Oral Communication

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Outline

- Introduction
- Elements of communication
- Purpose
- Audience
- Structure
- Communication Aids
- Delivery

Exercise

- We have given you a clapper
- Each student should give a 3 min presentation on the following topic:
  - Why is my town the best town in Puerto Rico?
- When the student is presenting, clap if he or she has done something wrong in the presentation
  - Examples: stage fright, moving too much, etc.

Communication

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Situation

- Particular situation within we are communicating.
  - What?
    - What is my subject?
  - Who?
    - To whom do I wish to communicate it?
  - Why?
    - What is my purpose in communicating it?
  - When and where?
    - Are there features about the place and time which affect how I should speak?
  - How?

Format

- Letter
- Email
- Application
- Presentation
- Report
- Essay
- Paper
- Dissertation
- Etc.
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Language
- English
- Grammar
- Vocabulary
- Spelling
- Punctuation
- Speech

Spoken presentations
- Examples
  - Company sales
  - Training session
  - College lecture
  - Inform progress, report results
- Features
  - One or more speakers presenting information and ideas
  - Clearly defined purpose
  - An audience

Preparation
- Careful and intelligent preparation
- Failures
  - Over-confidence
  - Lack of time
  - Laziness
- Key
  - Organization

Purpose
- Inform
- Persuade
- Entertain
- Meet and get on with your audience

Purpose – To inform
- Provide information
  - Straight facts (data)
  - Difficult to digest
  - Figures, Dates, Names, Events
  - Put data in context, patterns, and pictures
- Stories
  - Easier to remember
  - Pattern, beginning, middle, and end
- Descriptions and explanations
  - Functioning of organization, machine, institution
  - Visualize what is being described
  - Images, analogies
Purpose – To persuade

- Persuade audience of something
  - Buy my product
  - A different way of doing things
  - Agree to a course of action

College lecture
- Students
  - Take the subject seriously
  - Open their minds to a new way of thinking

Purpose – To entertain

- Entertain the audience
- Usually a secondary purpose such as
  convince or persuade

Purpose – To meet and get on with the audience

- Keep in mind
  - Continuing relationship with the audience
  - Will be meeting them regularly

Manager
- People he/she will be working with

Professor
- Students

Audience

- Where are they now?
  - Theoretical knowledge
  - Practical knowledge
  - Intelligence
  - Level of education
  - Terminology they can handle
  - How quick can they pick up ideas
  - Concentration span

Audience

- Expectations
  - Audience came for a reason
  - Students
    - Pass a course - compulsory
    - 8:35am
    - Not enough sleep
    - Lack of enthusiasm
    - MAKE IT INTERESTING!!!

Audience

- Practical needs
  - Where is the screen, projector, board?
  - How is the seating arranged?
    - Can everybody see?
    - Can everybody hear?
    - Where will you place yourself? Move around?
    - Lighting?
    - Microphone?
Audience

- Intellectual needs
  - Order in which the material is presented
  - Communication aids
    - Visual aids
    - Audio
    - Verbal aids
    - Stories, anecdotes, images, analogies, mnemonics
    - Handouts
  - Rhythm and variety to keep the audience interested and alert

- Personal needs
  - Too long
  - Exhaustring
  - Break?
    - Coffee
    - Stretch legs
    - Chat

Build a structure

- Content
  - What you want to include?
  - How much time you have?
  - How much your audience can tackle?
- Priorities
  - Presentation soon will be forgotten
  - Select small number of key points

- Ordering
  - Logic of the subject
  - Logic of learning and understanding
  - Need for variety
- Arrangement
  - Introduction
  - Body
  - Conclusion

Communication Aids

- Whiteboard
  - Pros: Brainstorming, Linking ideas, Summarizing
  - Cons: Sloppy handwriting, Erase, Fixed to the wall, Complex diagram?
- Flipchart
  - Pros: No erasing, material prepared in advance
  - Cons: Cannot be used in large space
- Overhead projector
  - Pros: Everybody sees, Well prepared material, Overlaying complex diagrams built step by step
  - Cons: Alignment, Focus, Small letters, Colors (contrast)

Delivery

- Nervous?
  - What about reading prepared text?
    - Not engaging
    - Prompt cards
  - Talk to your audience
    - Speak to them
      - Look at them – eye contact
      - Move around (evenly)
    - Interruptions and questions
    - Things have to be read (enough time for reading slides)
    - Pose
      - Hands, clothes
    - Voice
References

- Seely, John, Oxford Guide to Effective Writing and Speaking, Oxford University Press, 2005

Questions?

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