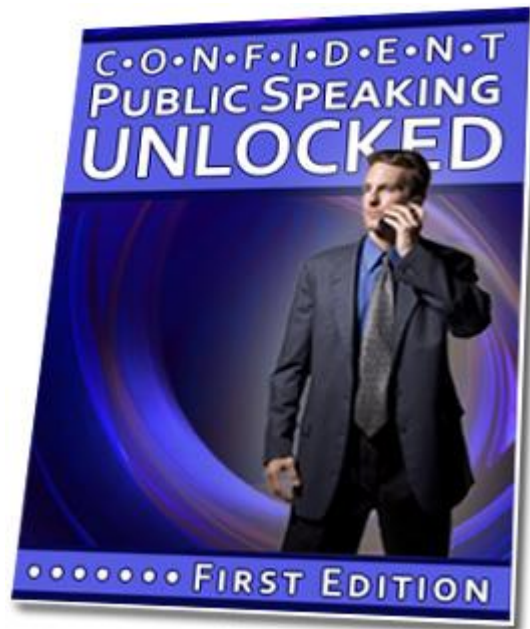


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# Confident Public Speaking *Unlocked*



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There are times when each of us is called upon to address a group of people. There is no reason why we cannot approach this challenge with relative ease and self-confidence.

## **The Purpose of Speaking**

Public speeches are delivered on many different occasions, but no matter what the occasion, the speaker hopes to get the audience to accept his point of view.

Therefore, in a certain sense, all speeches are persuasive speeches:

Persuading the audience to believe your information persuading the audience to change its beliefs persuading the audience not only to change its beliefs, but also to act on the changes

Perhaps you wish to inform the audience about capital punishment. Or, you may wish to get them to change their beliefs about capital punishment. Or, you may not only wish them to change their beliefs about capital punishment, but to write letters to the governor telling him what action to take.

The purpose is determined by the type of audience you are speaking to; by the circumstances of the speech; and sometimes by the course of action that you recommend.

But, whether the purpose of a particular speech is determined by the audience, by the circumstances, or by the speaker himself, preparation of the public speech must begin with the establishment of the purpose of the speech.

This purpose should be put into a sentence which is specific and concrete. A clear knowledge of the purpose in speaking is as helpful to the speaker as a road map is to the driver. The purpose gives direction to the speech and, to a degree, governs all subsequent efforts the speaker makes.

The speaker should therefore begin preparing his speech by asking himself just what action he wishes his audience to take.

We call this desired action the intended audience response (IAR).

The intended audience response should aid the audience, not just the speaker. We expect each speaker to be responsible for the welfare of the audience.

When Hitler spoke to the German people prior to and during World War II, he sought and received support for a military machine that ultimately brought death and destruction to Germany.

We believe, therefore, that he misled the German people.

His intended audience response should not have been taken by the people, in their own self-interest.

The President of the United States has, on the other hand, suggested the exchange of atomic energy secrets and fissionable materials among the nations of the world.

This is an action that people could take in their own self-interest.

A person who would deliberately recommend action by the audience that was to their detriment is dishonest; he who would do so unknowingly is ignorant. Certainly, the public speaker must avoid being either.

A speaker may recommend action that would be beneficial to the audience, but impractical to carry out. A speaker who would select such an IAR will, of course, fail.

To avoid such failure, the speaker should be able to answer these questions in the affirmative:

- Does the audience have the authority to make the IAR? (Politicians do not address children.)
- Does the audience have the capability to make the IAR? (Appeals for charitable contributions are not made to beggars.)
- Would it be appropriate for the audience to make the IAR? (Women should not be asked to volunteer for heavy labor.)

In addition, the speaker should not ask for a response that he has neither the time nor the support to justify.

## 2. Selection of the Central Idea

People will take action consistent with the ideas they accept. In order to get an audience to accept the IAR, a speaker must present an idea that will lead to the desired response.

In order to clarify the relation between the central idea (CI) and the intended audience response, let us consider the following IAR examples:

Donate money to charity  
Vote in the next national election

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