Lafayette
Leadership Institute
February 5, 2000

THE ART OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION
AND PUBLIC SPEAKING

Gary A. Evans '57
Vice President
Development & College Relations
Lafayette College
I. Introduction

Why is good public speaking important?

Advance a cause
Convince others to act
Explain and gain - support, votes, cooperation

What are the consequences of poor speaking?

Loss of confidence
Doubts about credibility
Questions of leadership

Why do we fear public speaking?

Don’t want to make fools of ourselves
And yet the more we fear speaking the more we make
the mistakes that look foolish:

Giggling
Mumbling
Fumbling
Rambling
Repeating
II. The Five Steps for Successful Public Speaking

Prepare
Prepare
Prepare
Prepare
Prepare

Step I - Prepare for your audience

Who are they? Age, friendly or hostile, expertise, etc.

What do they want to know? And what do they already know?

Why are they here?

Where are you speaking?

When are you speaking?

How do you get answers to these questions?
Step 2 - Prepare your Speech

The title

The purpose - persuade, inform entertain?

Method of delivery - memorize, read, impromptu

Your opening

- jump right in
- don’t apologize
- don’t say "Madam Chair, members of the ...."

The body of the talk

- Have something to say. Prepare early, work it and re-work it
- Organization
  - tell them what you will tell them
  - tell them
  - tell them what you told them

Be current

Your conclusion

- Upbeat
- Telegraphed, but not more than once
- Strong summary
Step 3 - Prepare for your delivery

Practice - out loud (shower, car) or in your head

Arrive early - check the room, microphone, lectern, etc.

Talk to some members of the audience

Walk forward with confidence

Pause before beginning. Let there be some anticipation

Vary your voice

Use pauses effectively

Use your hands - but don’t wave or swat flies

Time your delivery - know your best points. Drop some if necessary but not the powerful points
Step 4 - Prepare the extras

Statistics

Be precise

Illustrate

Be careful

Quotes

Credibility

Authority

Knowledge

Humor

Don’t tell jokes. "I heard a good joke the other day"

Be pleasant

Use stories that apply

Avoid ethnic and off-color humor

Be self-deprecating
Step 5 - Prepare for Q and A

Why does an audience member ask a question?

- For clarification
- For information
- For rebuttal
- To make a speech

What do you do?

- Look at the questioner
- Never ridicule
- Don’t say "That’s a good question"
- Repeat the question - or paraphrase it
- Be brisk or brief - not brusque

What if you want questions and no one asks?

- Set up a "plant"
- Say, "On the way in I was asked...."

Don’t say "I’ll take one more question"

Have a second closing
Summary:  S P E A K E R

S  Show biz

P  Prepare:  content, delivery, timing

E  Energy.  Your enthusiasm will sell

A  Anecdotes.

K  Knowledge.  Be sure you know what you’re talking about

E  Examples.  For simplification, clarification and validation

R  Rapport with your audience