is the following: *Isolate the .one thing that best defines and identifies you or your classmate.* Answer this question: *What is it that describes you or the person you are introducing as a unique per-son?* Now, develop a speech around the answer that builds positive ethos for later speeches. Jimmy Green introduced himself as a person with strong outdoor interests and later gave interesting, effective speeches' on environmental problems. Sandra Baltz's *My Three Cultures*" prepared her audi-ence for the speeches she would later give about *MiaaleLiHteIll laeiH*, customs, and issues. Anne Gilbert not only introduced Spider Lock ridge as a multidimensional person but also established a picture of herself as a tol-erant person with wide-ranging interests.

To help you isolate the essential traits about yourself or the person you, will be introducing, conduct a self-awareness inventory in which you an-swer the following questions:

1. *Is your cultural background- the most important thing about. you?*

How has it shaped you? How might you explain this influence to oth-ers? In her self-introductory speech (reprinted at the end of this chap-ter) Sandra Baltz described herself as a unique product of three cultures. She felt this cultural background widened her horizons. Note how she focused on food to represent clearly and concretely how these elements come together harmoniously in everyday experience:

In all, I must say that being exposed to three very difficult cultures -Latin, Arabic, American - has been rewarding for me and has made a difference even in the music I enjoy and the food I eat. It is not unusual in my house to sit down to a meal made up of stuffed grape leaves and refried beans and all topped off with apple pie for dessert.

2. *Is the most important thing about you the environment in which you grew up?* How were you shaped by it? What stories or examples demon-strate this influence? How do you feel about its effect on your life? Are you pleased by it, or do you feel that it limited you? If the latter, what new horizons would you like to explore? In his self-introductory speech about his life in rural Tennessee, Jimmy Green concluded by saying:

To share my world, come up to the Tennessee River some pleasant fall afternoon. We'll take a boat ride north to New Johnsonville, where Civil War gunboats still lie on the bottom of the river, and you will see how the sun makes the water sparkle. You will see the hills sloping down to the river, and

the rocky walls, and I will tell you some Indian legends about them. We'll "bump the bottom" as we fish for catfish, just drift-ing with the current, and if we're lucky, we might see a doe and her fawn along the shoreline, or perhaps some Canada geese, or even an eagle soaring far overhead. These are the images of home that I carry with me wherever I go.

3. *Was there some particular person - a friend, relative, or childhood hero - who had a major impact on your life? Why do you think this person had such influence? Often you will find that some particular person was a great inspiration to you. Here is a chance to share that in-spiration, honor that person, and in the process, tell us much about yourself. In her self-introductory speech, Marty Gaines explained how her two grandmothers had meant so much to her:*

Margaret Hasty was my "Memma." She was the kind of grandmother that everybody knows and loves. The kind that when you visit her house, she's waiting for you at the back door, and you walk up the steps, and she grabs you and she gives you a big hug. And she's always got your favorite cookies hidden in the cabinet. . . .

Martha Clark Akers. . . was my other grandmother. And that's what she was, my Grandmother. Grandmother was very formal, very strict, very well educated. And when you went to visit Grandmother's house, she was at the door. But she didn't yank you up and give you a big hug. She held the door open so that you could walk in, file past, and give her a gentle kiss on the cheek. And then you'd go to the couch and sit down. And when she was ready to speak, she would say "Well, how are your grades?" or "What books have you read lately?"

I didn't understand Grandmother for years. I finally realized that she loved me just as much as Memma, but in a different way. Where Memma loved me for who I was, Grandmother loved me for what she knew I could become and for what she wanted me to be. Both have given me a great blessing.

Now, when I come home from work, there are some days that I'll just grabby children up, and give them a big hug, and tell them I love them. And I think to myself, "Thank you, Memma." And then there are other days when I come home and there may be a nasty note from the teacher, and I know I'm going to have to be strong and strict. And I say to myself, "Give me strength, Grandmother."

4. *Have you been marked by some unusual experience? Why was it im-portant? How did it affect you? What does this tell us about you as a person? The experiences that shape people's lives are often dramatic. If you have had such an experience, it could provide the theme for a very effective speech. George Stacey, a student in an evening class, told of an incident that happened while he was working as a security guard at a bank:*

One afternoon shortly after I started working, a customer had allheart attack in the bank. I wasn't trained to handle anything like that and he died before the paramedics arrived. I felt like my ignorance had killed him. As a result of

that experience, I enrolled in first aid and CPR courses and now work as a volunteer with the county emergency services.

Not long ago, another customer lost consciousness while standing in line at the bank. Because of my training, I was able to render the proper first aid while someone else called 911. She lived, and I felt redeemed.

This speech gave the audience a glimpse of George's humanity and also established his credentials for presenting a later successful informative speech on CPR.

Experiences need not be this dramatic to be meaningful. Rod Nishikawa related how an encounter with prejudice at an early age changed his life and helped him develop personal inner strength. His self-introductory speech is outlined later in this chapter and reprinted in Appendix B. Sharing such experiences can help establish an atmosphere of trust in the classroom.

5. *Are you best characterized by an activity that brings meaning to your life?* Remember, what is important is not the activity itself but how and why it affects you. The person being introduced must remain the focus of the speech. Talk about the specific elements in the activity that relate to your personality, needs, or dreams. When you finish, the audience should have an interesting picture of you. When she conducted her self-awareness inventory, Laura Haskins realized that her entire life was best described as one frenetic activity. As she considered what it took to meet the demands of her family, home, work, and her university classes, she discovered a very apt image that became the central theme of her self-introductory speech:

Come one, come all, see the magnificent juggler! See her juggle family, home, work, college, whatever comes her way. I wasn't always this good. My juggling act began impromptu when I enrolled in nursing school. My children were preschoolers then and I had to learn fast. . . .

Experience has taught me to plan, prioritize, rearrange as necessary, and pass off to my assistant juggler, my husband, without missing a beat. The International Jugglers Association is reviewing my application for membership. I'm a shoo-in. I may not be June Cleaver, but I am a magnificent juggler.

6. *Is the work you do a major factor in making you who you are?* If you select this approach, focus on how your job has shaped you rather than simply describing what you do. What have you learned, from your work that has changed you or made you feel differently about others? In introducing Mike Peterson, Carol Solomon told how his work as a bartender had influenced him. She explained that his job involved more than just mixing drinks -that it had made him an observer of people.

He sees them in their times of happiness, when they are celebrating a promotion or a grandson or an anniversary. He sees the sadness of lonely people trying to make a connection, and he sees the other people, trying to make a connection, and he hears lots of good stories, both tragic and hilarious, and he thinks he may "become a writer so that he can tell these stories. Maybe, if we're lucky, he'll tell us sometime about" the land shark who got hooked by the hooker.

After her speech the audience saw both Mike and his work in a new light. Carol's introduction helped him gain the interest of listeners.

7. *Are you best characterized by your goals or purpose in life?* A sense of commitment to a purpose will usually fascinate listeners. If you choose to describe some personal goal, again be sure to emphasize why you have this goal and how it affects you. Tom McDonald had returned to school after dropping out for eleven years. In his self-introductory speech he described his goal of finishing college:

Finishing college means a lot to me now. The first time I enrolled, right out of high school, I “blew it.” All cared about was athletics, girls, and partying. Even though I have a responsible job that pays well, I feel bad about not having a degree. My wife’s diploma hangs on our den wall as a constant reminder. All I have hanging on the den wall is a stuffed duck!

As he spoke, many of the younger students began to identify with Tom; they saw a similarity between what caused him to drop out of school and their own feelings at times. Although he wasn't "preachy," Tom's description of the rigors of working forty hours a week and carrying nine hours a semester in night school carried its own clear message.

8. *Are you best described by some value that you hold dear?* How did it come to have such meaning for you? Why is it important to you? Values are abstract, so you must rely on concrete applications to make them meaningful to others. As you introduce yourself or others, be careful not to appear preachy or morally superior to your listeners. As she worked through her self-awareness inventory, Beth Riley discovered that her passionate love of life and her strong sense of values were the most distinctive things about her. But how could she make these traits come to life for others? And how could she unify her speech? Beth found an ingenious way:

I think a good way to introduce myself is to look at the characteristics of my favorite color, red. Red is an emotional color. It feels things very deeply and loves to make people smile. Red is so full of emotion that it has to have an outlet. It loves to make music, to sing, and to write po-etry. Most of all, red is deeply passionate. It is passionately devoted to principles like honesty, integrity and compassion. It grieves over the

Self awareness inventory

1. Is your cultural background the most important thing about you?
2. Have you been influenced by your environment?
3. Did some person have an impact on your life?
4. Were you shaped by some unusual experience?
5. Is there some activity that reflects your personality?
6. Can you have some special goal or purpose in life?
7. Do you have some special goal or purpose in life?
8. Does some value have great meaning for you?

loss of these basic principles in our society, one in which it's okay to cheat on your taxes and the basic working principle of government seems to be "screw the poor." Red is passionate in its anger. it is angry over the needless suffering of the homeless in a nation of wealth and excess. . . . If you see me around campus, and you can't remember my name, just call me Red.

As you explore your own background or that of a classmate, we suggest that you ask all the probe questions within the self-awareness inventory. Don't be satisfied with the first idea that comes to you. You should find this thorough examination of yourself and others to be quite rewarding.

SELF INTRODUCTION

[You can bring this sheet up to the podium with you when you introduce yourself to the class. Skip any you don't wish to talk about.]

1. Name:
2. Personal
3. Place of birth:
4. Marital status:
5. Interests and Hobbies:
6. Helpful Hints for Newcomers:
7. Other Activities:
8. School
9. Year and Major at RU:
10. What career opportunities are there for your Subject?
11. Education to date:
12. Previous Communication Classes:
13. Best and worst college experience
14. Work
15. Place(s) of Employment:
16. Computer experience:
17. Career Goals:

Name:

RU- Communication Studies

Interviews

A. Objectives:

1. Help students and instructor get acquainted.
2. To make students aware of the fact there is much in their own background they can use in a speech.
3. To help create a homogeneous atmosphere in the class (We are here to help each other).
4. To give students experience in speaking before a group. (The more you speak the better you become,)

B. Activity: Interview the person assigned and report to the class as many of the following things about this person as possible:

1. Funny things that have happened to them.
2. Stupid mistakes they have made.
3. A pet superstition or tradition they or someone they know has.
4. An old saying that has been passed down in their family.
5. The wackiest ambition they ever had.
6. An embarrassing moment that they had.
7. Their best and/or worst teacher, and why. (no names please!)
8. Something unusual that has happened because of their name.
9. The person's name.

Be sure and exchange your name and phone numbers with the person you interviewed.

Physical Delivery

Effective delivery is a function of the entire body. It includes the speaker's voice, posture, gestures, facial expression, and bodily movement, and serves to emphasize, clarify and dramatize a spoken word. Controlling and integrating physical behavior is a skill. The purpose of this unit is to help you obtain that skill

I. Note taking

- A. Test questions
- B. Important concepts
- C. Examples
- D. Links

II. What is Physical Delivery?

Physical Delivery is nonverbal behavior that supports the verbal message.

III. Goals/Assessment

Upon completion of this unit you should be able to:

- * Use appropriate kinesic elements (posture, gesture, and facial expression) that achieve congruence and enhance the verbal intent.
- * Use appropriate proxemic elements (interpersonal distance and spatial arrangement) that achieve congruence and enhance the verbal intent.
- * Use appropriate clothing and ornamentation that achieve congruence and enhance the verbal intent.

IV. Beginning and ending a speech

- A. When does a speech begin?
- B. When does a speech end?

V. Posture

- A. Men
- B. Women

VI. Eye Contact

- A. Making eye contact with your audience
- B. What is circular response? The interaction between the audience and the speaker.

VII. Gestures

A. Definition The movement of any part of the body that is used to express some thought or emotion

B. Value

1. Aid in communication

2. Hold attention

3. Reduce tension

C. When should a speaker move?

1. sideways-when going from point to point

2. forward-for an important point

3. backward-to let the audience relax

D. Bad Delivery Habits

E. Types of hand gestures

1. emphatic

2. descriptive

3. conventional

a. pointing

b. giving or receiving

c. rejecting

d. cautioning

e. dividing

f. clenched fist

VIII. Facial expressions

A. Smile

IX. Nonverbal communication

A. Visual

1. physical appearance

a. What does your grooming say to your audience?

b. Objectics - the study of clothing

2. kinesics

3. Tips to make you presentation interesting nonverbally

B. Vocal (paralanguage)

X. Stage Fright

A. Know your topic

B. Practice

C. Don't memorize

D. Know introduction especially well - Know the first two or three minutes particularly well

E. Use movement to reduce tension

F. Memorize three words

G. Practice poise

THE FOLLOWING LINK COULD BE HELPFUL

Get Those Butterflies to Fly in Formation
How To Conquer Public Speaking Fear
Stage Fright - Don't Let It Kill Your Presentation
REMEMBER, THE MORE YOU SPEAK THE MORE COMFORTABLE YOU WILL
BECOME.
Assignment # 1 The Physical Delivery Speech

GIVING SPEECHES AND ORAL PRESENTATIONS

On the Job

FACING A COMMUNICATION DILEMMA AT THE KEYS GROUP

The Key to Giving Speeches

“Acceptance in the community is the key,” says Brady Keys Jr. His company—the Keys Group—operates 11 KFC fast-food restaurants in Georgia. With annual sales of more than \$7 million, the Keys Group ranks among the most respected African American-owned businesses in the country.

When Keys started out in the restaurant business nearly 30 years ago, he realized that good food was only half the battle. Consumers have hundreds of fast-food outlets to choose from, all with similar menus. If you want the public to eat at your restaurant instead of the one across the street, you have to do something extra.

For Brady Keys, the extra ingredient has been personal charisma. A former all-pro defensive halfback for the Pittsburgh Steelers, Keys has used his forceful personality along with expert speaking skills to inspire both investors and employees and to build a presence in the communities in which he does business. Today, he's a well known and highly respected member of the business community, but winning acceptance hasn't been a fast or an easy process.

Keys realized that if he wanted to succeed in business, he'd have to gain people's respect. He'd have to persuade bankers to lend him money and big companies to do business with him. He'd have to convince employees to work hard and customers to trust him. But how? If you were Keys, whether you were addressing a large crowd or an audience of one, what would you need to know about preparing, developing, and delivering speeches? Can improving your speaking skills really lead to the success that Keys has realized?

SPEAKING AND PRESENTING IN A BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

As Brady Keys will tell you, giving speeches and oral presentations can be an integral part of your business career. Chances are you'll have an opportunity to deliver a number of speeches and presentations throughout your career. You may not speak before large audiences of employees or the media, but you'll certainly be expected to present ideas to your colleagues, make sales presentations to potential customers, or engage in other kinds

of spoken communication. For most speeches and formal presentations, you'll follow three general steps:

1. Prepare to speak (by defining your purpose, analyzing your audience: and planning your speech's content, length, and style).
2. Develop your speech or presentation (including the introduction, body, close, question-and-answer period, and visual aids)
3. Deliver your speech or presentation