



Public speaking isn't everyone's cup of tea. While a lucky few may be natural-born speakers, most of us are not. However, being prepared and mastering a few basic skills can go a long way toward improving the entire public speaking experience — yours as well as the audience's.

With help from the Canadian Foreign Service Institute, we've compiled a few tips to help you prepare and perhaps make your next speaking engagement more effective. Even good speakers sometimes need a refresher course. Remember, if you are successful, so are we.

There are four points you should remember in order to be a better public speaker:

- Know your material well, and know what you want to achieve.
- Know your audience and address their needs.
- Project your enthusiasm for the topic.
- Make a strong and credible impression.

## Know Your Material

Boy Scouts and Girl Guides believe in being prepared. You should too. This is because a successful talk is 75% preparation and 25% delivery. Always focus on the purpose and consider the message the audience should hear. If they were to remember only 10% of your talk one week from now, what 10% would it be?

In order to be prepared, you might want to ask yourself:

- What is your main message? Clarify it in a simple sentence.
- How will you support your message?
- Will you use research, anecdotes, exhibits, analogies, testimonials or statistics?
- What resources will you use?