

Specialty Speeches

1. Speak Off the Cuff

Objectives

- Develop an awareness of situations in which you might be called upon to deliver an impromptu speech
- Understand how to prepare for impromptu speaking
- Develop skill as a speaker in the impromptu situation by using one or more patterns to approach a topic under discussion; for example, comparing a past, present, and future situation or before and after
- Time: 5-7 minutes

2. Uplift the Spirit

Objectives

- Identify and understand the basic differences and similarities between inspirational speeches and other kind of speeches
- Learn how to evaluate audience feeling and establish emotional rapport
- Develop a speech style and delivery that effectively expresses inspirational content by moving the audience to adopt your views
- Time: 8-10 minutes

3 Sell a Product

Objectives

- Understand the relationship of sales technique to persuasion
- Skillfully use the four steps in a sales presentation: attention, interest, desire, action
- Identify and promote a unique selling proposition in a sales presentation
- Be able to handle objections and close a prospective buyer
- Time: 10-12 minutes

4. Read Out Loud

Objectives

- Arrive at an understanding of the elements that comprise oral interpretation and how it differs from preparing and giving a speech
- Learn the preparation or planning techniques of effective interpretation
- Learn the principles of presentation and develop skill in interpretive reading with regard to voice and body as instruments of communication
- Time: 12-15 minutes

5. Introduce the Speaker

Objectives

- Focus on the special occasion talk from the standpoint of the introducer (function chairman, toastmaster, master of ceremonies)
- Become knowledgeable and skilled in the functions associated with the master of ceremonies
- Handle the introduction of other speakers at a club meeting.
- Time: Duration of a club meeting. (To be arranged with the EVP)

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Daniel Smith DTM, first attended Toastmasters in Australia in 1996. From when he joined in early-1997, he completed his CTM and ATM-B there by 1999, then focused elsewhere until he joined Shanghai Leadership Toastmasters in late-2007 and China Advanced Toastmasters in early 2008. With speeches spread over more than 10 years, his DTM was completed in about 3 years of active Toastmasters membership.



I chose this manual partly due to the subjects appealing, though mostly because it seemed really easy to schedule - the projects are all close to ordinary speech length, and require less preparation than most other manuals. Yet, these projects offer great rewards, with focused learning on specific topics that are relevant and readily applicable in and beyond Toastmasters.

This manual is magnificent. The projects are varied in nature, relevant in style, and challenging in delivery. You will find it easy to slip these presentations into your club meetings too as the projects are all short or even add nothing to the meeting duration at all.

Best of all, these projects often simply stretch the existing skills.

For example, the first project, "Speak Off the Cuff", asks you to give a 5-7 minute impromptu speech. While I appreciate that some speeches look like they're impromptu, this project is to help develop your skills in taking a subject that you are basically familiar with and to be able to deliver a high quality extended presentation around that topic without actually preparing a formal speech. It is like a 5-7 minute Table Topic, except that rather than having no idea about the topic, you suggest to your evaluator a few topics that you feel comfortable speaking about and have them choose which one in particular.

At China Advanced Toastmasters, we even started doing regular "Super Table Topics" - which could then be evaluated against the criteria for "Speak Off the Cuff", and either count towards an Advanced Manual Project, or to make it more complex, also evaluate it against one of the Competent Communicator projects.

The second, third and fourth projects also help you refine specific speaking skills that are further developed in other manuals. This will help develop your inspirational speaking, your persuasive speaking and your skill in reading from a script, each of which are useful skills, though in this manual, you are given the opportunity to focus for a short time - only the one, reasonably short, speech - on specific aspects of that skill.

Then the fifth project, "Introduce the Speaker," is for you to be the Toastmaster of a meeting - how easy is that? Well, actually, it's not that easy. At least it isn't if you want to do it well. Which is why this project, specifically focused on developing your skills as a Toastmaster, is so valuable since it offers you specific ways to evaluate your performance as a Toastmaster or Master of Ceremonies, and the opportunity to be specifically evaluated rather than just being momentarily evaluated by the General Evaluator. Best of all, having specific criteria against which we can evaluate our Toastmaster can sharpen the skills of the rest of the meeting attendees, since they then have a better idea as to how to be a great Toastmaster, and focus your mind the next time you are the Master of Ceremonies.