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Everybody Talks

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Recommended Citation

Crisman, Ima, "Everybody Talks" (1960). *SDSU Extension Circulars*. 629.
http://openprairie.sdstate.edu/extension_circ/629

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Everybody Talks



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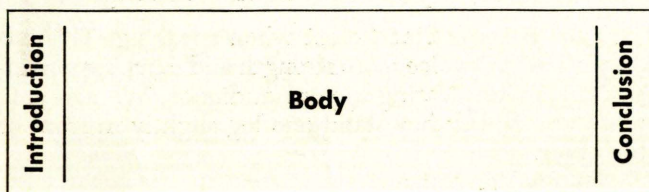
EVERYBODY TALKS. They talk for business, for pleasure and just to kill time. Talk can be interesting, entertaining, even inspiring. Here are some suggestions for 4-H club members who want to talk not more but better.

MAKE A PLAN

Decide on the purpose and keep your objectives on the level of the audience interest and knowledge.

Your plan will be a three part plan—introduction, body, and conclusion.

In terms of time for the talk the following illustration shows approximately the percentage that is devoted to each:



Start with the body and develop the introduction and conclusion later.

The subject matter may be arranged into three to five major topics. Illustrations or personal experiences are a must in any talk. The body of a talk might be compared to an automobile without a starter or brakes. They come later; the introduction is the starter and the brakes will be the conclusion.

Someone has said that in the introduction you will tell them what you are going to tell them, in the body of the talk you tell them, and in the conclusion you tell them what you have told them. A satisfactory repetition of ideas will help the audience to remember.

WHEN YOU MAKE A TALK

One way to make your audiences sit up and take notice is to test your speech in advance by asking yourself four questions:

Is there anything in my speech worth quoting?

Look for at least one quotable statement that could make a headline or be repeated orally by someone who listened to the speech.

By Ima Crisman, State 4-H Club Agent

Have I used plenty of examples to get my points across?

Think back to some of the talks you remember most vividly. Did you remember the story or incident or other illustrations the speaker used to point up an important fact. Study the points you want to put across, then clinch them with a story, incident, or illustration that will catch and hold the interest of the audience.

Is my speech down-to-earth?

A weakness, common to many of us, is liking to show off a bit. We want to impress people with our knowledge of this or that. If we hear a speech with flowery phrases and high flown oratory we are temporarily carried away with it. But how much of that kind of message do we carry home. Keep a down to earth quality in your speech.

Is my talk too heavy-handed?

Regardless of how much we want to get across "our message" we dare not overdo it. Here are three good ways to get lightness into a speech:

1. Don't tell everything there is to say about a subject. Develop one segment and explore it with enthusiasm.
2. Discover fresh ways of stating heavy facts.
3. Surprise the audience with an amusing incident where it is least expected.

OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER

What else is needed? Here are a few tips for the speaker:

If you are thinking ideas you won't be self conscious. You and the audience will be idea-conscious.

Don't encase yourself in a cellophane wrapper of "afraid-of-making-a-mistake." Will Rogers said "Go ahead and make a mistake, or two or three of them. It will make folks think you're almost as human as they are."

Look and act confident, no matter how you feel. Prepare yourself by making the best of your talents. Develop a sense of personal worth. Don't let one failure destroy your confidence. Try again.

So you have stage fright. You would be unnatural if you didn't have some of it. Remember stage fright is

nature's way of stirring you up to do your best. Breathe deeply and relax. Do not apologize. Get so interested in what you are saying that you forget your nervousness.

Your personal appearance should be the best. Wear clothes that do not distract your audience's attention. Any distraction will cause the listeners to lose a little of what you are saying.

If you are preparing a talk for radio, write it the way you would talk to your friend if you were sitting in his living room. Develop a friendly quality in your voice which will capture the confidence and attention of the listeners.

Your family, your home, your schooling, your friends, your 4-H work, your viewpoints are all a part of you. Your background gives "color" to your voice and your words and makes up the "feeling" you have as you talk.

Keep the Golden Speaking Rule in mind: "Say it to others as you would prefer to have the same thing said to you."

SERVING AS EMCEE

Emceeing can be fun. Audiences want to like you and to laugh. There are few simple rules to help you. Preparation and practice pay off. Make yourself look and act confident.

The Job: The master or mistress of ceremony is to present the show, not be one. Your job is to introduce acts, keep audience interested, and give continuity to the program, and fill in where there is a time lapse.

How To Do It: To present a program effectively, you must be prompt and ready to capture your audience. Introduction of acts should include interesting information concerning the individual or group. If there is a time lapse, fill in with material you have ready. Have the act or person inform you when they are ready, and then do the introducing. If they need the mike, you should take it to them.

Audiences: They vary! Try to capture their mood, and do the best you can with them. Whether you are presenting a program of pure entertainment or something more serious, you are charged with certain degree of responsibility in taking care that what you have to offer is properly sold. Your job is to detect the saleable angle in the act on the program and then present it in such a way that your audience "buys" what you have to

sell. If the program is long, they will welcome a "stretch" about half way.

Be ready to lead the applause after the act; audiences are sometimes reluctant to start applauding an act.

Successful Story Telling: Have fill-in material if you need it. Notes, on small cards, are perfectly acceptable provided you don't just read them.

Beware of jokes that can offend your audience. It is wise to avoid nationality, religious, liquor, and suggestive stories.

Many successful emcees keep a file of good stories. When you hear a story, write it down. Testing jokes on your family or friends will give you confidence and an idea of the response. Give your audience time to laugh before you go on.

Grammar: Use correct grammar. Look up any words that you are not sure of in pronunciation. Watch using slang, and "git" for get, "jist" for just.

Use of the Mike: Arrive early enough to test your voice over the mike, and learn how to adjust it. Stand several inches from the mike; it will "blast" if you are too close. Proper adjustment should be about shoulder height, talking over the mike allows the audience to see your face.

Your Dress: Men should wear a suit or sport coat and slacks. A white shirt and tie are acceptable. Girls should dress neatly, and choose their accessories carefully. "Glittery" jewelry detracts on stage. Remember you will be on stage, and the lights are strong.

Your Posture: Stand erect when speaking. This not only gives your voice more strength and carrying power, but it is more pleasing to your audience. Women look more graceful if they stand one leg slightly in front of the other.

Happy Emceeing!

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