

Speaking and Listening Tips and Tricks

How to be an Influential Speaker

The way a speech or an oral presentation is delivered has a huge impact on how the audience listens and interprets the content. Below are some tips for improving the delivery of your next oral presentation.

Tone

The tone of voice you use is important and can change the whole mood of your presentation. For example, there is a different tone of voice you use to speak at a funeral than there is at a sports carnival. The tone of voice you choose helps the listeners to create a connection with you. It expresses your feelings you have about a topic. Choose your tone of voice carefully to help create a connection with your listeners.

Volume

The volume of your voice needs to be raised and lowered for different effects throughout your presentation. As you change the volume, you will also change the emphasis and the importance of each section of your presentation.

Pitch

The pitch of your voice is how high or low your voice sounds to someone listening to you. Changing your pitch throughout a presentation allows you to express different emotions at different times, which will help to create a connection with the audience.

Pace

The pace of your speech is how fast you are speaking. Changing the pace throughout your presentation will allow the audience to pick up on the important sections. If you quicken your pace and then slow it right down, it will add emphasis to the point you are trying to make. The most effective rate of speech is 140-160 words per minute. Any more than this and you may lose your listeners attention.

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How to be an Awesome Listener

In order to be an effective listener, you need to make sure that you are showing you're an effective listener. Below are a range of techniques you can use to improve your listening skills.

Pay Attention

You need to pay attention and really listen to what the speaker is trying to say. Look at the speaker and try to clear your mind from anything that could be distracting you from really hearing what they are saying.

Look like your listening

Your body language gives away how you are really feeling. Often, your body language can say things that you wouldn't actually verbally say to someone. Sit upright, smile, and take notice of your facial expressions when someone is speaking to you.

Don't interrupt

Even though you might have something really important to say, or you might disagree with the speaker, it is respectful and courteous to let the speaker finish speaking without any interruptions. If you have something that you really want to say, wait until the speaker has finished speaking.

Try to understand

Listening is more than just hearing what the person is saying. It involves really trying to understand what the speaker is trying to say. Think about the things that they are saying and reflect on them in your mind.

Do you agree or disagree? Does something connect with you?