

How to Become a Great Speaker!

Presented by Simone Kirk, ARSL 2017

Let's talk about Glossophobia

GLOSSOPHOBIA: The fear of public speaking... Did you know that 74% of people admit that they suffer from it? 5.3 million Americans have some sort of stage fright. Statistics show that most people would rather die than give a speech in front of an audience. Are you one of them?

Let's look at:

- Physical signs of Glossophobia: Sweaty hands, shortness of breath, rapid heartbeat, nausea, tight feeling in the stomach.
- Psychological signs of Glossophobia: Sleeplessness the night before, anxiety or nervousness, panic, a blank feeling – presenter can't remember anything.

Please know: To be nervous before a presentation is NORMAL! But you can't let fears overcome you to the point where you are not able to present or function.

With this talk, I will show you how to overcome performance anxiety, may it be mild or severe.

I will share strategies with you on how to become a better speaker period. When this session is over, you will feel more confident, loaded with tips and tricks, and the most important dos and don'ts for your next speech.

Why do librarians need to have public speaking skills? Why should you pay attention for the next 45 minutes?

No matter what your position at the library, your public speaking skills will be in demand: Customer Service – book talks – staff meetings – or you are invited to present somewhere – in all these situations, you should represent and present your library in the best possible way, and get the word out about what you do! That's the best way to win supporters!

And don't forget: You are representing your library, but you are also ALWAYS representing YOURSELF!

Mad public speaking skills benefit your personal growth, improve your communication with others, increase your self-confidence, and improve your leadership skills. It is the most important and beneficial "soft" skill to have for any career. To the point: It will make you more awesome!

How do you get rid of stage fright? How do we get to the point that alone the idea of standing on stage does not turn us into a sweaty mess?

Preparation

1. Prepare yourself!

Prepare yourself, before preparing your material.

GLOSSOPHOBIA has many symptoms and different severity levels! Some people are less effected, some suffer heavily.

Let's look at:

- Physical signs of Glossophobia: Sweaty hands, heat rising, shortness of breath, rapid heartbeat, nausea, tight feeling in the stomach, etc.
- Psychological signs of Glossophobia: Anxiety or nervousness, panic, a blank feeling – presenter can't remember anything.

Please know: To be nervous before a presentation is NORMAL! But you can't let fears overcome you to the point where you are not able to present or function.

"There are two kinds of speakers: Those that are nervous, and those that are liars"

Mark Twain

Step 1 to overcome Glossophobia:

Acknowledge the physical and psychological symptoms, and tell yourself that it is normal to be nervous! Did you know that your physical symptoms mirror the exact symptoms of an Olympic athlete, ready to perform in front of the whole world? When asked in interviews about their feelings before a performance, all athletes say: "I wasn't nervous! I was **EXCITED** to present what I trained for all year! I was not scared! I was ready to succeed!"

The way you THINK about your performance makes all the difference in your preparation: Train your brain: Say "I'm excited! This is adrenalin pumping through me. It's the good kind of nervous!" Adrenalin will let you accomplish amazing things! Use it to your advantage!

Step 2 to overcome Glossophobia:

Relax! Directly before your presentation, take a few deep breaths, shake out your hands and arms, strike a power pose and hold it a few seconds to ground yourself. If you relax your body, your brain will follow! Try to smile: It signals your brain that you are ok – because you are smiling! You are happy!

Step 3 to overcome Glossophobia:

Boost your confidence! You can't deliver a good performance without some level of confidence!

If you have confidence problems: Alter your thinking: You must be good at something? Why did somebody asked you to speak, or sent you to perform? Somebody else believes in you, and so should you. Talk to people who thinks the world of you! (family, friends, etc.) Ask them why they like you? And you soak that up! When you step on stage, OWN IT!

Be confident in your abilities! Be excited to share them with your audience!

Prepare yourself also means:

2. Let's talk Appearance/Outfit

Your outfit is important! Get used to the idea that people will judge you! This is normal! It happens automatically without any ill wishes, or anybody wanting you any harm. People don't know you, so you will get judged by what they see. Never underestimate this point of your presentation.

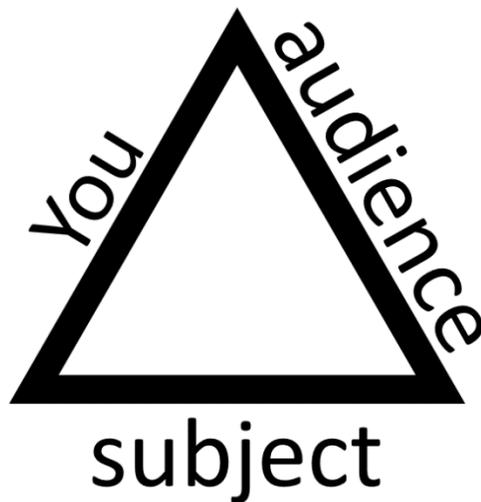
- Don't try a completely new look for your performance. If you don't like it, you will feel insecure.
- Be as comfortable as possible without looking too casual.
- Dress appropriately according to your audience: Corporate events might call for a suit, your 6th grade middle school summer reading talk will come across much more real in jeans and t-shirt! Or wear a funny costume and go all out! Situation appropriate outfit is key.
- Look polished: Shoes, fingernails, jewelry, and hair. Your GOAL: Look as confident as possible!
- Dress according to your body shape and figure: Don't let your audience see how much you love tacos and fried chicken! It's none of their business!
- Can you move freely in your outfit? Make sure nothing slips, rises up, falls open, etc.
- Wear an outfit that doesn't make you fidget and pull on it.
- Your hair: Ladies, hair flipping is great during a date, but touching your hair during a presentation and constantly flipping it out of your face is a "No No"!
- Makeup: Ladies, I recommend to wear a light makeup to achieve a polished and professional look. Makeup was invented to enhance your natural beauty. Why not use it? Don't overdo it, use it to compliment your overall look.
- Shoes: Ladies, if you wear heels, be sure you can rock them on stage! Nothing is more embarrassing than a rolling ankle and a staggering lady on the verge to fall.
- Suits: Guys, make sure you wear a well fitted suit: Correct arm length for dress shirts, upper button closed on your jacket or open. Do not close more than the upper button! Avoid the "sausage effect"! Watch your pant length: Coordinate with your shoes to avoid too short or too long pants. My tip: Wear a dress shirt that makes your eye color pop! Little things have a big effect and and go a long way!

- Guys: You can dress up a nice fitting pair of jeans with a dress shirt and a matching tie. Wear a belt, if you tug your shirt in. Otherwise your outfits looks “unfinished”.
- Tennis shoes: Guys and ladies, be careful with athletic shoes, if you have to be dressy. Converse and more stylish models could be dressed up, depending on your overall outfit.

Now move on to your presentation material itself.

Preparation also means:

3. Know your terrain: Audience – You – Subject:



What is the purpose of your speech? What interests your audience? Relationship?

Let’s look at **You as speaker** first: Talk about something you are an expert in! You are a librarian: You do research for a living! Learn your presentation by heart, till you can present it backwards. You can’t deliver a fascinating presentation by reading off a piece a paper! LEARN YOUR PRESENTATION! The better the prep, the better the rep!

Choose your passion theme! You can’t give a good performance without passion. Forget it!

Practice your speech out loud! Over and over again, till you feel confident and your presentation is fluent. By doing this, you also get an idea about timing. Do you have to elaborate, or shorten your presentation? NEVER run out of time on stage: It signals your audience that information is lacking, and you just didn’t get to it all.

All this prep work will raise your confidence. It will make you feel prepared, and you will feel more assured and ready to present.

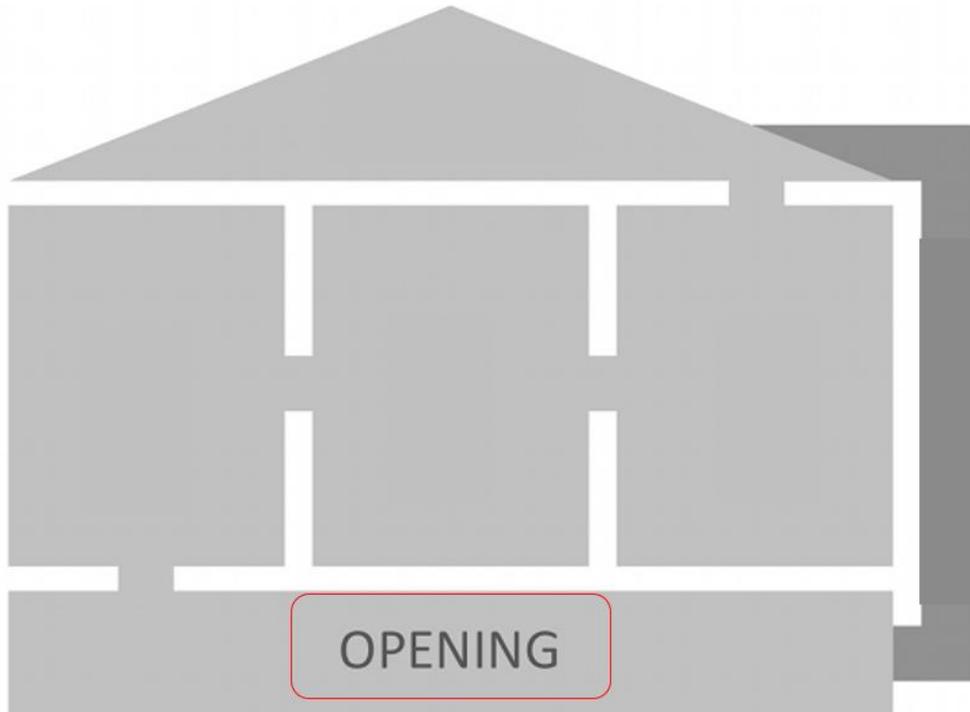
Let’ look at your **Audience**: What do you know about your audience? Average age? Political orientations? What’s the relationship to you? These factors influence how you build your speech and choose your **Subject**. The subject needs to be of interest to your audience. Tailor it as much as possible.

You are now ready to start building your speech.

Meet the “Speech Structure Building”, by Florian Mueck

Building your speech is pretty much like building a house!

You can use this structure for any speech, performance, any topic, and any occasion.

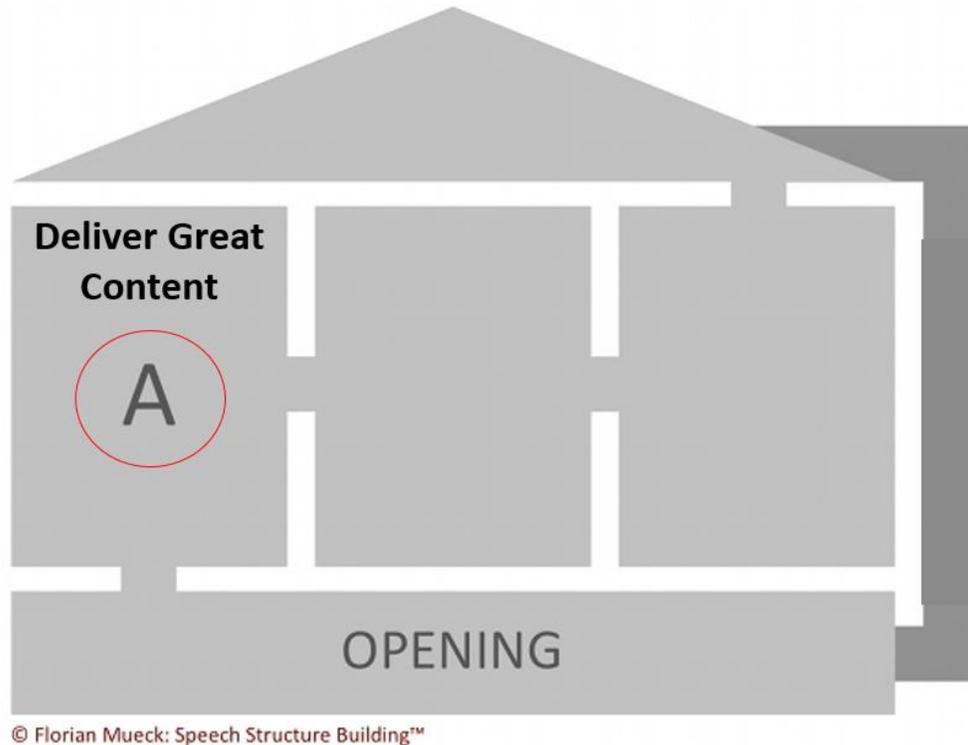


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1. Solid Foundation! This is your **opening**: You have 30 seconds to catch your audience!
 - Your 1st sentence is GOLD: Don't waste it: Don't go the traditional route... Hello, my name is...and I'm so excited to be here! BORING! Open with a catching statement or a question! Get creative!
 - Don't put the agenda out at the beginning (via power point slide or paper hand-out). You erase all suspense. You want your audience to focus on you, instead of reading your hand-out material.
 - IMPORTANT: Tell your audience in 2-3 sentences what the PURPOSE OF YOUR SPEECH is. Short and to the point: "With this talk, I will..." "In the next 30 minutes, I will explain to you how..." You will refer back to this statement at the end during your closing.
 - With an engaging opening, the foundation for your speech is in place.

The pillars represent the content of your speech. LESS IS MORE! Pick 3 points you want to talk about. Don't overload your audience.

A: Deliver Great Content:



Structure

- Have a logical structure in your speech!
- Don't jump around – mentally, your audience might have a hard time following your points.
- Different ways of structuring: Chronologically, subject oriented. The most important structure rule: Keep it simple! LESS IS MORE!
- Use the Speech Structure Building for every topic – it always works!

Example for a book talk presentation:

Beginning: You could read a catching sentence from the book, or use a statement from the author, etc.

Your 3 most favorite scenes, or 3 why you love it so much.

Closing: Call to action! Tell people why they really need to read this book!

Drain pipe: Refer back to your opening statement

Example for a fundraiser speech:

Introduction: Why do you need this money for your library?

Highlight 3 things that are missing and the consequences, or 3 things you want to improve.

Closing: Call to action! Please fund me!

Drain pipe: Refer back to your beginning and bring the presentation to a full circle that makes sense to your audience...

Rhetoric

- Choose your language and sentences wisely: Get to the Point! LESS IS MORE!
- Use positive rhetoric! Avoid vague statements: “I don’t think it would work”. Say: “It won’t work, because...”
- Build bridges of sympathy: You achieve it by provoking emotions from your audience! Make them feel something! Be personal, be vulnerable! Your audience likes to relate to its speaker.
- Use **Metaphors!** They are such a powerful tool! Paint a picture in the mind of your audience.

Example: Talk in a staff meeting about saving a library project or program series:

“Something is not working out right. Maybe we should give the project more time? Let’s try it for a little longer.”

Or you can say:

“Some of us believe that the fire and passion for this program has been extinguished. But I see that flame! Let’s ignite that fire together and burn down any doubts!” See what we just did there...

Anecdotes (or tell them about yourself)

- Remember? You skipped the boring introduction of yourself at the beginning? This is the part when you share something personal or something that is important to you with your listeners.
- Tell them a story that is related to your speech subject.
- People love stories: I promise your audience will listen!

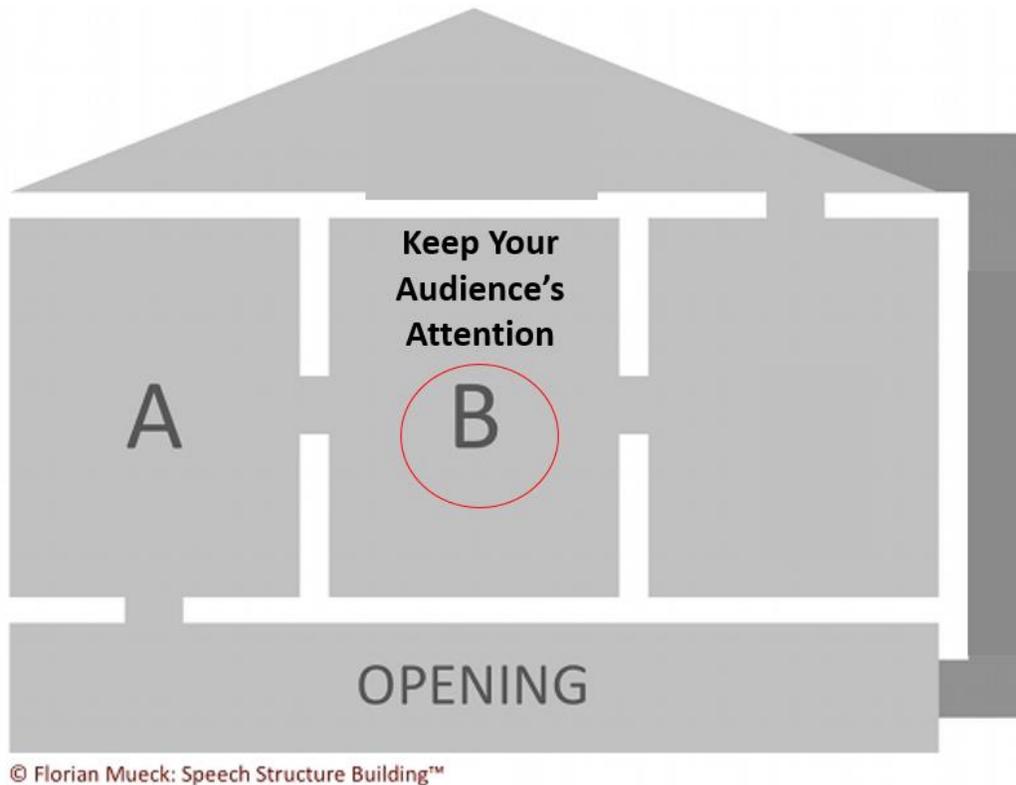
Example:

You are seeking funding for a story time program. Share the heartwarming story of you as a child listening to a story for the first time. Do you remember it? How did it make you feel? Your audience liked to feel instead of just listen.

Quotes

- I used a Mark Twain quote as an opener. Why not use wise words from people who already have credibility status?
- Research quotes that support your speech, and tap into the source’s knowledge, wisdom, and fame.

B: How to Keep Your Audience Engaged:



Eye contact

- ALWAYS hold eye contact with your audience – it's so important to make a connection. If you look somebody in the eye, you signal: attention, respect, I hear you, I'm interested in you. Treat your audience the same way.
- Holding eye contact is difficult. We are programmed to avoid it. Look them in the eyes: If you don't, they feel disconnected, disrespected, and left out. By maintaining eye contact – you include your audience!
- Best practical way to handle it: Pick 3 people/points. Front LEFT, Middle, back right. Keep your eyes moving all the times! Don't stare somebody down. That's weird...
- Some public speakers suggest the moving "Figure eight". Find what works for you.
- Please know: You are breaking away from your audience by reading from a script! Don't do it! Know your material and keep your eyes on your listeners at all time!

Voice

You already know your voice! There are so many variations. Loud, whispering, upset, high pitch, sulky, etc. USE YOUR VOICES! Trust me, you have them!

- Do you use different voices during story time?

- Then why do so many speakers present in a monotone voice? BORING!!!! Your audience will fall asleep soon...
- And the worst voice mistake: Speaking so quietly and softly that the backrow can't even hear you. Very frustrating to your audience. They made the effort to come and listen to you. Speak up, so they can hear you.
- GOOD VOICE PROJECTION and GOOD VOCAL VARIETY is key to keep your audience from dosing off. Speak loudly without yelling – you can practice that: Good posture is key. Don't slouch!
- And learn to use the element of a PAUSE: Silence in the room can enhance a statement, when placed correctly. Don't fill empty space with "uuhms", and "aahh", and "well", etc. It's not necessary.

Body Language

- Body Language can win a presentation, or ruin it.
- Most presenters are static, almost careful on stage. NOT the right approach to be fascinating.
- Don't ever feel like you are over doing it with your gestures. Think of you as an actor. Extreme movements, not too hectic, are easy to follow and captivate attention. Motion before static existence!
- Change up your movements. Don't use the same hand movement throughout the whole presentation.
- Watch your posture: Don't give the impression you are scared.
- Do's: Use your hands and your body, face your audience, and don't turn your back.
- Use the stage space, don't stand in only one place.
- Don't hide behind the lectern. Lecterns are your worst enemies! Tear down the walls between the audience and yourself. (Personally, I hate podiums. I'm so small. I always feel like a kid in front of the ice cream counter and I can't peak over it!)

You can create a feeling of intimacy and inclusion by becoming one with your audience. Step to the side of the lectern, or come around a table, if you can. Use a wireless mic. Don't get pinned behind the lectern! If you don't have a Wi-Fi mic, ask for a mic with a longer cable. It is so worth the effort.

- Now... don't get too close to your audience! Leave your audience a comfort zone. Don't invade personal space! It can be scary for your listeners.

Visual Aids

- Visual aids, or props: There are lots of possible ways to include some.
- Limit it to 3 props per speech. LESS IS MORE!!!! Don't overwhelm your audience.
- The most popular one, and the most butchered one!!!! POWER POINT slides
- A screen behind you has only one function: To ENHANCE your presentation... meaning: It supports what you are saying. It's not supposed to be a competition and steal your audience's attention away from you.
- Biggest power point mistake: Reading Slides. Don't do it! Why would you beam information up there, and tell your audience the same thing. You are forcing your listeners to read. They can't look at you, listen, and read at the same time. The human brain will try to tackle it all, but it's not obtaining information as effectively, as it would, mastering just a single task. Ever been frustrated by reading

slides? Before you could read it all, the next slide appeared, and you didn't even hear fully what the speaker said? See? Exactly! Don't do it!

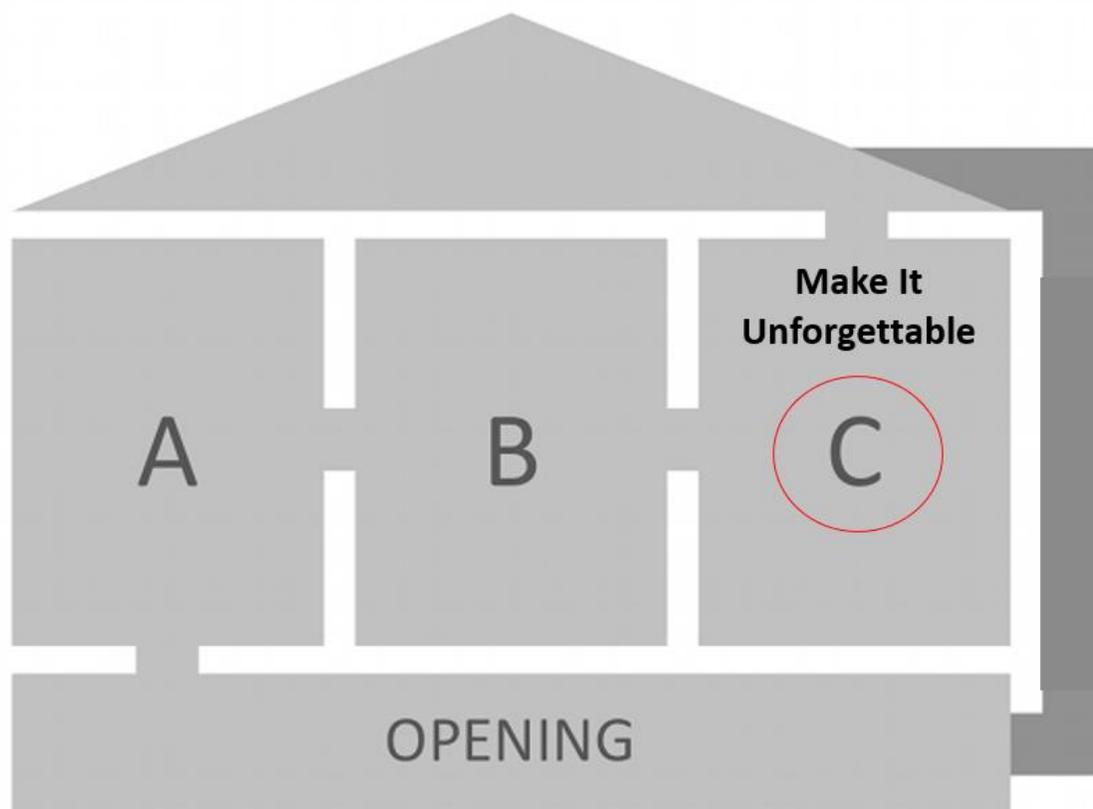
- MEGA IMPORTANT: Don't put your agenda on the screen at the beginning: You just took all suspense out of your presentation. Somebody might already have decided: I'm not interested in point 2 & 3, and plans to tune out.
- Have an interesting image up when people fill the room. Something that relates to your presentation and creates an interest in what is to come.
- You can play music while people trickle in. It sets the tone, and your audience will love it.
- Power point pictures: ALWAYS FULL SCREEN! Emotions want to be felt and are so much more important than only your rational thought process. A full screen image has more impact than 4-5 little photos cramped into one slide.
- Fight MONOTONY: LOOSE the reappearing pre-fabricated slide frames. You just create monotony.
- Also: Your Logo does not need to be on every slide. It creates monotony too. Don't do it!
- WORDS in slides: Use only a few words per slide, or short sentences. Try to group them, frame them, and make it visually interesting. Don't fill the screen with words strewn all over. It's confusing and your eyes can't settle on anything. Your audience does not want to read. It wants to listen and feel!
- Make a connection with your slides:

Example: Subject "Networking"

Show a spider web picture as a slide: ask your audience: "When does the spider work on her web? Morning? Evening? Always! Always network!!!!"

- Statistics in a power point: Make sure you send a clear message – visually!
- Stress the consequences of the statistic, and why you show this statistic! What does your audience learn from it?

C: Make it unforgettable! These are the extra tricks...



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Humor

- Very important: Make your audience laugh! Think about it: We like people so much better, when they are funny... it connects us! It makes us happy! Happy feelings make happy people!
- You don't have to be a standup comedian to make your audience laugh – or smile: Think about HUMOR as element when you prepare your speech, and build it in. Easiest way: Anecdotes – share something funny that happened, for example during story time.

Enthusiasm

- The best way to NOT be boring as a speaker: Show enthusiasm! How do you do that? Be animated on stage, talk about your subject like it personally means something to you. You have to communicate that you care, and why you care.

For example: Let's talk fundraising. What would the proposed project mean for your community? How can it touch people? Give concrete examples, no vague statistics. Tell your sponsors exactly what will happen when they fund you. Also tell them what happens, if they don't. Be dramatic, be extreme. Stir up some emotions!!!!

Passion

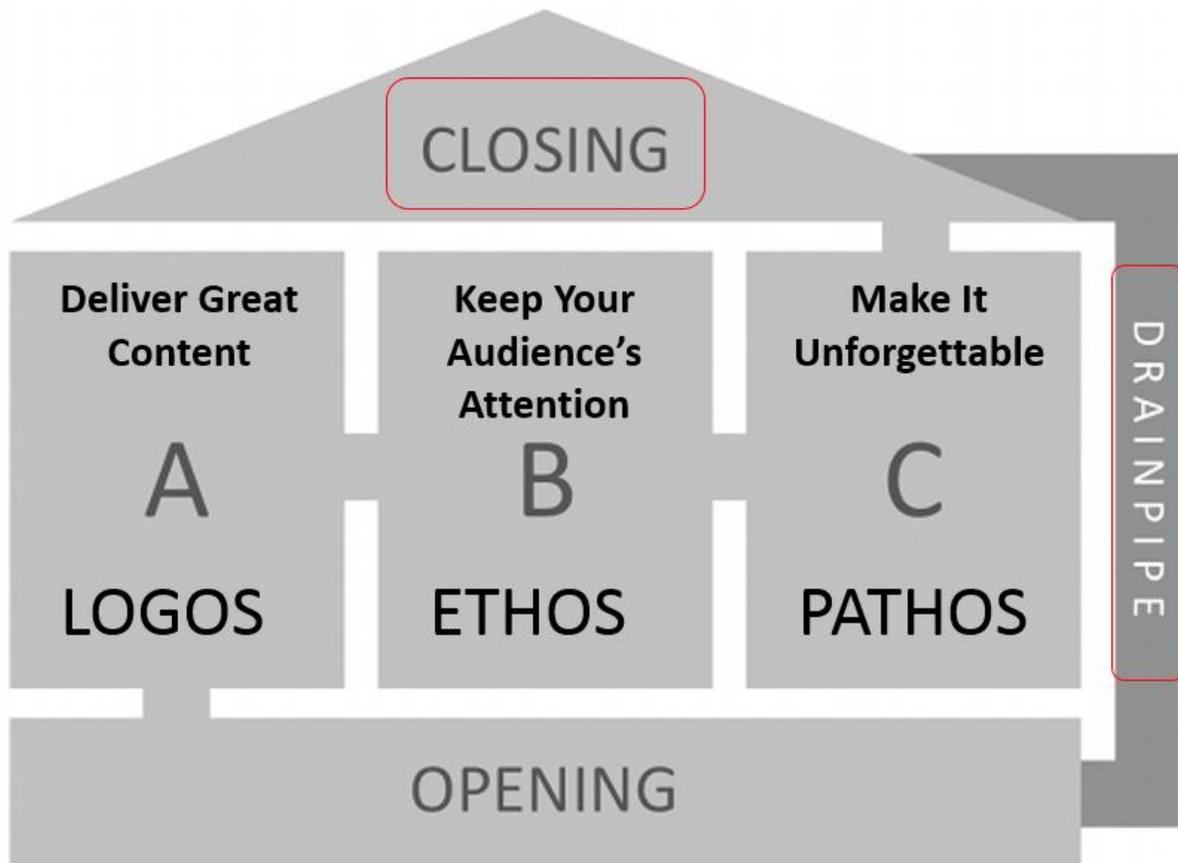
- Your speech won't have the same effect, if you lack passion for your subject. The audience will notice that you don't care. Don't even go there...
- Your audience will pick up on your passion for what you do and talk about to them.
- Ever listened to a monotone, static, lecture-like speaker for an hour? The content was great, very knowledgeable speaker, but it still put you to sleep? Don't be like that: Be animated, lively, and passionate on stage!

Your most **IMPORTANT** public speaking tool: Smile!!!!

- Why is "SMILING" even a subject in public speaking, I thought? Smiling is great! Everybody loves to smile!
- Do you know, how many people forget about it during a presentation? Out of nervousness?
- Maybe you don't feel like smiling, you feel tense and more like grinding your teeth? You should smile anyway. A friendly face is more likeable than a grumpy one.
- Smiling signals that you are comfortable – the worst thing: Make your audience feel sorry for you, because you are so uncomfortable.
- Smiling signals the audience: You are enjoying this, you like talking about your subject, and they automatically give you more credit on the likability scale.
- Of course, if you are telling a sad story, and communicate horrible funding numbers, don't smile! Your facial expression should match up with the content you are talking about.
- Guys, you are more prone to not wanting to smile during a presentation. Men like to be seen as tough = confidence = knowledge = respect. Forget it! Everybody will like you so much more when you smile! It's called charisma! Please unleash it on stage!
- **Be an actor! You are already doing that in your job! Fake it till you make it!**

You have solid columns for your house/speech. Every functional house needs a roof!

The roof is your **CLOSING.**



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- Close your speech with a 3-4 sentence summary, and a call to action, according to the purpose of your speech. For example, you asked for library funding: Tell them to start supporting you. Right now! End your presentation with a “bang” and provoke emotions in your audience!

Drain Pipe

- Your closing statement needs to refer back to your opening statement. If you opened with a quote, bring the quote up one more time. Always give your audience a “well rounded” performance. This is called “the Drain Pipe”. It flows back to your foundation/opening of your speech.
- And please: No “THANK YOU” at the end. Remember Hannibal Lector in the movie Silence of the Lamb:

“Clarice, have the lambs stopped screaming? Thank you!” A boring “thank you” lessens the impact of your dramatic statement at the end, it lessens the effect on your audience. Don’t do it! It’s hard, I know. Don’t worry about being perceived as arrogant. Your audience will not feel this way after a fun, genuinely great performance by you.

Another example of a great end to a speech: MLK: I have a dream speech. His ending: “ Let Freedom ring! Let freedom ring!” Picture his hand gesture and his facial expression. Now, did he end it with: “Thank you! It was an honor to speak to you today.”?

- The audience will know when you are finished. Calmly take a step back and wait. Smile. That’s it. And take your applause, don’t be uncomfortable accepting it. You deserve it!

All the tips and tools I have given you... please keep in mind: Whatever you do: Make your audience feel something. Emotions are so much stronger than facts! Keep that in mind when advocating for your library: Make people FEEL that libraries are important. They rationally already know that libraries are justified to exist. Make it personal.

They will remember your talk, trust me. And remember”:

“There are two kinds of speakers: Those that are nervous, and those that are liars”

Mark Twain

Be nervous! It’s good to be nervous! Embrace it, and let the adrenalin pump you up for the performance of your life!

Don’t be scared – be excited!

References.

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The Seven Minute Star. Become a great speaker in 15 simple steps

By Florian Mueck, ISBN 978-1-45059-975-7

Read it FREE Online: <https://books.google.com/books?isbn=3844229833>

PlusPlus. Patterns for better communication

By Florian Mueck, ISBN 978-1-48180-361-8

Rhetoric: The Public Speaking Game

The world's first public speaking board game

By John Zimmer & Florian Mueck

<http://rhetoricgame.com/>

Also available as **App** for iPhone & Android devices

This App is so much fun! I highly recommend it! You have to try it! Play it during a get together with friends, or use it for a library program. It has a family version which is perfect to play as a family with kids!

www.florianmueck.com

Visit Florian Mueck's website and check out his awesome blogs about different aspects of public speaking.

TED Talks:

Simon Sinek on Training Your Mind to Perform Under Pressure...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GBF9xXhSFRc>

1.

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Amy Cuddy Short TED Video - Empowering through Body Language...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TdU2l0i2Wh0>

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