



TURNAROUND ROUTINE

Purpose

Learn to control what you give away in your speaking and develop confidence in your speaking ability.

Materials

None

Group Size

4 - 6

Background

Have you ever seen a presentation that was the pits? I mean it turned you off so much you began to groan? Have you ever seen a presentation that you got you excited and interested in the topic that was being presented?

Speakers are like a TV - they can be tuned into or turned off.

What kind of speaker do you want to be? Most of us like to be listened to. We like to share our ideas and be appreciated for the effective way we can do this.

One way to develop good communication abilities is to act out both the pits speaker and the peak speaker. This exercise will let you get a feeling what it is like to be both types of speakers and then to make up your mind how to be the best speaker you can be.

Activity

1. Think of a topic that you can give a one to two minute speech on.
2. When you give your speech, plan to start by turning off your listeners. That's right. Do some of the things that poor speakers do. For example, don't look at the audience, speak in a boring manner, slouch, look disinterested, speak softly so others can barely hear you, be disorganized in your content. Enjoy doing this for the first half of your speech.
3. Half way through the speech, turn it around. Be the best speaker you can be. Use good speech habits like a clear, projected voice, a confident manner, stand tall, be alert and keen, put energy into your well organized thoughts. Yes, you can do it!
4. Invite someone else to take his or her turn at the turnaround routine. It's fun and it's educational!

Debrief

- Describe how you felt being a poor speaker.
- What went through you mind as you began to turn it around?
- Describe how it felt being tuned in.



TWO LIES AND A TRUTH

Purpose

Develop listening, reasoning, familiarity, and ease with words.

Materials

None

Instructions

Have each player make three statements about him/herself, two of them lies and the third true.

For example: I have an older sister; I once rode Flipper; I have recorded 7 blues albums under the alias Red Hot Burns. The group tries to guess which is the true statement. In the example, the true statement is: I once rode Flipper. Make it clear from the start that you are looking for facts, not opinions or subjective statements such as "I'm rich," or "I'm beautiful."



VIDEO MAGIC

Purpose

See and hear yourself perhaps for the first time!

Materials

Camcorder with film, playback monitor (TV) with cables

Group Size

3 to 4 per session

Background

Today's video technology puts a power at your fingertips that no other generation has ever had.

Walk into any department store or video store and there they are - the camcorders. They have now become a regular photographic tool of the family. Camcorders are used to record family vacations, graduations, weddings, celebrations and other special occasions.

This amazing technology may be available to your club. Perhaps there is a parent who owns a camcorder and who is willing to come to the club to video the members when they speak. Maybe you have one at home and are willing to bring it to the club for use in your speaking events.

This technology - the camcorder - is very powerful! You can use it to see yourself as others see you. That kind of feedback can be very useful to you as you develop your speaking skills. It's one thing for a member to tell you - its quite another thing for you to see for yourself how you communicate. What are your communication strengths? What areas do you need to work on?

Activity

Note: In this activity, you will be asked to give a brief (one minute) talk so give some thought about what you want to say. If you speak on something you have an interest in, you are more likely to speak effectively.

Note: You may want to have three or four speakers per recording session. You can spread this activity out over a number of meetings.

1. Set up the camcorder ready for recording.
2. Prepare to give your one-minute talk. You may want to speak before the club or do this in a small group. Some of you may want to give an impromptu talk - one that is not prepared but one where you have something to say.
3. Each of you that wishes to do so, give your one-minute talk before the camcorder.
4. Now play back each of the speeches (limit to 3 or 4 per session).



5. When you view a speaker, provide feedback to the speaker after you have watched him or her. Your feedback can follow this order.
 - Two things they did well.
 - Two things they can work on for their next talk.
 - The best thing you liked about the speaker.

Debrief

- What have you learned about your speaking? Are there some common things you have all learned? Are there some unique things you have learned about yourself?
- The magic in video is seeing yourself as others see you. The camcorder is a powerful tool to help you become a better speaker.



WORDS PER MINUTE

Purpose

Learn what your word rate is (words per minute) and discover what is the appropriate word rate for speakers.

Materials

A story you can read - the fast 500 words, and a watch with minute hand or digital read-out.

Group Size

2

Background

How fast should you talk in front of an audience?

When you listen to some TV commercials you may have noticed that some people talk very fast. In fact, so fast that it is difficult to hear and understand all that they are saying. You miss some of the details. Actually, in some commercials this is done on purpose, because they only want you to hear a few key words, like “buy, act now or remember”.

With some of your own conversations, you may experience a person that talks quite slowly. You may feel that their word rate is just too slow for you.

Well what is the appropriate word rate for us? More specifically, what word pace is an audience comfortable with? Are you too fast, too slow or just right for them?

The answers to these questions are found in the completion of this exercise.

How fast or slow you speak does have an impact on your audience. Let's try to make it a positive impact!

Activity

1. Find a story that you can read. Count out the first 500 words of this story.
2. Read the fast 500 words of the story. You may want to read it again to get comfortable with what you're reading.
3. Now find someone who is willing to listen to you read out loud and to time you while you read.
4. Read the story (the first 500 words) to the listener as if you were giving a speech. Don't rush through the story just to get it done. Read with expression and interest.



5. When you finish reading, divide your time into 500. For example, if you took 3 minutes and 30 seconds to read the 500 words, then divide 3.5 into 500. Or if you took 4 minutes and 15 seconds, divide 4.25 into 500.
6. The answer you get will be your words per minute (WPM).

Debrief

- A good word rate ranges from 130 words per minute to 165 words per minute. How did your word rate compare to these figures?
- Don't think you have to hold a constant word rate. A variety of pace is more interesting. But on average, your WPM should be in the range of 135 to 165.