

SPEAKER INTRODUCTIONS

The purpose of an introduction is to “set the stage” for the speaker by creating interest, establishing the speaker’s credibility, and developing positive expectations for the audience. The introductory speech should be brief, direct, and most importantly, provide the audience with a reason to listen. In short, an introduction must address the questions, “why this speaker?” and “why this topic for this particular audience?” Appropriate length of time is usually 2-3 minutes. First gather and organize the necessary information in preparation for your introduction. Then, employ specific techniques to enhance the quality of your speech.

1. Organization of Material

- Relevance to audience
 - What is the occasion?
 - Why this topic for this audience? (specific reference to audience needs, interests, expectations)
- Biographical information
 - Who is the speaker? (full name, title, company, organization, location)
 - What are the speaker’s qualifications? (education, experience, publications, honors, affiliations)
 - Why this speaker for this audience?

2. Techniques For Introducing A Speaker

- Practice your delivery in order to avoid reading the introduction.
- Check your introduction with the speaker prior to delivery in order to ensure accuracy of information.
- Pause until the audience is settled and ready to listen.
- Use your normal voice and speaking style.
- Direct your remarks to the audience rather than the speaker.
- Avoid typical cliches and prolonged stories or jokes.
- Move away from the lectern, but remain standing until the speaker is in place.
- Be a model listener.

Presentations: Creating the Right Impression

3. Sample Introductory Speeches

INAPPROPRIATE:

Our speaker tonight is someone who really needs no introduction. He's been around a number of years and I'm certain he is the best in his field—we are really very fortunate to have him here tonight.

So, without further ado, it is with great pleasure that I introduce Dr. John Knowitall who will be speaking on a topic dear to his heart "Our rising cost of living."

APPROPRIATE:

When our president appointed me program chairman for the year, I invited all of you to submit a list of topics you would like addressed at our meetings. The most frequently mentioned was that of how to cope with the rapid rise in the cost of living index. I know you all are as concerned about our shrinking dollar as I am—last year our dinners cost only \$15.00 this year it's costing us \$25.00.

So how do we cope?

To address this issue I invited Dr. John Knowitall, Professor of Economics at Hale University. In 1991 he was appointed a member of President Bush's Economic Advisory Board. For the past three years he has been developing practical methods for all of us to beat the effects of our shrinking dollar.

Dr. Knowitall, we welcome you.