

## COMMUNICATING **ON VIDEO**

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**WHERE LEADERS  
ARE MADE**

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# HOW TO USE THIS SERIES

Each of the advanced manuals in this series assumes you already know the basics of speech – organization, voice, gestures, etc. – but not necessarily that your skills are fully developed. Refer to your **Competent Communication** manual if you need to review some of the principles of speech.

These advanced manuals are designed around four principles:

- ▶ The projects increase in difficulty within each manual, beginning with an overview of the subject and then becoming more specialized as you progress.
- ▶ Each subject incorporates what you have learned from the preceding ones, and it is assumed you will use these techniques whether or not they are specifically referred to in that section.
- ▶ The projects supply more information than you need to complete each particular assignment. This will give you ideas for future talks.
- ▶ It is the speech preparation and delivery that teach you, not just reading the project in the manual.

## BE SURE TO

- ▶ Read each project at least twice for full understanding.
- ▶ Make notes in the margin as you read.
- ▶ Underline key passages.
- ▶ Repeat projects as necessary until you are satisfied with your mastery of a subject.
- ▶ Ask for an evaluation discussion or panel whenever you wish, especially if few of your club members have completed the *Competent Communication* manual.
- ▶ Credit up to two speeches per manual given outside a Toastmasters club if:
  - 1) your vice president education agrees in advance,
  - 2) a Toastmasters evaluator is present, completes the written project evaluation, gives a verbal evaluation
  - 3) you meet all project objectives.
- ▶ Have your vice president education sign the Project Completion Record in this manual after you complete each project.
- ▶ Apply for Advanced Communicator Bronze, Advanced Communicator Silver, or Advanced Communicator Gold recognition when you have completed the appropriate manuals and met the other requirements listed in the back of this manual.

# INTRODUCTION

Video is part of our daily lives. In some countries, people have more television sets than telephones, cars, refrigerators, or bathtubs. Eighteen-year-old people have spent more hours watching television than they have spent in school. The advent of broadband Internet connections has spread video worldwide that may have never seen the light of day in the recent past. With the introduction of digital cable, video on demand, and satellite television systems to already existing commercial and public television systems, the number of available television channels has increased dramatically. To fill airtime on all of these channels, new programs are being developed and more people are needed to take part in these programs. Business people, politicians, educators, civic leaders, and other members of the community are being asked or are volunteering to appear on television.

In addition, the introduction of inexpensive yet high-quality video equipment has affected us. Many companies, organizations, and schools are producing their own programs – from videotaped annual reports to educational programs to training programs. In short, all of this means that you are likely to appear at least once on television – perhaps in a news interview, a panel discussion, a talk show, a documentary program, a training program, or even a televised Toastmasters club meeting. Whatever the program format, it's important that you're able to communicate effectively on video.

Television presentations are different from other presentations, and they require special consideration. Some of these considerations are:

- ▶ **Time.** All television programs are organized by time schedules. Programs generally are 30 minutes or 60 minutes long, and program material is organized to fit into these time blocks. To go under time or overtime by as little as 40 seconds can cause havoc! You must be aware of the time allotted to you and use it wisely.

Time is less of an issue when it comes to video that is to be distributed over the Internet. In this case, the main considerations are the viewer's connection speed and the maximum time limit allowed by the video sharing service provider.

- ▶ **Audience.** Television is a mass medium, and its viewers vary demographically and socially. Your message must be adjusted to suit the masses. The exceptions are programs produced for specialized audiences, such as training programs.

On the other hand, video distributed over the Internet can be as specific and focused as desired. There's less need to de-mystify the jargon used in your field, unless your program is geared toward beginners.

- ▶ **Action.** Television depends on action. Most programs use a variety of camera shots and visual effects to emphasize movement, since movement attracts attention.
- ▶ **Distractions.** The television studio contains a variety of distractions – flashing lights, television cameras, people moving equipment, producers and directors giving cues and instructions. Yet you must concentrate on your presentation and appear calm and relaxed.

► **Appearance.** Television is a visual medium. Your facial expressions, posture, gestures, eye contact, clothing, and makeup are emphasized and exaggerated by the television camera. You must know how to use these visual elements to your advantage. More about this appears in the Appendix.

This manual is designed to take you through learning experiences involving some of the program formats in which you most likely will participate. In the first project you'll prepare and present a television editorial. In project two, you will appear as a guest on a television interview program. You will be the host of a television interview program in the third project, while in the fourth project, you are asked to conduct a press conference. Finally, you'll conduct speech training using video.

In the first four projects, you will be evaluated on your live presentation; in the last project you will be evaluated on your videorecorded presentation. However, you should make every effort to videorecord all of your presentations for later review by your evaluator and yourself. Only by actually seeing yourself on television will you be able to improve your television presentation. You may be able to borrow video equipment from a friend, fellow club member or your company, or rent it. Be sure that your evaluator reads your project and the Appendix before your presentation.

If you cannot obtain video equipment you should simulate the television experience as much as possible. Set up chairs or other objects around the stage area to simulate television cameras, and direct your talk around them. Have a club member act as floor manager, periodically signaling you to look in different directions as if the production director were cutting from one camera to another. Use your imagination. These speaking assignments are challenging. Yet they will provide you with valuable experience in communicating effectively on television.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

An editorial is an opportunity to influence public opinion and action on an issue. It doesn't just draw attention to an issue; it makes a point about that issue. Because it is brief, you must choose words and information carefully. Make sure your editorial clearly states your position, contains evidence to support that position, and is logically developed.

**OBJECTIVES:**

- ▶ To effectively present an opinion or viewpoint in a short time.
- ▶ To simulate giving a presentation as part of a video broadcast.

**Time:** Three minutes, plus or minus 30 seconds

## STRAIGHT TALK

One type of video presentation is the editorial. Editorials can be part of a television station's newscast, public access television programming, or Internet broadcast. They also may be referred to as "commentaries" or "guest views." An editorial is a prepared statement directed to the viewer that takes a positive or negative stand in relation to a specific issue. The issue usually is the result of a major news event, and may be local, national, or international in scope. But an editorial doesn't merely inform or entertain; it provides meaningful and deeper insights into an issue. By knowing how to effectively prepare and present a video editorial, you'll be better prepared to influence public opinion and action on an issue.

**ELEMENTS OF AN EDITORIAL**

A good editorial communicates a particular message. It doesn't just draw attention to a particular problem or issue; it makes a point about that problem or issue.

An effective editorial contains several key elements:

- ▶ **A cause.** An editorial addresses an important, contemporary issue.
- ▶ **A firm conviction.** An editorial emphatically states a position on an issue and remains true to that position.
- ▶ **Evidence.** An editorial contains information to substantiate its position.
- ▶ **Reasoning.** An editorial is rational.
- ▶ **Logical development.** An editorial is well-organized. Thoughts flow smoothly.

An editorial is a challenge to write because, in addition to the above, it must be brief. Most editorials are only two to three minutes long. Thus, words and information must be chosen carefully. Words must be short and clear. Information must contribute to the point. Too much information and your point can get lost among the confusion. Be safe by making only one point in your editorial.

You should be able to condense the point into a single sentence, such as: the city council should not rezone Black Street to allow commercial development because the neighborhood could not accommodate more traffic.

**An editorial provides meaningful and deeper insights into an issue.**

## VIDEO PRESENTATION

There are two basic types of video: direct and indirect. In indirect video, performers address one another or the studio audience – not the camera. In direct video, performers look at and address the camera only. They talk to their audience through the camera.

A video editorial is the direct type. When giving an editorial, you communicate with your audience by looking directly at the camera, not at the studio audience or another person. You're usually seated at a table or desk, and you face the camera squarely. Be sure to read the Appendix for tips on working with cameras.

**Make only one point in your editorial and condense that point into a single sentence.**

Some people find cameras intimidating and this affects their talk. If cameras make you nervous, try thinking of a friend. Instead of the camera, visualize one of your family or a good friend in its place. You'll be able to speak naturally and appear to be at ease. To enhance your relaxed appearance, sit straight in your chair with your lower back supported. Don't hunch over or twist in your chair – this looks sloppy.

Appearance on video is important. Be sure to read the Appendix for tips on dressing, gestures/body movement, and reacting to cameras.

## YOUR ASSIGNMENT

For this project speech, prepare, rehearse, and deliver a three-minute editorial, plus or minus thirty seconds, designed for an on-camera presentation. Your editorial should clearly present:

- ▶ The news event or current issue evoking your editorial comment.
- ▶ A reaction or stand to the event or issue.
- ▶ The reasons to support the reaction or stand.

When giving your talk, be sure to do the following:

- ▶ Speak while seated at a desk or table.
- ▶ Use a script for your presentation. You should be able to give most of your talk from memory, but use the script to help you recall the exact wording. Or you may make cue cards for yourself. Cue cards are large poster boards on which your script is printed. The cards are held near the camera within reading range. You can glance at the cards as you give your editorial while still directing your eyes at the camera. Should you use cue cards, you'll need an assistant to hold them.
- ▶ Establish and maintain eye contact with the camera.
- ▶ Videorecord your presentation if possible. If this isn't possible and cameras aren't being used, set up a chair in front of the desk or table to simulate a camera, or mount a still camera on a tripod. Direct your talk to the camera.
- ▶ Assign a club member to act as "floor manager" for your presentation, giving you hand signals that indicate remaining time. More information on hand signals is in the Appendix.
- ▶ If your presentation is recorded, play back the recording after the presentation so you and your evaluator can determine how effective your talk would have been were it actually broadcast.



## ▶ PROJECT 2

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Talk shows, podcasts, and live streaming video are common today, and more people are needed as guests. If you're invited to appear on a show, prepare carefully. Know the interviewer's purpose, the reason for your appearance, the interview's length, the interviewer's identity, and who your audience will be. Anticipate questions and prepare responses. During the interview, be enthusiastic, stay calm, listen carefully, and be yourself.

### OBJECTIVES:

- ▶ To understand the dynamics of an interview or "talk" show.
- ▶ To prepare for the questions that may be asked of you during an interview program.
- ▶ To present a positive image on camera.
- ▶ To appear as a guest on a simulated video talk show.

**Time:** Five to seven minutes

# THE INTERVIEW SHOW

Hosted interview programs that feature guests who discuss their various areas of expertise abound. With these programs becoming more common, more people are needed to appear as guests. By developing the special skills required for video appearances, you may find yourself a frequent guest on a variety of programs.

### PREPARING FOR THE SHOW

Watch your favorite talk shows or podcasts. The host and guests converse with ease, don't they? Their conversation appears completely spontaneous.

In reality, this isn't so. The host and guests spent hours preparing for the interviews.

Of course, you can't anticipate everything that will happen during an interview. But you can have a general idea of the interview's purpose, its length, and the questions and issues you'll face. When you're invited to appear on a show as a guest, prepare by asking these questions:

- ▶ What is the purpose of the interview? Know why you've been asked to appear.
- ▶ What type of interview will it be? You may be part of a panel discussion, one of several guests on an hour show, or the sole guest on a half-hour program.
- ▶ Why were you asked to appear? Was it your position, expertise, or personality that influenced them to invite you?
- ▶ How long will the interview be? An hour-long interview requires more preparation than a five-minute interview.
- ▶ Who will be conducting the interview? If the interviewer is known to be hostile and rude, you must prepare accordingly. Watch the interview program several times before you appear on it to determine the interviewer's style and if the interviewer is knowledgeable in your subject area.
- ▶ Who is your audience? If the program is for a specialized audience, such as lawyers, you can use vocabulary suited for them. But if the audience is an entire city, then you must keep your words simple and clear, so most anyone will understand it.

Talk with your interviewer before your appearance. Provide your interviewer with, or help to develop, a proper introduction of you. A good introduction will establish your credibility. Discuss what subjects the interview will cover. If you have topics you prefer not to discuss on the program, tell your interviewer immediately. Otherwise, you both could be embarrassed at show time.

Now that you've established the framework of the interview, you can anticipate the questions you may be asked and you can prepare some

**State your main point first; it is important to keep your answers short and to the point.**

responses. In preparing for the interview, remember the dynamics of the interview situation. The program host (or interviewer) wants you to discuss the agreed-upon subject. You are the center of attention; the host is merely trying to encourage you to talk by asking questions. The questions most likely will be open-ended questions; that is, they allow you great flexibility in your answers. "How do you feel about the recent legislation mandating harsher punishment for people convicted of driving while drunk?" allows some freedom of response.

In preparing your responses, remember that the clock rules. It's important to keep your answers short and to the point. State your main point first; otherwise, the interviewer may interrupt you to ask another question or to pause for a break. Speak in what TIME magazine calls "sound bites"—15- to 20-second segments. Your responses are less likely to be edited out, if the program is to be edited, and you'll make your point more easily. For example, suppose you are asked why you favor establishing a national lottery. You can't say, "I have eight areas to cover as I answer your question. First..." Your response must be concise and to the point: "The lottery will increase revenue for our schools and highways without increasing taxes."

When answering questions, be honest and straightforward. Don't hesitate to ask the host to restate the question if you don't understand it, or to say, "I don't have the answer to that question." Avoid saying "no comment." It sounds evasive and gives the impression that you're hiding something.

## SHOWTIME

During the interview, remember to:

1. **Be enthusiastic.** Even a boring subject can become interesting if the interviewee is enthusiastic.
2. **Don't overwhelm your audience with facts and statistics—they're boring.** Instead, illustrate your points with stories. As in any speech, anecdotes or short stories add emphasis to your points. They attract attention and provide insight.
3. **Use humor carefully.** You are speaking to a large audience, and not everyone has the same taste in humor. You don't want to offend anyone, and you want to maintain a positive image and your credibility.
4. **Listen carefully.** Ignore all of the equipment, audience, and stage crew, and focus your attention on the host and the questions. You won't be able to answer the question if you haven't heard what was asked.
5. **Be yourself.** Don't imitate your favorite movie star, act stiff or formal, or try to impress everyone with your charm and knowledge. You'll only succeed in looking foolish. Be conversational, relaxed, and poised.
6. **Stay calm.** Don't lose your temper or become defensive under questioning. (See Project Four for more information on handling difficult questions.)
7. **Know where to look.** If you're a guest on an interview program without a studio audience, you should look directly at the interviewer, not at the camera. If there is a studio audience, you should look at them occasionally. Don't dart your eyes back and forth between the interviewer and the audience, however. Direct your eyes to the audience slowly, and look at them for several seconds before turning your head back.

Ignore all of the equipment, audience, and stage crew, and focus your attention on the host and the questions.

## **YOUR ASSIGNMENT**

For this project, you and another member will prepare and present a five- to seven-minute interview program, designed for an "on camera" presentation. You will be the guest, and your partner will be the host, and other club members will be your studio audience. If possible, your partner should be working to complete this manual, too, and should follow the guidelines in Project Three, "When You're the Host." If possible, simulate the staging for a real talk show, with you and the host seated in comfortable chairs, with plants and other props nearby. You will be interviewed because of your expertise in a particular subject, to be determined by you and your interviewer.

If possible, videorecord the presentation for later playback, so you and your evaluator can determine the success of the program had it actually been broadcast. Assign a member to act as floor manager, to give your host hand signals at appropriate times (see the Appendix).

If videorecording isn't possible and cameras aren't being used, set up two or three chairs around the stage area to simulate cameras. Appearance on video is important. Be sure to read the Appendix for tips on dressing for video, using gestures, and reacting to cameras.

Although some preparation is necessary, do not rehearse the interview with your partner.

# EVALUATION GUIDE FOR THE INTERVIEW SHOW

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluator \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Note to the Evaluator:** The speaker was asked to appear as a guest on a simulated talk show, with another club member serving as the talk show host or interviewer, and the rest of the club acting as the studio audience. The speaker was to answer questions asked by the interviewer. Questions were to be based on the expertise of the speaker in a predetermined subject. Although the presentation may be videorecorded, your evaluation will be based on the live presentation. However, it is suggested you review the video later with the speaker and discuss how effective the presentation would have been had it actually been broadcast. It is suggested you read the entire project and the Appendix before you hear the presentation. Remember, you will be evaluating only the guest, not the host.

- ▶ How prepared was the speaker? What indicated this?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- ▶ How effectively did the speaker answer the questions? Did the speaker show enthusiasm?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- ▶ How did the speaker use a story or anecdote to illustrate or emphasize a point?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- ▶ Did the speaker appear relaxed, confident, and poised? Were the speaker's gestures/body movements appropriate for the special requirements of video? Did the speaker relate appropriately to the studio audience?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- ▶ How did the speaker's appearance (clothing, makeup, etc.) enhance or detract from the presentation?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- ▶ How effective do you believe the speaker would have been on a real talk show?

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

A talk show host must be knowledgeable about each guest, be able to phrase questions well, be able to handle different personalities, and make guests feel relaxed and comfortable. Carefully prepare for an interview, finding out as much as possible about the guest and the topics to be discussed. Consider your audience's knowledge of the guest and subject and phrase questions accordingly.

**OBJECTIVES:**

- ▶ To conduct a successful interview.
- ▶ To understand the dynamics of a successful interview or talk show.
- ▶ To prepare questions to ask during the interview program.
- ▶ To present a positive, confident image on camera.

**Time:** Five to seven minutes

## WHEN YOU'RE THE HOST

Watch talk show hosts interview guests. The job looks easy, doesn't it? They just ask questions, and the guests answer them. It couldn't be much more simple!

This conjecture couldn't be further from the truth. Hosts must do more than ask questions. They must establish such strong rapport with their guests that the guests forget about their nervousness and the many distractions (equipment, stage crew). The guests should feel so comfortable that they become relaxed and animated, conversing with ease and revealing their personality. An enthusiastic, relaxed guest usually creates a dynamic, successful interview. A nervous, tense guest creates a dull, boring interview.

### THE ROLE OF A HOST

Thus, as a talk show host, you can't just ask questions. You must have the knowledge and experience to phrase questions well, and you must be able to handle different personalities. If a guest is aggressive, you must be able to maintain control of the interview or the guest may give a monologue. If a guest is passive or shy, you must be able to draw that person out. Of course, you also must be able to ignore the many studio distractions and focus attention on the guest. You must listen carefully to guests' answers and ask appropriate follow-up questions. Yet you must constantly remain aware of time. The clock rules your interview. A 30-minute program is exactly 30 minutes. You must pay attention to the clock and cues from the production crew and be able to wrap up the interview gracefully, on time. And you shouldn't display nervousness. A nervous host can result in a nervous guest and an interview that's a fiasco.

The best talk show hosts don't interview their guests "cold." Rather, hosts do extensive research into a guest's background and into the subject they'll be discussing. Specifically they:

- ▶ Know what topics they want to cover
- ▶ Know specific questions to ask
- ▶ Know the personality of the person they'll be interviewing
- ▶ Know how to lead guests to say what they really believe.

▶ **Hosts do extensive research into a guest's background and into the subject they'll be discussing.**

## AVOID BEING SUPERFICIAL

Many interviews are superficial. They deal only with the what and when of a subject. Good hosts explore the why and how. For example, suppose you'll be interviewing your town's police chief. One topic you want to discuss is your city's rising crime rate. You've done your homework. You compare crime rates for the past three years and ask what the police department is doing to combat crime. The police chief responds.

At this point, you could change the subject to discuss the new police headquarters building now under construction. Or you could ask the police chief what he believes are the factors contributing to the crime rate. Is it the town's high unemployment rate? The large number of low-income families in your town? The deterioration of the family unit in today's society? Your question may elicit the chief's personal observations and could provide some new information about crime.

In preparing for your interview, talk briefly with your prospective guest. Find out additional background material and prepare a good introduction. Determine the guest's personality type. Is the guest outgoing or introverted? You also can find out if the guest objects to discussing certain topics. After all, if you can't discuss a particular subject, the interview may be pointless. You may want to brief your guest about the topics you'll be covering. But don't divulge your specific questions. You want the interview to appear as spontaneous as possible.

## REMEMBER YOUR AUDIENCE

Focus on your guest, but do not forget your audience and its knowledge of the subject. Often you and your guest know what you're talking about, but the audience does not. They may not understand the question "Mayor Wilson, what is your view on the new city tax?". Phrase questions for the benefit of your audience. "Last week the City Council voted to place an additional one percent tax on liquor and cigarettes sold in the city. Mayor Wilson, what is your view of this new tax?" This explains the question and gives the audience the necessary background for the question.

Likewise, if your guest uses technical words or terms with which your audience may not be familiar, ask your guest to explain them.

## TYPES OF QUESTIONS

There are several basic styles of questions you can ask.

- ▶ **Close-ended questions.** These questions elicit short answers. "How old are you?" "Where did you live as a child?" can be answered in one or two words. Be wary of using too many close-ended questions; they can make a boring interview.
- ▶ **Open-ended questions.** These questions are broad and require longer answers. "How did you develop this engine?" "Why did you decide to come to this country?" Open-ended questions are the most common type of question. But they, too, should be asked with care, as they give guests the opportunity to ramble.
- ▶ **Leading questions.** These questions are phrased so the respondent answers in a certain way. Such questions often can be considered traps: "You were wrong about that, weren't you?" "Weren't you arrested for shoplifting?" These questions generally are found in more hostile interviews.
- ▶ **Hypothetical questions.** These are "What if...?" type questions. "What if we entered a nuclear war?" "What would you do if your daughter dropped out of school?" They require imaginary answers. Hypothetical questions can be used to draw out and reveal your guest's personality.

## START OFF RIGHT

You have prepared for your interview. Now it's show time. What can you do to start off the interview with a bang?

First, properly introduce your guest. Your introduction should clearly indicate the reason for the interview and give the guest's credentials.

**Begin with a non-threatening, simple question that allows your guest to answer well and develop confidence.**

Second, ask an easy question. Begin with a non-threatening, simple question that can be answered with ease. If you ask hard questions and your guests don't respond well, they may become nervous and flustered. An easy question allows your guests to answer well and to develop confidence.

Third, listen to your guest. A good host highlights the guest. Smile, nod, and keep eye contact. Doing so will encourage your guest to speak

and you will be able to ask appropriate follow-up questions. When a guest begins to ramble, you can cut in with a comment or another related question.

Fourth, wrap up the interview gracefully. Watch the time. When 60 seconds remain, begin to conclude the interview. This may require interrupting your guest. "Mayor Wilson, we have only a few moments remaining." Ask for any closing comments and thank her and your audience.

## YOU, THE CAMERA, AND THE AUDIENCE

When you're the interviewer or host, your eye contact with the camera, guest, and/or audience varies. When greeting your viewers and introducing guests, you should look at the camera or, if there is a live studio audience, at the audience. While interviewing your guest, however, you should maintain eye contact with your guest, with only occasional looks at the camera or audience. When breaking for a commercial or when closing the program, again, directly address the audience or camera.

## YOUR ASSIGNMENT

For this project, you and another member will prepare and present a five- to seven-minute interview program, designed for an on-camera presentation. You will be the host or interviewer, your partner will be the guest, and other club members will be the studio audience. If possible, your partner should be working to complete this manual, too, and should follow the guidelines in Project Two, "The Talk Show." If possible, simulate the staging for a real talk show, with you and your guest seated in comfortable chairs, with plants and other props nearby. The subject of the interview will be based on your guest's expertise in a specific area. Talk with your guest to determine the subject area.

If possible, videorecord the presentation for later playback, so you and your evaluator can determine how effective the program would have been had it actually been broadcast.

Assign a member to act as floor manager to give you time cues. See the Appendix for more information on hand signals.

Appearance on video is important. Be sure to read the Appendix for information on dressing, using gestures, and reacting to cameras.

Although some preparation is necessary, do not rehearse the interview with your partner.



**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

Business and government officials sometimes are asked to be spokespersons for their organization, commenting on various issues. During a press conference you give a prepared speech on the issue and then field questions from journalists. Make sure you are familiar with all the available information about the issue. Answer all questions in a positive manner, speak in sound bites, remain calm, and conclude the conference with a positive statement.

**OBJECTIVES:**

- ▶ To understand the nature of a video broadcast press conference.
- ▶ To prepare for an adversary confrontation on a controversial or sensitive issue.
- ▶ To employ appropriate preparation methods and strategies for communicating your organization's viewpoint.
- ▶ To present and maintain a positive image.

**Time:** Three to five minutes for presentation, two to three minutes for question period.

# THE PRESS CONFERENCE

Imagine this scene: You are the president of a large toy manufacturing company. You are seated at your desk, busy with paperwork. You have a meeting with the board of directors in just one hour. The telephone rings. The caller is your company's public relations officer. "Cam," she says, "another child was seriously injured this morning while playing with one of our toys. The local media are interviewing the child's mother for their evening newscasts. She supposedly has said that the toy was unsafe for small children and is filing a lawsuit. Several reporters have discovered the five lawsuits already filed against us and have called us, asking for comments on the situation." Handled poorly, this situation could spell disaster for the company. Handled properly, the situation may even generate some positive publicity for the company. But how can one handle it properly?

## THE SPOKESPERSON

Business and government officials sometimes are asked by the media to be spokespersons for their organization. Often they are asked to comment on controversial and sensitive issues for television, newspaper, radio, and Internet journalists. When they are trained to handle such situations properly, officials can generate goodwill and a positive image among the public and the media.

## STEPS TO SUCCESS

One way to deal with media inquiries like the one described above is to hold a press conference for the media. During a press conference, you give a prepared statement and then answer questions from your audience of journalists. You'll do well if you remember the following:

1. **You are in control.** You should be prepared before you make a statement or answer questions. If the media catches you in an unprepared situation (such as when you're leaving your office to go to your car), and ask questions, you don't have to answer. You can simply say, "I'll be glad to talk with you at nine a.m. tomorrow." If you are prepared but have other engagements, you may state, "Because of meetings (or the need to work on this problem), I can take only five minutes now to answer your questions."
2. **Select the proper environment.** Again, you are in control. If you feel more comfortable being interviewed at your desk, in a conference room, or at a lectern, arrange for it. Generally avoid holding a press conference in the middle of a noisy crowd or amidst other distractions, as your message can get lost.
3. **Be prepared.** Identify your objective for the conference. This is the one message you want your audience to remember. Then incorporate this objective into your opening, and organize your talk around it. Keep it positive. Have all facts and figures before you. Anticipate possible questions and prepare your answers beforehand.

4. **Answer all questions in a positive manner.** Keep a positive note in your responses. Don't repeat a negative question or statement before you give an answer.

For example, a reporter asks you, "Why are you opposed to putting a stoplight at the intersection of Fourth and Main streets? Four pedestrians have been injured there by automobiles whose drivers didn't see the pedestrian crosswalk."

Answering the question with "I am opposed to it because..." gives a negative feeling. "Opposed" is a negative word, and can imply that the injuries are not important to you. A better response would be, "The injuries are of great concern to me. I agree that the intersection is dangerous. But a stoplight won't solve the problem. The intersection is poorly lighted, and both roads curve sharply before they meet, obstructing drivers' views of the intersection. They won't see a stoplight until it's too late. I believe the roads should be straightened." In this statement, you have agreed there is a problem, but you've calmly disagreed with the proposed solution and you've explained why, all in a positive manner. You did not contribute to the controversy over your position, and your proposed solution may gain popularity.

5. **Speak in "sound bites."** Be brief in your statements. The shorter your answers, the better the results of the interview. The media love brief comments that effectively present a viewpoint.
6. **Be calm.** Remember, you want to maintain a positive image. Don't get angry or become impatient with reporters. On camera you will just appear rude. Be courteous at all times.
7. **Answer one question at a time.** Sometimes a reporter will fire off a series of questions. Answer only one, and make sure it's the one that allows you to communicate your objective. If a reporter tries to interrupt you with new questions, ignore the interruption, complete your thought, and then call on the reporter.
8. **Beware of innuendoes.** A reporter may subtly try to make you look bad by peppering remarks and questions with innuendoes. Don't ignore an innuendo; you will appear to be condoning it. Instead, address it directly. "Before I answer your question, I must object to the way it was worded..."
9. **Defuse hostile questions.** Address your response to the audience as a whole rather than to the person asking the question, and avoid eye contact with the person after you've answered. So the person doesn't have an opportunity to ask a follow-up question, immediately after answering the question, call on someone in another part of the room.
10. **Don't look at the cameras.** The media usually bring portable cameras to press conferences, and all of them may be on at the same time. In this situation, avoid looking directly at any camera. Instead, look directly at the person asking the question. When giving a prepared statement, avoid reading your notes. Look at specific individuals in the group instead, moving from one side of the room to another. Refer to your notes occasionally as needed.
11. **Conclude with a positive statement.** Often your original opening message is forgotten following a period of questions and answers. Wrap up the session with a strong closing statement that reiterates your position, and end the interview by thanking the media.

## YOUR ASSIGNMENT

You will hold a press conference for video journalists. The conference will be broadcast "live." You will make a three- to five-minute presentation on a controversial issue or situation concerning your company or other organization you represent. Then you will field questions from your audience for two to three minutes. Your fellow club members will act as journalists. Arrange in advance to have them prepare questions.

If possible, videorecord the press conference for later playback, so you and your evaluator can determine how successful the conference would have been had it actually been broadcast. Again, appearance is important. Be sure to read the Appendix for tips on dressing, using gestures, and working with cameras.



**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

The Web is a useful training medium because you can use it to visually demonstrate the skills being taught. As you prepare a training program, determine your objectives, then your audience's knowledge of the subject and compare it to what you want them to know. Then plan your training program accordingly. Select the best strategy to provide this information, and then create a script.

**OBJECTIVES:**

- ▶ To learn how to develop and present an effective training program on the Web.
- ▶ To receive personal feedback through the videorecording of your presentation.

**Time:** Five to seven minutes for the presentation, plus five to seven minutes for playback of the video.

## INSTRUCTING ON THE INTERNET

The Internet has become an important tool in training. More than 10,000 companies around the world use the Web for training, and the number is growing. Webcasts are used in teaching clerical skills, machine operation, computer operation, and management training, for example.

The Internet also is being used to help people improve their speaking skills. In some cases, a speaker explains on video how to prepare and present a speech. In other cases, students are videoed as they give presentations. The video is then played back so the students can see and analyze their performances. Viewing yourself on-screen provides personal feedback. You can observe your gestures/body movements, facial expressions, and vocal variety. You also can note any distracting mannerisms you may unconsciously display while you speak, and you can determine if your speech was effectively organized. Once you've observed your problem areas, you can work to improve them.

For this speech project, you'll have the opportunity to prepare and present a training program on video, and you'll review your presentation. Only your video presentation will be evaluated. Although video equipment is not required in the four previous projects, it's a necessity for this project. If you, your friends, fellow club members, or your company cannot supply video recording equipment, you may be able to rent a camera, recorder, and monitor from a video store and use it for your presentation and for fellow club members' presentations that day as well.

**A training program differs from a speech in that a training program identifies a specific problem and then solves it.**

### A TRAINING PROGRAM

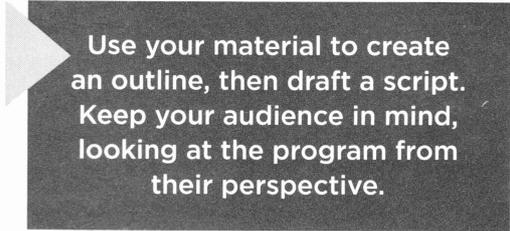
A training program is designed to create changes in a behavior, attitude, or skill. For example, suppose you've noticed that some club members don't organize their speeches well. A carefully designed training program on speech preparation could help solve the problem.

Preparing a training program differs slightly from preparing a speech. A training program identifies a specific problem and then solves it. When creating a program, you'll do well if you do the following:

1. **State your objectives before you begin.** What is the problem to be solved? What do you want your audience to do as a result of your training program? Your objectives should be in writing so that they describe the desired performance and are measurable and realistic. For example, your objectives for the speech training program suggested above could be: a) club members will learn the basic elements of a speech – opening, body, and conclusion, and b) club members will learn how

to organize their speeches effectively. These are realistic objectives and results can be measured by observing members' speeches in the weeks following your training program.

2. **Analyze your audience.** Determine your audience's knowledge of the subject, their ages and education. Make sure your audience knows why they are watching the program and how they will benefit from doing what you want them to do. If the program is asking them to change their performance, do they know what the performance standard is? Do they understand why their current performance doesn't meet this standard?
3. **Gather the information to be included in your training program.** Refer to books, magazines, the Internet, or experts for material.
4. **Determine your training strategy.** We learn in many ways – through lectures, group discussions, demonstrations, role-plays, site visits, games, case studies, or programmed instruction. Decide which strategy to use. Training programs, lectures, demonstrations, role-plays, and case studies work best for video. Keep in mind, however, that your time is limited.
5. **Outline your program.** Organize your material into an outline, and then draft a script. Keep your audience in mind as you draft it. Look at the program from their perspective. What questions might your listeners have? Answer them in your script. Show how the training program will help them in some way. Review the completed script to make sure it accomplishes your objectives.
6. **Keep your message clear.** Ideas should flow logically and sentences should be short. Don't overwhelm your audience with information. Tell them only what they need to know in order to do what you want them to do.



**Use your material to create an outline, then draft a script. Keep your audience in mind, looking at the program from their perspective.**

Adults learn most effectively when they are allowed to learn at their own pace. Individuals need time to accept new ideas and weigh them against their personal experiences. Be sensitive to the pace at which you deliver information. Allow for slower acceptance by some viewers. At the same time, be careful not to bore fast learners.

### TIPS FOR VIDEO

Your physical appearance is important. How you look affects your credibility and your image. When preparing for your presentation, remember to:

- ▶ **Dress appropriately.** Generally, men and women should dress conservatively in medium colored suits. Avoid wearing bright red or white clothing, flashy jewelry, and stripes.
- ▶ **Avoid making quick, sweeping gestures.** They make it difficult for the camera operator to follow your movements. Use slower gestures and keep them close to your body.
- ▶ **Use vocal variety moderately.** Speak as if you're talking to only one person, not to an audience of thousands.
- ▶ **Use visual aids carefully.** Visual aids can add emphasis to your message. Just be sure that any visual aid relates to your subject and will be seen and understood by your audience.

More information on dress, gestures/body movement, vocal variety, and visual aids appears in the Appendix. Be sure to read it carefully.

## YOUR ASSIGNMENT

For this project, you'll present a five- to seven- minute training program. The subject is one you should know well – how to prepare and present a speech. Because of the time limits, your training program will follow the "lecture" learning strategy. Record your presentation on video and play back the recording during the meeting. You will be evaluated only on your recorded presentation, not on the "live" one.

When giving your presentation, be sure to:

- ▶ Avoid using a lectern and notes. Speak while standing. You should be able to give most of your talk from memory. However, if you are uncomfortable with relying on your memory, make cue cards. Cue cards are large poster boards on which your script is printed in large letters. The cards are held near the camera within reading range. You can glance at the cards as you give your presentation while still directing your eyes at the camera. Should you use cue cards, you'll need an assistant to hold them.
- ▶ Establish and maintain eye contact with the camera.
- ▶ Use visual aids if necessary. More on visual aids is in the Appendix.
- ▶ Speak "with" your audience, not "at" them. Speak as though you are talking with a friend.
- ▶ Read the Appendix before your presentation. Dress, gestures/body movement, voice, and facial expressions are important. Know how to use them properly on video.

A panel of evaluators, under the direction of the general evaluator, will evaluate your videorecorded training program. Be sure to discuss this project with your vice president education before the meeting so that the proper arrangements can be made.



# ENRICH YOUR VIDEO EXPERIENCE

## YOUR APPEARANCE

Your appearance in visual media affects your credibility and your image, so it's important that you look your best.

Several days before your appearance, telephone the studio and ask what color background is used on the set for your show. If you wear a beige suit and the set is painted beige, you'll blend in. Wear clothing that contrasts with the set. Ask what you should wear, just to be safe.

Generally, women should dress conservatively. Wear a medium-colored suit with a light blouse, or a dark-toned dress. Avoid ruffles – they're distracting – and slit skirts that need to be held closed when you're seated. Don't wear flashy or noisy jewelry and bright hair ornaments. These, too, are distracting. Avoid print, plaid, or checked clothing, as these can affect video quality. Also, don't wear white or bright red colors; they also affect video quality.

Men should dress conservatively, too. Medium colored suits are best, with a light blue shirt and conservative tie. Wear matching knee-length socks and shoes that complement the suit color. Avoid shiny print ties, jeweled tie tacks, and gold chains and bracelets – they reflect light. Also don't wear striped or white shirts, since they affect video quality.

If you wear eyeglasses, don't wear them on camera unless necessary, because they reflect light. Never wear photosensitive glasses on camera because the bright studio lights will make them turn dark. Makeup is essential, even for men. Used properly, it can enhance your appearance, since bright lights can make you appear pale and tired. Makeup should have a matte finish and be the same color as your skin. Powder is necessary for both men and women – it reduces shine and glare. Women should avoid heavy blue eye shadow and red rouge; orange, browns, and tans look best on video. Apply makeup carefully and sparingly. Don't exaggerate your makeup or you'll look like a clown.

The camera can make you look 10 to 20 pounds heavier than you actually are. Dress in clothes that are slimming – dark colors, no horizontal stripes, and simple lines – if you want to appear thinner.

## YOU AND THE CAMERA

"Where do I look?" is a common question from those about to appear on video for the first time. Inexperienced performers don't know whether to look at the camera, the studio audience, or the host.

The answer is, "It depends on the situation." Newscasters, reporters, those presenting editorials, announcements, or demonstrations generally should look directly at the

camera that is "on the air." A bright red "tally" light on top designates this camera. Be careful not to let your eyes wander – you will appear nervous or lost.

Occasionally, a different camera will go on the air. When this happens, the red tally light on one camera will go off and the red light on the other camera will go on, or the floor manager will point to another camera. Simply transfer your gaze to the other camera as smoothly as possible. Remember, the camera is your audience. Talk to it as you would talk to a friend. Don't stare at it wide-eyed.

If you are a guest on an interview program without a studio audience, you should look directly at the interviewer, not at the camera. If there is a studio audience, you should look at it occasionally. Don't dart your eyes back and forth between the interviewer and the audience, however. Direct your eyes to the audience slowly, and look at it for several seconds before turning your head back.

When you are being interviewed, keep your attention focused on your interviewer. Ignore the video equipment, lights, cameras being moved, and the stage crew darting back and forth, and don't stare off into space. Don't do anything that you wouldn't want to be seen doing in front of thousands of people.

When you are the interviewer or host, your eye contact with the camera, guest, and/or audience varies. When greeting your viewers and introducing guests, you should look at the camera or, if there is a live studio audience, at the audience. While interviewing your guest, however, you should maintain eye contact with your guest, with only occasional looks at the camera or audience. When breaking for a commercial or when closing the program, again directly address the audience or camera. Take care, too, not to be a scene-stealer. If you are in a camera shot with someone else who is the focus of attention, don't move around, fix your tie or fuss with your makeup. Even though you are in the background, you can detract attention from the other person and ruin the show.

The media usually bring portable cameras to press conferences, and all of them may be taping at the same time. In this situation, avoid looking directly at any camera. Instead, look directly at the person asking the question. When giving a prepared statement, avoid reading your notes. Look at specific individuals in the group, moving from one side of the room to another. Refer to your notes occasionally as needed.

### **GESTURES/BODY MOVEMENT**

On video you want to appear confident and poised, not nervous and tense. Your gestures/body movements and facial expressions all indicate your confidence or nervousness, and all of them are magnified on camera. It's important that you practice your movements and expressions so that you appear at your best.

A video camera can produce a variety of different shots or pictures – close-up pictures, wide-angle pictures, etc. – from the same position, so you won't be aware of what shot a camera is taking of you. Most shots of you will be of your head and shoulders. When being interviewed on a talk show, sit in a relaxed position with your shoulders back. Don't sit stiffly; you'll look tense. Be careful not to slouch, too. Keep your feet on the ground and put your hands in your lap or on the arms of your chair when you're listening. When speaking, lean forward slightly. If you're seated in a swivel chair, take care not to swivel back and forth. If you must stand during your presentation, stand comfortably with your shoulders straight and your weight distributed evenly on both feet. Don't shift from foot to foot, sway, or lean on anything. If you must walk, take slow, small steps so the camera can follow you.

Avoid making quick, sweeping gestures. They make it difficult for the camera operator to follow your movements; as a result, your arms or hands won't be in the picture. Use slower gestures and keep them close to your body. Don't gesture directly at the camera or your hands and arms will be

distorted. Make sure your gestures are appropriate and natural. Be especially careful of any nervous habits you have, such as tapping your fingers, touching your tie, or fussing with your hair. Again, the camera magnifies them.

Also be aware of your facial expressions. A frown, squint, or furrowed brow can make you appear worried, defensive, or tense. Relax your facial muscles and smile whenever appropriate. A smile makes you appear relaxed and friendly.

If your presentation involves using props, flipcharts, or a lot of movement, practice before the program with the camera operators so they'll be prepared to follow you. Make sure you never walk out of the picture!

## MICROPHONES

Microphones are an important part of your appearance, and it's important that you know the various types of microphones and how to use them properly.

- ▶ **Handheld microphone.** You hold this type of microphone in your hand. It's attached to a long cable, so if you plan to move around while you speak, be sure to allow enough cable to do so. Handheld microphones are the most awkward, because one hand must always be holding the microphone, which restricts your gestures. You must be careful not to gesture with the hand holding the microphone, because the sound will fade as you move it away from your mouth.
- ▶ **Lavaliere microphone.** Sometimes called a lav or a lapel mic, this is the most popular of all microphones. It is small and clips to your blouse, shirt, or lapel, or it can dangle from your neck on a cord. It should be six to nine inches below your chin. Attached before the program begins, the lavaliere microphone allows you complete flexibility in movement with due regard to the trailing microphone cord. The cord should run from the mic away from you. If you'll be walking, tuck a loop of cord into your belt or hold it in your hand to give some slack. However, this microphone is sensitive and can pick up heavy breathing or the sound of clothing rubbing against the instrument.
- ▶ **Boom microphone.** A boom microphone is a microphone suspended from a long pole, which is held over the stage area. A boom microphone can be moved up, down, or across to pick up voices. It, too, is highly sensitive. Boom microphones are kept out of camera range so the viewing audience can't see them. You don't have to worry about not being heard because the boom operator follows you as you move around.
- ▶ **Wireless microphone.** Wireless microphones are hand-held microphones without a cord. They're battery operated, and ideal for walking around.

Before the program begins, arrange for a microphone check with the sound engineer. Speak normally into the microphone so the engineer can set the correct volume. Use vocal variety moderately. Remember to speak as if you're talking only to one person, not to an audience of thousands. Varying your pitch, volume, and vocal variety too much will only annoy your audience and make you look foolish. During the program, avoid coughing, tapping your fingers, rustling paper, or hitting the microphone. And watch what you say; always assume the microphone is on.

## VISUAL AIDS

Visual aids can greatly enhance any presentation. Visuals can illustrate your points and add emphasis to your message. Just be sure that any visuals relate to your subject and will be seen and understood by your audience.

Visual aids for video have special requirements. For example, standard-definition television pictures are in a format of four units wide and three units high. Thus, any visuals you use must be in this 4:3 ratio. This is also a safe ratio to use if the studio is equipped with high-definition television equipment, which utilizes a 16:9 aspect ratio. If the visual aids you use are too big, they'll be cut off. If they're too small, they'll be comical. To ensure good framing for your visuals, allow a border around the visual of one-sixth the total area.

Keep your visuals simple and uncluttered. Too much detail won't be seen. For print visuals, leave plenty of space between letters and lines. Since glossy surfaces reflect light and cause glare, all visuals should have dull surfaces. Colors should contrast. Each visual should emphasize only one point.

When making charts and graphs, use a dull finish gray or blue cardboard 14 inches (35.5 cm) by 17 inches (43 cm) or 11 inches (28 cm) by 14 inches (35.5 cm). Keep your graphics within a 9 inch (23 cm) by 12 inch (30 cm) area on the 14 inch (35.5 cm) by 17 inch (43 cm) cards and within a 6 inch (15 cm) by 8 inch (20 cm) area on 11 inch (28 cm) by 14 inch (35.5 cm) cards. Keep words or graphics to four or five lines. Print all lettering and make it bold. Keep the focus on the center of the graphic.

If you're planning to use slides or film, check with the studio beforehand to see what size slides and film they prefer. Keep slides simple and clear. Again, limit copy to five lines. Display three-dimensional objects so the audience can see the actual size, since the camera can make a small object appear large through close-ups. Make sure the objects are well lighted and don't cause glare. Be sure the object stands out from its background.

Rehearse with your visuals before the program begins so you'll be able to present them smoothly during the show. If necessary, number your visuals so you can easily present them in the correct order. Remember to speak to your audience, not to your visuals, and don't block them from the camera's view.

# CUES

If you're going to perform on visual media, you should learn the various hand signals and cues used by production crews that will guide you throughout the program.

CUE	MEANING	DESCRIPTION
Stand by:	It is almost time for performer to begin speaking or performing some action.	Hand and arm upraised.
Cue to start:	Begin talking and/or action.	Index finger pointed directly at the person who is to perform the action.
Time cue (1 minute):	Minutes remaining for the performer and/or program.	Arm upraised with one, two, three, four, or five fingers in the air to show amount of time remaining.
30 seconds left:	Thirty seconds left in show and/or specific segment.	A "T" made with both hands.
15 seconds left:	Fifteen seconds left in show and/or specific segment – start to wrap up whatever you are doing.	Tight fist.
Finish (wrap it up):	End the discussion and/or action.	Arm upraised with knuckles of fist pointed toward the performer.
Cut:	Stop talking and/or action.	Moving the hand across the throat in a cutting motion.
Speed up:	Talk faster and/or skip some of your material – time is running out.	Rotating the index finger clockwise in circle – the faster the rotation the greater the need to speed up.
Slow down:	Slow down. Too much time remaining – ahead of schedule.	Hands are pulled apart in slow motion, as if pulling rubber bands.
OK:	Everything is going well – keep talking or engaging in your current action.	Circle made with the thumb and forefinger.
Back up:	Move back – too close to the camera.	Pushing motion with both hands.
Come closer:	Move closer to the camera.	Palms facing the person giving the cues; both hands moving toward the chest.
More volume:	Speak louder.	Cupping the ear with the hand.
Less volume:	Speak softer.	Raising palm to lips.
Speak to or look at a particular camera or microphone:	You should be looking at this camera or speaking into this microphone.	Hand pointing to a specific camera or microphone. A wave of that hand means get ready to move to another camera – it is about to be "activated."
On time:	Right on schedule.	Index finger touching the nose.

PROJECT COMPLETION RECORD **COMMUNICATING ON VIDEO**

PROJECT	SPEECH TITLE	DATE	VICE PRESIDENT EDUCATION'S INITIALS
1. Straight Talk			
2. The Interview Show			
3. When You're the Host			
4. The Press Conference			
5. Instructing on the Internet			

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