

Using Humor in Public Speaking

HUMOR

(SUMMARY)

1. Use humor to attract and keep your audience's interest, to help them like and appreciate you and what you have to say, to help them do or believe as you want them to, to help them remember your words of wisdom, to support your ideas, and to help you recover when disaster seems to be threatening your efforts.

2. Don't use humor if you don't know how, if the occasion doesn't call for it, unless you are confident of your ability to use it accurately and well, or if the audience isn't prepared for it, and if you can't make even your friends laugh when you try to be funny.

3. Humor is anything funny which has the quality of making us laugh, whether a silent inward chuckle or a belly laugh. Wit, satire, and irony are closely related, but call for a more intellectual approach.

4. Humor comes in many forms, from large (*exaggeration*) to small (*understatement*), from a play on words (*pun*), through *parody* to the broad humor of *burlesque*.

5. Use humor whenever it suits the speaker, the audience, and the occasion, and will not give offense.

6. Keep humor relevant. Make it fit the ideas being developed. It is a useful tool, but never a substitute for ideas. Use humor at the beginning to acquaint listeners with the speaker and his subject, in the body of the speech to shore up its weaknesses, and in the conclusion to drive the main ideas home.

7. Humor fails when it is weakly spoken, badly interpreted, or poorly adapted to its purposes. Using notes obscures it, clumsiness in composition muffles it, and slowness exterminates it.

8. Funny stories work if you can tell them and if they are worth telling. They must suit your needs and those of your audience as well. You need to search hard to find appropriate ones and to file them carefully for quick reference. A card file is more convenient than a notebook for this purpose.

9. Try your luck with humor by studying its various forms and by frequent practice.

10. Prepare yourself so that inept chairmen may not hurt your chances. Write your own speech of introduction for them to use, and go yourself well before you are to speak to be sure that all is in readiness for you.

FORMS/TYPES

EXAGGERATION — UNDERSTATEMENT

SUPRISE TWIST — INCONGRUITY

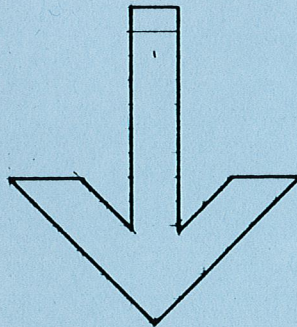
PUN — MALAPROP — PARODY

BURLESQUE

WIT — SATIRE — IRONY

SOURCES

- 1. JOKE BOOKS**
- 2. JOKE SERVICES**
- 3. READERS DIGEST, PAPERS, etc.**
- 4. RADIO, TELEVISION**



**PERSONAL EXPERIENCE
AND OBSERVATION**

DO'S / DON'TS

CHOOSE "RIGHT"

ADD YOUR FLAVOUR

DEVELOP YOUR STYLE

KNOW THE AUDIENCE

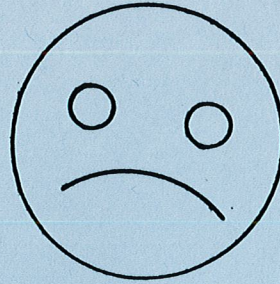
TIMING/PACE

BUILD UP

ONE-LINERS PAUSE, PACE, PITCH

DON'T X OFFEND

WHAT IF NOBODY LAUGHS



- 1. USE "SAVERS"**
- 2. DON'T PANIC**
- 3. DON'T RUSH**
- 4. DON'T CHANGE**
- 5. WAIT FOR THE LAUGH**

Evaluation Form



- REMEMBER.
- Be positive, honest and thorough.
- Neither whitewash nor go for the jugular
- THANKS! JK

Speaker: _____

1. List those things that were done well.

2. List a few things which could be improved.

3. Includes any other comments.

(Feel free to use the flipside)

EVALUATOR : _____

DATE : _____

..... FOLD AND TEAR

Evaluation Form



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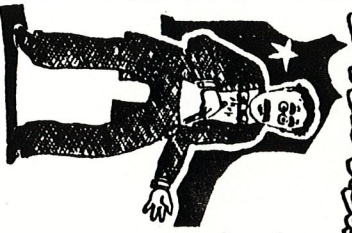
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Student Profile Sheet

PLEASE FILL OUT THIS PROFILE SHEET AS COMPLETELY AS YOU CAN. THIS WILL HELP ME TO KNOW YOU BETTER AND TO TAILOR THE COURSE SO THAT I CAN HELP YOU ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS. THANKS FOR YOUR HELP!

JK

- STUDENTS NAME : _____
- OCCUPATION / EMPLOYER : _____

1. What speaking experience have you had?

2. Is public speaking a requirement of your job or profession?

3. Do you have any specific fears about public speaking?

4. Do you feel impelled to improve your ability to...

- _____ Persuade/convince others
- _____ Put ideas across clearly
- _____ Improve self-confidence
- _____ Think quickly & clearly under pressure

- _____ Become skilled in group leadership
- _____ Listen effectively
- _____ Tactfully evaluate someone else's speeches
- _____ Gracefully accept helpful criticism

5. Are there any areas you wish to learn more about that are not already listed in the course outline?

6. Picture yourself as the type of speaker you wish to become. Describe that speaker.