

INSPIRATION: A Chance To Speak

Consider the role of Inspiration as nothing more than a chance to speak.

Your Inspiration is a great opportunity to share something thought-provoking or heartfelt with the audience, and improve your speaking skills in the process.

The Key Elements of Delivering an Inspiration:

- Deliver a story, anecdote, fable, etc which is humorous, touching, or inspiring.
- Use content that you have a personal connection with to allow you to deliver it with passion, enthusiasm and purpose.

How To Prepare for Inspiration:

- Think of an Inspiration as the same as a regular Project Speech, except much shorter. (*i.e. just get up and speak for 2 minutes*)
- An Inspiration typically runs in the vicinity of 1 to 2 minutes – just enough time for a short story or anecdote.
- Prepare as you would for any regular speech - choose your content, write it out, practice it aloud, and time yourself to check your speech length.

How To Perform as Inspiration:

- When called upon by the Toastmaster, deliver your prepared Inspiration within 1-2 minutes.

Notes on Improving your Inspiration:

If you're keen to improve on your speech for next time, here are some things you can practice outside of meetings:

- If you ran over (or under) time, practice your speech aloud, time yourself, and edit your speech until you have the correct amount of content.
- If you used notes, try practicing it aloud to yourself over and over, lessening your reliance upon your notes each time.
- If you spoke too softly, too slowly, or with a constant pitch or tone – try reading your speech in different voices (aim to sound silly on purpose) and record yourself with your phone or computer. You'll be surprised how much 20 minutes of quick practice can improve your delivery!
- If you kept your hands clasped (either in front or behind you), in your pockets, or fidgeted with notes or other objects – try delivering your speech again but use your hands and arms to gesture purposefully. Use your gestures to emphasize your points.
- If you stood in one place, rocked back and forth, or alternately, wandered around aimlessly – try delivering your speech while moving *with purpose*. This is much more difficult than it seems.

To practice one extreme, take 5 paces between speaking each thought in your speech (often a whole sentence or phrase). Once you're comfortable moving around while still being able to deliver your speech, dial the movement back to match the ideas you're talking about.

That's it!

Have fun, get involved, and thanks for helping us run the meeting!