

## Prepare and Practice Your Informative Speech

**Brief:** Rehearse your speech just as you plan to present it (using notecards and technology) and—if possible—in the same location where you will deliver your speech.

**Learning Objective:** Demonstrate the ability to effectively prepare for and practice delivery of an informative speech.

### Prepare Notes

Once you have created a comprehensive outline, you should be able to create your notecards (or cue sheets). Design your notecards to have enough information on them to be able to deliver the speech without missing details. The notecards should be organized in the precise order that you will deliver your speech.

You should be able to glance at the cards, get your bearings, and look back at the audience. If you are reading the cards word-for-word, you have included too much text. Only include word-for-word text if you plan to share an extended quotation or statistics that must be delivered precisely.

Be sure your notecards are numbered (e.g., boldly in the upper right hand corner), so you can keep them organized. Color coding the cards is a good way to easily distinguish them at a glance. Losing your place can be very stressful and potentially distracting to the audience.

Rehearse your speech using the notes that you will bring to the podium. Be sure you can glance at the notes, get your information, and look up to maintain eye contact with the audience.

### Rehearse Your Speech

Practice, practice, practice! There's no substitute for rehearsing your speech aloud. Rehearse in front of friends, family, or in front of a mirror if needed.

### Timing Basics



Generally, you are given a set amount of time to speak. When rehearsing, you want to make sure to practice all of the parts of the speech, including quotations, examples, video clips, and visual aids, to make sure you won't run out of time and have to cut short or omit important content during delivery.

Timing is not only about knowing how long you are going to speak, but also how fast to speak, when to pause, and how

long to pause to achieve the desired effect. Practice varying your rate of speaking and your use of brief pauses. Phrase the speech as you will phrase it in the actual delivery (and listen for verbal fillers, awkward pauses, and other non-fluencies).

### ***Rehearsal Tips***

Speak in a conversational style. Do not talk at your audience; pretend you are talking with your audience.

Rehearse just as you plan to present and— if possible—in the same location where you will deliver your speech.

Prepare for interruptions. Leave time for questions at the end of your presentation.

Rehearse with your graphics and coordinate them to your talk. Display them only when you are talking about them.

Time the individual parts and the total speech with a stop watch and make sure to have a clock that you can see while speaking.

During final rehearsal, make brief notes for yourself so you know how long each point in the speech takes. Mark your outline accordingly so you know if you are spending too much time on any one given point.

## **From Concept to Action**

There's no shortcut to practicing your speech. Students who don't practice their speeches or who quasi-practice their speeches (only in their heads or only parts of their speeches), will not perform as well. But, effectively practicing your speech requires a commitment to advanced planning and time management. Are you will to make that commitment? If so, go to your calendar now, set aside the required time, and ask for friends and/or family to be your practice audience. If you're not able to make that commitment, why not? Are you ready to accept the consequences of not practicing (poor performance, poor grade)? The choice is yours.

### **OER IMAGE SOURCES:**

"Time Timer Clock Watch Hour Countdown Minute." Pixabay. <https://pixabay.com/en/time-timer-clock-watch-hour-371226>. Accessed 15 December 2018. [CC BY-SA 3.0]

### **OER TEXT SOURCES:**

"Delivering Your Speech: Preparation, Practice, and Delivery." Lumen Learning. <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/publicspeakingprinciples/chapter/chapter-12-preparation-practice-and-delivery>. Accessed 15 December 2018. [CC BY-SA 3.0]

"Successful Rehearsing Habits: Mimic Timing and Context." Lumen Learning. <https://lumen.instructure.com/courses/218897/pages/linkedtext54284>. Accessed 15 December 2018. [CC BY-SA 3.0]