



HUMOR LESSON #7

Objective

To help members feel comfortable in creating and using humor in a speech.

Introduction

Ask members the difference between humor and jokes.

Did your members know the difference? A joke is a retold funny story or incident. You may first read it in a joke book and then retell it or you may have heard it from someone and then retell it.

Humor is something that comes from us - either in the way we say things or the way others say things. Humor is natural and spontaneous, not canned or rehearsed.

<p>Humor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • natural • spontaneous • comes from us and others • uses creativity & imagination • usually appropriate • always fresh and unique 	
<p>Jokes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rehearse • comes from repeated telling • uses our memory to retell • made up • often doesn't fit the event • may have heard it before 	

As you discuss jokes and humor build a chart of differences. This is important, because the intent of this lesson is to develop the humor in all of us, not the ability to recite jokes we hear.

Know-How

Humor creates a special bond between you and your listeners. It's virtually impossible to dislike someone who makes us laugh, who helps us enjoy ourselves.

A sense of humor can be sharp, explosive, dry or witty. Used properly, it can be a powerful tool for putting positive energy into your communication.

Some tips for humor:

1. Don't tell jokes. Leave comedy to the comedian. Perhaps 1 in 100 are good joke-tellers. If



your joke falls flat, you go down with it.

2. Find the form of humor that works for you. What kind of humor do you like? Stories, anecdotes about yourself, dry wit or maybe a unique outlook on everyday life.
3. Think Funny. Humor is the hardest communication skill to exercise. The best exercise to do is actually working at a mind-set. Think funny. You will begin to see humor around you and to use it in your speaking.
4. Think friendly. This is also a mind-set. Exercise your attitude on this one. The next person you see, think of being friendly, rather than judging or advocating or questioning.
5. Record your humor. Keep a journal, scrapbook, diary of funny quotations, anecdotes, stories - especially the stories that happen to you. A humor bank!
6. Make humor fit the speech. Relate it to what you are taking about. Humor becomes effective when it makes an impact.
7. Five different sources of humor include:
 - Your observations
 - Letters
 - Lists
 - Definitions
 - Quotes

Practice

Mine Your Memory!

1. The personal story is one of the best sources of humor. It never fails to gain attention and it can be used by anyone. Take advantage of it!
Recall events in your life. All of them offer potentially amusing stories. In other words, mine your memory. Let's go to work on humor.
2. Find a humorous event or story in...
 - Your first day at school
 - Strangest gift you ever got
 - Your wildest vacation story
 - A strange dream
 - Your first date
 - A funny relative
 - Biggest mistake you made
 - A teacher's action
 - Something that seems funny now but not when it happened
 - Funniest thing that has happened to your friend
 - Others?
3. Get members into groups of two. Have them each share one of their continued



humorous events. Encourage them to listen to themselves telling their stories. Become comfortable with sharing humor.

4. Now get in groups of four. Each of them can share the same story they shared in pairs or they may wish to share another humorous event. Develop more of a comfort level at sharing and listening to humor.
5. In the whole group, begin to share what it takes to make a humorous story work well. Your group may come up with such things as:
 - Practice - the more you tell your story the better you get at it
 - Persistence - if it doesn't work the first time, but is still funny to you, then re-work the story. Maybe its too long, has too much detail, lacks your energy and enthusiasm.
 - Personality - think funny, think friendly. Your attitude has much to do with the success of your humor. You've really got to believe that what you're telling is funny.

Challenge

Each member is now ready to use humor in a speech. It's been told at least twice and will be practised in the preparation of the speech.

Make sure the humor fits the speech. You can always adapt the story to make it fit.

Remember, you have to be serious to be funny. Work hard at it. Sooner than you expect, you'll develop a wonderful sense of humor - a gift all of us can develop for the pleasure and gratitude of others.

Think funny!



WAY WITH WORDS LESSON # 8

Objective

To develop a value for the power of words and a non-value for jargon and word fillers.

Introduction

Have members use their creativity to rework these phrases and sentences.

- Fast boat
- I walked to the car
- I need help
- Old woman
- Bob ate his supper
- Slim man
- He is lazy
- Susan speaks clearly
- White as a sheet
- Dead as a door nail
- Awesome man
- Wide river

Discuss how a few simple descriptive words can help the listener see, feel or hear what is happening or how you feel. Words can bring to life the way we speak!

Know-how

Mark Twain once said, "The difference between the right word and the almost right word is the difference between lightning and a lightning bug." To put the energy of lightning in our message, we have to select the right words for the right situation.

Since there is no rewind button in speaking, you need to give listeners hooks to see, hear or feel what you say. How can you put hooks in your speech?

Here are some Tips

1. Build your vocabulary. It's easy to stretch your vocabulary. Just try to use one new word a day. If you come across a new word while you're reading, jot it down. Look it up in the dictionary and start using it in conversation to make it your own.
2. KISS. Keep it short and simple. Don't get too fancy. Keep your language direct, free of jargon and inviting!
3. Paint with words. We can lend the energy of motion and emotion by the use of vivid expressions. A F-16 Fighter jet becomes a "screaming bird of prey"; a freeway becomes "a river of glowing red coals", a night sky becomes "a sparkling cosmic ocean".



4. Avoid nonwords. Language is made up of words and nonwords. The continued most common nonwords are uhh, ahh, and umm. Other nonwords include so, well, you know, okay, like, sort of and so on.

Does this mean you should never say a nonword? No. We're not striving for perfection, just effective communication to the best of our ability.

Practice

1. Divide your 4-H members into groups of three. Number off in each group, "one, two and three".
2. Have person 1 from each triad come up to the leader. Request persons 2 and 3 to wait briefly while instructions are given to all the 1's.
3. Instruct person 1 to listen for any nonwords between persons 2 and 3.
4. See if they can remember some examples of nonwords that were used. (Person 1 is not to tell persons 2 and 3 what he will be doing).
5. Instruct person 1 to return to their group. Instruct persons 2 and 3 to have a conversation while person 1 listens.
6. After a minute, call for silence. Ask person 1 of each group to report to their group concerning the number of nonwords used and what kinds were used. This is a reporting exercise, not an evaluation exercise.
7. Now have persons 2 from each group come up to the leader. Instruct them to listen for descriptive words or phrases used between persons 1 and 3. Give some examples to ensure clarity of task.
8. Repeat steps 4 and 5, this time using person 2 as the listener and reporter.
9. Have person 3 come up to the leader. Instruct person 3 to listen for any jargon between persons 1 and 2. Give some examples.
10. Repeat steps 4 and 5, this time using person 3 as the listener and reporter.
11. Debrief this exercise by asking all to comment on what they can do to expand and enrich their way with words.

Challenge

Memorable Story

Request members to construct a story for the next meeting. Stories can be anywhere from two to four minutes long. The importance of this challenge for members is to build a memorable story through their way with words. Paint pictures, hear sounds or evoke feelings in the stories you tell. Use all the senses you can to recreate the story for your members.



YOUR AUDIENCE LESSON #9

Objective

To develop the ability to identify what makes an audience special and unique.

Introduction

Match the topics on the left with the most appropriate audience on the right.

Put this on a flip chart.

Topic	Audience
• How to Save Trees	• Self-employed person
• Building Credit with Clients	• Home Economist
• Managing the Farm	• Bank Manager
• Skateboard Safety	• Young farmer
• Keeping Fit in your 40's	• Parents
• Rural Leadership	• Paper producers
• World Travel without Children	• School students
• Fund Raising for Clubs	• Retired couple
• Getting a Job	• 4-H member

The point of this exercise is to get 4-H members to realize that not every topic is for every audience. We listen selectively, depending on our interests, age, experiences and education.

Know-how

For the young person it is very easy to get wrapped up into his or her own world. For that matter, it is very easy for any of us to get caught up with our views and station in life. We tend to look through our own shade of glasses.

But the audience is a living, breathing entity. It needs to be listened to before it can be spoken to. How do we listen to our audience to prepare what we can say to them?

Here are three tips to keep in mind concerning the audience.

1. Audiences are tuned to their own radio station. It is called the WIII FM radio station. It stands for "What is in it for me?" When an audience begins to listen to you, each is asking, "Am I going to get anything out of this for my benefit?" The introduction serves to answer this question for the audience.
2. All audiences have a personality. Some audiences are keen, while others are tired; some audiences are expressive, others quiet; some audiences are willing and receptive, others quiet and non-responsive; some audiences are open and friendly, others hostile and



unfriendly; some are warm and memorable, others can be cool. The point here is to be sensitive to the personality of the audience. Read them and get a feel for what you are dealing with. Personalities do change. Be open to working with an audience.

3. All audiences are special. Your job is to find out what is special about this audience. Is it their values, their attitudes, their occupations, their knowledge, their experiences? Find out what makes them special and then use it in your speech.

Practice

“What Makes 4-H Special”

Say to the members: “Imagine you are grown up and live in this community. You have been asked to come and speak to this 4-H club. You want to do a good job and so one of the first things you do is to find out what is special or interesting about this 4-H club. Not any club - this club.”

For members:

- On a piece of paper, put down three things that make your club special. Other words for special are interesting, unique, noteworthy.
- After two minutes pass, join up with another member. Share what you have both put down and then come up with a list that is a compilation of both lists.
- After four minutes of working in pairs, join another pair to make a group of four. Now, with an appointed leader and recorder, develop a list of three special club characteristics. Spend six minutes on this.
- Each group of four can appoint a spokesperson who will report on their three special club characteristics.

Challenge

Compile a list of all the special characteristics about your club. The next time you invite an outside speaker to come to your club, send them this list. It will help the speaker prepare for your club. They will understand you better and know what your needs and interests are.

You can also use this list for club members who prepare speeches for the club.



STYLE LESSON #10

Objective

To learn the importance of energy and enthusiasm in speaking to others.

Introduction

The Leader Turnaround

Have the leader speak to the club. In the speech, have the leader model an incompetent speaker. This might include stumbling as you come to the front to speak, dropping your notes, acting very nervous, not looking at the club members, filling your speech with lots of nonwords, speaking softly-perhaps mumbling what you say, getting mixed up with your thoughts, keeping your hands folded in front of you, speaking in a monotonous voice, speaking in slouched body position and so on.

After about two to three minutes of this, turn it around. Begin to speak with confidence. Stand tall, smile at the club members, and speak with adequate projection and varied pitch. Avoid nonwords; use expressive gestures and eye contact with the audience. Just be the opposite of what you were initially. Do this for another two to three minutes.

After you have concluded your speech, talk about how important your style was in both scenarios that you acted out. You may have very important messages to give, but if you lack style, then much of your message could get lost in the delivery.

Know-How

Imagine a finely carved diamond. By itself, the stone is lovely, priceless and awesome. To showcase a diamond's beauty, however, a shrewd jeweller adds enhancers: background of black velvet, a setting of gold and a well-aimed light.

If the same diamond is displayed carelessly (plopped on a bowl of macaroni salad), it loses allure. Yet objectively - whether on velvet or macaroni - that diamond is still that diamond. It's the same substance just in a different environment.

In everyday reality, many ideas get presented like diamonds in macaroni (here's another idea - plop). Fortunately some ideas survive. As ideas, they are so good without enhancement that they get heard in spite of ineffective ways they get presented.

Few ideas sell themselves automatically. A person with a good ideas can be even more successful by incorporating some enhancers - some style.

Here are three key enhancers that will add style to your communication.

1. Enthusiasm ... show it!

Bring enthusiasm to both your subject and to your audience. This can happen much easier when you speak on something that matters to you, things you have a passion or a very keen interest in.



2. Expose... do it!

Reveal something personal about yourself through the medium of a story or anecdote. The audience will endear themselves to you because they can empathize with what you are saying. They see the human side of you - the side that connects with your audience.

3. Energy ... give it!

Move, lean forward, vary your gestures, smile - do the things that show you have energy. Your audience will be energized. Remember, you always get back what you reflect!

Practice

The Member Turnaround

Now it's the turn for the members to have an opportunity to turn things around. A member is asked to act as an incompetent speaker in the first minute of their speech. He/she is to then turn things around by finishing off the final second minute of speaking with as much 'style' as he/she can muster.

This exercise can have a tremendous benefit to the nervous or inexperienced speaker. They see themselves in both roles - an incompetent and a competent speaker. By acting the turnaround out they realize that they have a choice - they can be good and show style if they set their minds and wills to do it.

Like other activities, some members may want to watch rather than participate. As always give that option but encourage members to try this. They may well be amazed at what they can learn from doing.

Practice

Have a member address the club. Just like your opening speech in this continued lesson, the member is to model an incompetent speaker. This could include stumbling around as they come to the front to speak, dropping their notes, acting very nervous, not looking at the club members, filling helping the speech with lots of nonwords, speaking softly-perhaps mumbling what is said, getting mixed up with their thoughts, keeping their hands folded in front or in their pockets, speaking in a monotonous voice, showing a slouched body posture and so forth. Members can really ham this part up for maximum effect.

After about one minute of this, have the member turn it around. Coach them to speak with confidence. This could include standing tall, smiling at club members, speaking with projection and varied pitch, avoiding nonwords, using expressive gestures and eye contact with the audience. The member is to be as much as possible, the opposite of what they were initially. Do this for the second minute in their two-minute speech.

After members have concluded their turnaround speeches, talk about how important their style was in both scenarios. You may want to summarize your style comments with a chart entitled "Pitts and Peaks Performance".



Pitts Performance	Peak Performance
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Poor posture• No voice modulation• Few gestures• Poorly organized thoughts• Eyes looking at notes• Etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Standing tall• Varied pitch• Expressive hand and face• Prepared and practiced• Eye contact with audience

Challenge

One of the best ways to see your style in action is to use a camcorder. The big advantage of the camcorder technology is the impact of actually seeing and hearing yourself. The camcorder can be a great teacher!