



Unit: Speaking

Skill 17: Making Introductions

Activity B: Our Speaker is...

Activity Skills:

Communication, public speaking.

Leadership Skills:

How to prepare a formal introduction for a speaker.

Suggested Level:

Advanced

Time:

45 minutes

Supplies needed:

- Paper.
- Writing material.
- Podium (optional).
- "How to Introduce a Speaker" handout.

Do Ahead:

- Make copies of worksheet

Source:

Developed by:
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Based On:
Witt Communications
http://www.wittcom.com/how_to_introduce_a_speaker.htm

BACKGROUND:

An introduction serves two purposes: First, it acts as a bridge, a transition from one part of a meeting to another. It gives the audience time to make a mental and emotional shift. Second, it prepares people for the speaker, heightening their sense of openness and anticipation.

WHAT TO DO:

Pass around the "How to Introduce a Speaker" handout.

Each participant should choose a work partner. If there is an odd number the facilitator can become a partner.

Identify who will be the speaker and who will give the introduction.

Explain that the group is hosting a "Leadership Conference" and are proud to have several talented speakers attend today. It is their job to introduce them with proper etiquette.

The person introducing the speaker will conduct a short interview with the speaker. This is the research portion of the handout. Allow 0 minutes to review objectives below.

During this interview you should:

- Find out what the speaker is talking about and why it has relevance to the audience.
- Then learn as much as you can about the speaker's experience, education, life, interests, and accomplishments - whatever helps establish the speaker's credibility on the topic he or she is addressing.
- Many speakers will send you a resume or their own written introduction. Use it to help prepare your remarks, but do not read it verbatim. (It is usually too long and self-aggrandizing).
- Learn how to pronounce the speaker's name.

The partners should then work together to create an outline for the introduction. Allow another 10 minutes to review objectives below.

The introduction outline will :

- Tell people why this speaker is talking about leadership at our conference.
- State a common problem or concern the audience shares.
- State how today's speech will help them solve that problem or address that concern.
- Establish the speaker's credentials - convince the audience that the speaker knows about leadership.

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Notes:

Remind those participants who will be introducing someone that their task is to introduce the speaker, not to take center stage. The spotlight is on them only for a moment so that they can shine it where it belongs: on the speaker. Comments should be kept brief. For informal gatherings 30 seconds is plenty. For larger events, aim for no longer than a minute. Under certain conditions - a very formal event with a very important speaker - you may need to speak for two minutes.

Allow between ½-2 minutes for each person to introduce their partner to the group. Remind them to:

- Walk to the podium with confidence. Arrange their notes, adjust the microphone, take a breath, look at the audience and smile.
- After giving the introduction they should conclude with the speaker's name, which is her or his cue to come forward.
- Participants should wait at the podium until the speaker arrives. Shake his or her hand and step back from the podium, handing it symbolically over to the speaker.
- Partners and the group should give feed back.

If time permits repeat the entire process allowing the roles to reverse.

TALK IT OVER:

Reflect:

- What did you like best about this activity?
- What was most difficult for you?
- What makes a good introduction?

Apply:

- Identify a situation when you might use the skill learned today.
- Why is public speaking an important skill?
- What other skills will help you to become a better public speaker?

BEYOND THE BOX:

Resources and Web Links:

Witt Communications Opportunity

http://www.wittcom.com/speaking_tips.htm