

How to Write and Present Effective Introductions

Would you like to add 1-2 minutes to your speech without any penalty? Would you like to use a tool so powerful that it is forbidden at Toastmasters contests?

To write an effective introduction, simply answer the following four questions:

- Why this Topic?
- Why this Speaker?
- Why this Audience?
- Why listen to this speech Now?

#	Element	Explanation	Notes
1	Topic	<i>What is so special about this topic that the audience should feel excited about listening to it? What is likely to pique their interest?</i>	
2	Speaker	<i>Why is the speaker qualified to deliver this talk? What type of knowledge, experience or skills gives the speaker the authority to speak on this Topic, how will the audience be confident that the speaker knows or is passionate about the Topic?</i>	
3	Audience	<i>What makes this audience suitable for the topic? How will THIS audience benefit? Why is this topic important for this audience?</i>	
4	Timing	<i>Why talk about this topic now? How timely is it for the audience to listen to the speech?</i>	
5	Speech Title	<i>Make your speech title audience-oriented, fun and enticing. Think of what benefit that the audience will get from listening to the speech.</i>	
6	Designation	<i>Your designation (relevant to your audience)</i>	
7	Name	<i>Your name (written phonetically if necessary)</i>	

INTRODUCTION MAD LIB

Instructions: Replace the number in the blank with the words from the table in p.1

Have you ever wondered about 1 _____? Our next speaker knows
about 1 _____ because 2 _____
_____. Once you know
more about 1 _____ it will be information (a skill) that you can use next time
you have to 3 _____. And remember, there
is no better time than NOW to know more about 1 _____ because 4 _____
_____. The speech title is
5 _____. [Pause]
Please help me welcome 6 _____, [Pause] 7 _____
_____.

Do's for Speaker	Do's for Presenter or TM
Write your own introduction. Provide to Toastmasters ahead of time and encourage TM to practice with you.	Request introduction ahead of time and USE it. Practice, practice, practice until you sound natural, positive and enthusiastic.
When you are known to at least some people in the audience, feel free to incorporate your name once or twice before adding it a final time at the very end of the introduction.	Always say the speaker's name distinctly and clearly, especially at the very end of the introduction. Increase the volume if necessary.
If your name is difficult to pronounce, write it phonetically and make the TM pronounce it ahead of time.	If the name has a tricky pronunciation, confirm the correct way, and then write it out phonetically for yourself.
Let the Toastmaster know how you will be handling the questions (during the presentation or after) or if you have special requirements.	Occasionally, the speaker may have a special entrance planned. (<i>e.g.</i> entrance music, a staged stunt, something with a prop, setting up humor during the speech). Make sure you ask the speaker about this, and do whatever you can to support them in a successful entrance. If necessary, let the audience know about their special requirements to help the speaker.
The speech's title is typically mentioned near the end of the introduction.	Give the speech title special emphasis.
Let the TM know where you are located. As the TM speaks the last words of the introduction, be ready to take control of the stage. Shake the TM's hand.	Face the audience so that they can hear the speaker name when you say it clearly. Consult notes ONLY for specific information. Wait for the speaker to meet you and shake hands.
Expertise that is relevant to the topic or to get connection with the audience.	TM to lead the applause. Never let people clap before you have completed the introduction.
Bring your own copy of your introduction. Triple space, font 20.	

Don'ts for Speaker	Don'ts for Presenter or TM
Rely on cliché or worn-out phrases in your introduction: "This speaker needs no introduction", "It is indeed a pleasure", "We are gathering here tonight", and so on.	Use clichés
Give too much detail about the speech in your introduction.	Embarrass or surprise the speaker. Give the speaker false starts.
Prepare an introduction that is more than 1-2 minutes.	Upstage the speaker by telling anecdotes about your experiences, attitudes, and opinions BEFORE the speech.
	Alter the speech title or any key terms
	Exaggerate the speaker's ability too much. Do not encourage unreasonable expectations from the audience.

"While a strong speech opening is vital, nothing helps establish a speaker's credibility more than a carefully-crafted and well-delivered introduction." *Andrew Dlugan*

For more Information and tips on writing and presenting an introduction, feel free to consult the following references:

<http://ecqlink.com/library/ps/introduce.html>

<http://ecqlink.com/speakreviews/pleasure to introduce.html>

http://maxatkinson.blogspot.ca/2010/03/how-not-to-introduce-speaker_16.html

<http://sixminutes.dlugan.com/how-to-introduce-a-speaker/>

<http://sixminutes.dlugan.com/tag/speech-introduction/>

<http://www.craigvalentine.com/speech-coach/ignite-your-audience-with-your-introduction/>

TMI: "CREATING AN INTRODUCTION" - The Better Speaker Series