

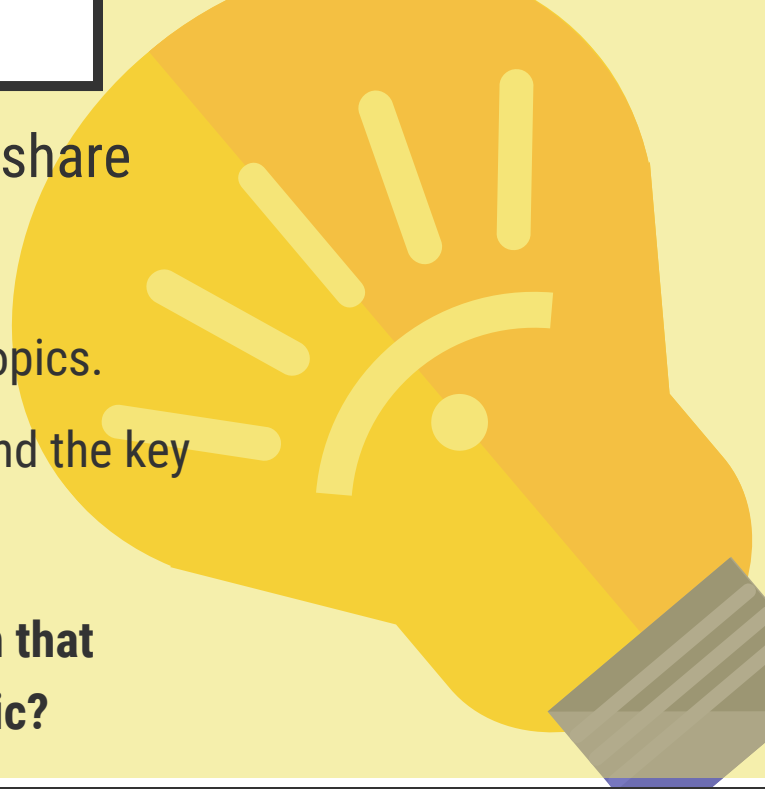
8

Steps to a Great Speech

1. Find a GREAT IDEA.

What is the **one idea** you want to share with your audience?

Remember, ideas are **not** the same as topics. Within your chosen topic, you want to find the key idea you'd like to share. Ask yourself,



What's one belief or assumption that I'd like to change about this topic?

2. Find a HOOK.

Find an **unexpected way of expressing your idea** that grabs the listeners' imagination and reels them in. **This should be the title of the talk.** Using a TEDTalk example:



Replace your **dry & technical** title...



The Chemical Signals of *Escherichia coli*

with a more **imaginative** one:



How Bacteria Really Talk

3. Do your RESEARCH.

This involves collecting **data**, of course. But your speech will come alive in listeners' minds through **story-telling**. Now is the time to collect stories, quotes, jokes, and quirky, memorable anecdotes.



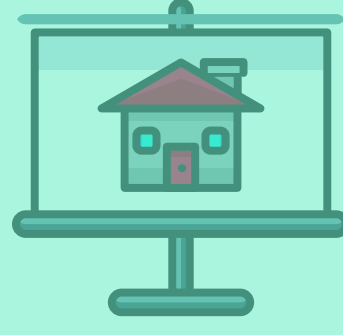
4. Create an OUTLINE.

Shuffle your data and anecdotes around until they make a **compelling, easy to follow storyline**. This can take several tries, so be patient.

Some tips:

- **Keep the time in mind.** Know exactly how much time you will have for the talk and create the outline accordingly.
- **Write the outline in modules.** This way, if your time is accidentally cut, you can quickly decide which modules to cut out.
- **Start and end with a bang.** The speech should start with an intriguing anecdote or piece of information and end with a positive, inspiring story or takeaway thought.

5. Write the SPEECH & build the presentation.



About the speech:

It will sound most natural if you **"speak-write" it**. This means that you pretend you are explaining it to someone in a real conversation, then record or type your sentences as you go. Writing it out like an essay may make it sound stilted and stuffy.

About the presentation:

Unless you are an experienced speaker, resist the temptation to do this first. You may end up using your slides as a crutch by filling them with mind-numbing bullet points. The **visual presentation should only serve as a back-drop and enhancement for YOU, the speaker.**

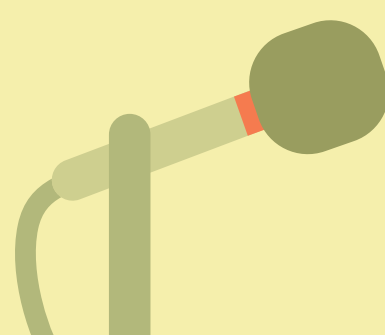
6. REHEARSE. Then REHEARSE AGAIN. And AGAIN.

Rehearse your talk to the actual time. Be sure to consider time for any questions or engagement with the audience.

Rehearse at least two more times. Your goal is to get 75-85% comfortable with the script, ad-libbing where it feels natural and memorizing the parts you want to hit dead on. It will be best to do this in front of a test audience to get constructive feedback.

7. Familiarize yourself with the VENUE and SETUP.

Last minute jitters can occur when you speak in an unfamiliar place. **Visit the venue if possible** and walk around the stage.



Check if the venue supplies all the equipment you will need: computer, microphone, projector & screen. If you want or need to advance your own slides, buy a remote to use for this purpose.

Prepare materials you will need to bring with you. This includes a short speaker introduction for your host and any surveys or materials you plan to pass out or sell. Prepare a back-up copy of both slides and script. Send both to your host.

8. Show up and CRUSH IT.

Show up at least 15-30 minutes early and circulate with the audience if possible.

Relax and enjoy it. Audiences can sense if you are having a good time on stage. Be interested, engaged, and happy to be there.

If you plan to sell or survey your audience afterward, bring help. You will be busy talking to audience members!

Was your talk recorded? If so, get the recording and share it or sell it!

