

原力英语全能提升训练营

CI 英语演讲训练

即兴演讲的构思技巧

- An impromptu speech is when you're asked to speak in public without prior notice. It can be one of the most terrifying speeches you'll ever do; standing up in front of a crowd and having to speak for a few minutes without preparation is daunting even for the most seasoned speakers.
- It's not likely to happen often, however when it does, you don't want to be caught completely off-guard.

IMPROMPTU SPEECH DEFINITION

- An impromptu speech is given with little or no preparation, yet almost always with some advance knowledge on the topic. This is sometimes referred to as "off the cuff" or "spur of the moment".
- For example, in class a teacher may ask a student to give a short impromptu speech about a topic that was in the assigned readings. Business meetings may also start with everyone talking briefly about what they have done recently on the project.

- In small informal meetings, the audience will interrupt an impromptu speech and ask questions, which helps guide the speech and the information that is presented.
- When campaigning, politicians sometimes respond to reporters or voters almost anywhere and at any time.
- Comedians are well known for their impromptu replies to hecklers, which are sometime planned, but usually made up on the spot.

Here are just some examples of them:

- Introducing yourself at networking events.
- Filling in for a late speaker.
- You are asked to give a toast at a company party.
- You get asked a question you did not prepare for while on a panel.
- Job interview questions from left field.
- You are interviewed by a reporter.
- You get pulled into a meeting to give an update.
- There is unexpected push back on your ideas at a company meeting.
- Say a goodbye speech to a departing employee.
- Your colleague refers to you in the middle of a presentation for input.

TIPS ON GIVING AN IMPROMPTU SPEECH

If you are about to make an impromptu speech and have a few minutes to prepare, follow these two tips.

I. Make some quick notes

- The first thing you should do when asked to speak, is to grab a pen and a piece of paper (or napkin - whatever you can find to write on). Jot down a few initial ideas, or even just a few words that you can expand upon during your speech.
- If you don't write anything else, make sure you've written down your starting and ending sentences as these are the most important.

2. Decide on the tone

- Next, think about what tone to speak in. This will depend on the type of event you're at. For example, at a wedding you would speak informally and you can have fun with the speech, whereas at a business conference you would speak more formally and stick to a professional tone.

3. Stick to the truth.

No need to embellish, exaggerate or stretch the truth. The truth is always good enough.

- For example, if you feel happy to have your colleagues in a meeting, then don't say that you feel "super excited." Saying that you feel happy is good enough. At least when you tell the truth, you will be authentic.
- Now, telling the truth does not mean that you divulge company secrets. You stick to your truth at the moment. If you don't know, then you say you don't know; if you are not sure, then you say you are not sure.
- Sticking to the truth will save you from a lot of mental anguish.

4. Share from personal experience.

- When you speak from personal experience, then you are referring to things that you intimately know. No need to research, no need to investigate, and no need to memorize anything.
- When in doubt about what to say, just tell a story from your past related to the situation. That will make your contribution unique and valuable.
- No need to make up anything, just look back in your memory to the closest experience with the topic and share that.

IMPROMPTU SPEECH FRAMEWORKS

- This is when it gets easy. Pick one of these frameworks to use as a structure to your impromptu speech and you'll instantly feel more prepared. They're easy to remember so you won't have to write them down, and instead can just write down keywords for each point.

I. The 5 Ws

Useful for when you're speaking about a person or specific event

- Following the 5 Ws provides instant structure to your speech and you'll be able to organize your thoughts in an easy-to-follow way. You don't even need to change the order - starting with 'who' gives context to the speech and ending with 'why' leaves the audience with the most important, relatable point.

- **Who** - who is involved in the event or who is attending
- **What** - what event are you at and what are the common goals?
- **Where** - where is the event, how did the initiative the event revolves around start?
- **When** - is the timing of the event important? What does the future hold?
- **Why** - why is everyone there? Why are *you* there?

- For example, if you're talking about a fundraising event, you could say who started the charity, what the goals are, where it is heading, when the event is happening, and why it's important.

2. Diplomatic framework

Useful for formal occasions such as a business conference.

- For this impromptu speech, start by talking about the advantages and disadvantages of the subject topic then end with a conclusion.
- This will make your speech informative and enable you to talk for a longer period of time than the 5 Ws. It's important to not be afraid of silence when using this framework.

2. Diplomatic framework

- Given that there is less room for creativity, you may find you need to pause to think about what you're going to say next. While you think, you could walk up and down the stage slightly as if you are letting your last point settle, ask if there are any questions, or ask for a glass of water.
- These techniques all buy you more time if your mind goes blank and save you (and your audience) from feeling awkward about a prolonged silence.

3. Storytelling

Useful for informal events such as weddings and book launches.

- Storytelling is a powerful method of speaking and is an easy way of connecting with the audience. When having to speak when you aren't prepared, start off small, then medium, and end large. Basically, talk about the event from an individual perspective, then a group or national perspective, and end with the bigger picture.

3. Storytelling

- For example, if you're asked to give a speech at a wedding, you could talk about when you met the couple and your experiences with them (small), what their relationship and marriage means to the rest of the wedding guests (medium), and end with the future of their relationship and their family legacy.

Quick Impromptu Formula You Can Use Right Away

- In an impromptu speech, the structure is king. Without a present and practiced structure, you will ramble on and make no point at all. In fact, the structure will be the king, queen, and general combined to martial and lead your content in a concise and relevant way.

THE F.A.T. METHOD OF BETTER IMPROVISATION

- **F- Feel:** Express your feeling about topic
- **A- Anecdote:** Share a relevant story
- **T- Tie Back:** tie back story to topic

- F = Feeling
- Share your honest feeling about the topic, circumstance or person. If you feel excited to be there then, that's the impression that you share (remember to stay close to the truth)

- A= Anecdote
- Share a relevant story. Most of the time, I share my first experience with the topic. For example, if it's a car, then I share a story about my first car in college. If it's a person, then I share my first experience meeting the person. It does not have to be that way.

- T = Tie Back

- After you are done with the anecdote, make sure you tie it back to the topic you are talking about. Example, if you are doing a toast for a departing coworker, and you share the story of the first time you meet her, you can tie back by saying, that after that event, you knew that she was destined for big things and that she will be missed when she leaves.

Here is an example of an impromptu speech using the FAT method.

Scenario: you are asked to thank a group of interns that worked with your department for the summer.

F: Feeling

I want to thank Michael, Amey, and Kira for working with our department over the summer. Their work is greatly appreciated, and I don't know how we would have done it without them (only say it this way if it's the truth).

A: Anecdote

I remember your first day. You were all quiet, taking notes and probably thinking oh my god what a mess. Then surprised us all by your initiative and how quickly you learned. With your help, we caught up on our financial audit.

T:Tie back

We were so thankful to have you this summer and wanted to wish you the best in your academic career next year. I know some of you will be graduating, and I look forward to hearing from you. I hope you would consider coming back to work with us 💎 Good luck!

Whilst we can still enjoy the famous tongue-in-cheek Mark Twain quote ‘it usually takes more than three weeks to prepare a good impromptu speech’, you now know what to do when confronted by the dreaded impromptu business presentation. Now all you have to do is practice on the edge of discomfort.