

How to Make Your Speech IMPACTFUL

Often, as speakers, one of our biggest challenges is creating speeches that not only deliver important information, but also deliver it with *impact*. When writing a speech, we might tend to just collect information into succinct paragraphs. While this is effective for outlining your speech's content, this isn't enough to make it a truly thought-provoking speech.

After you figure out *what* you'll be telling your audience, you really need to figure out *how* you'll say it to them. Let's take a look at two short examples. While these examples obviously aren't full speeches, they are persuasive arguments that can help us try to figure out why one might work better.

BAD EXAMPLE :

In 2016, experts estimated that less than 20% of children's books have people of color as their protagonists. While this statistic is improving, diverse representation in the media is still a big problem. In 2020, about 40% of lead actors in top movies were people of color, which is up 10% from the previous year.

GOOD EXAMPLE:

Have you ever read a book or watched a movie and wondered, *Why*

does nobody here really sound or look like me? Well, if so, you're not alone. Millions of children have been in the same place as you, and this problem has gone unaddressed for far too long. In fact, experts have estimated that less than 20% of children's books have people of color as protagonists. It is imperative that lead characters in books and movies have more different racial and ethnic backgrounds, more diverse gender identity and sexual orientation, varied family structures, etc.

In the first example, the argument is quite brief but really just two statistics with a simple opinion. It's not horrible, but it's not very effective unless you love hearing just numbers. On the other hand, in the second example, there is a relatable, **thought-provoking** hook; the statistic used is put into perspective; and the speaker's opinion and call-to-action are very clear and strong.

As you can see, there are **three main things** you should look for in the final draft of your speech to make it more impactful.

Make your speech:

- **Interesting**

Your speech should be interesting enough to hold the audience's attention, whether it's through questions, jokes, vocal variety, gestures, or even cool facts. If you incorporate enough of these elements into your speech, your

audience is much more likely to receive your overall message. (Tip: It's nice to have a slideshow or some other kind of visual reference during your speech, too.)

- **Relatable**

When you're speaking to your audience , make sure they can relate to what you're saying. When you're talking about something that might seem unrelated to their lives at first glance, try to clearly make that connection in your speech.

- **Relevant**

Now that you've held the audience's attention and made it clear why this topic matters to them, too, you need to seal the deal with a clear call to action. Tell them *what they can do!*

Next time you feel your speech is missing a certain *something*, use these three tips as your checklist! You might just find the pizzazz you need for your speech to deliver it with impact!