

Two Powerful Techniques for Introducing a Speaker

By Allan Kaufman, DTM and Allan Misch, DTM

An introduction is a mini-speech that tells why the speaker is credible to speak on the subject that's important to the audience. It should be brief and to the point. Usually the speaker will prepare a written introduction for you. If not, here are two methods for introducing the speaker.

The T I S Method

T... is for Topic

Tell the audience the subject and title of the presentation.

I... is for Importance

Tell the audience why the presentation is important to them—how they can benefit. Relate the topic to the audience.

S... is for Speaker

Tell the audience why the speaker is qualified to speak to them on the subject. Repeat the title of the presentation and finally, the speaker's name. Turn towards the speaker and smile. In formal situations, applaud until the speaker reaches you, shake hands, then sit down. In informal situations, don't applaud, sit down when the speaker rises and starts forward or follow the organization's customary practice.

The Allan and Allan Way

Speaker Description & Qualifications

Give a brief description of the speaker and list those qualifications that relate to the subject to be presented. Use humor if appropriate.

Topic

Tell the audience the subject of the presentation, if it's a manual speech, and the purpose of the speech.

Title

Mention the title of the speech.

Name of Speaker

End with the name of the speaker. This cues the speaker to come forward.

Some people mention the speaker's name at the beginning and within the body of the introduction. This is okay. However, you build up the suspense by saving the speaker's name for last. This also cues the speaker to come forward. If you do decide to mention the speaker's name before the end, let the speaker know before hand the last line of your introduction as a cue for coming forward.

Don't be too funny or present a summary of the speaker's presentation. Write the introduction, don't rely on your memory. Don't draw your audience's attention to any negative conditions or put pressure on the speaker by setting an expectation that the speaker cannot live up to. Don't say, "Without further ado...." or "Here's a speaker who needs no introduction...."

Should You Write Your Own Introductions?

YES, YES, YES. That way, you are not surprised. It's likely the person introducing you does not know how to effectively introduce a speaker. You should take control. Write out your own introduction. Type it double-spaced. Make about five copies of it. Send one in advance to the person who will be introducing you. Call up and make sure he (she) has received it and ask if he has any questions. Take two more copies of your introduction with you to your presentation. Save at least one copy for your reference file. Sometimes the person will forget to bring with him your introduction or maybe at the last minute, someone else will be asked to introduce you. Always be prepared.

Write the introduction using a 16-point or 18-point size and double or triple line space. Underline and/or bold words that should be emphasized.

What Should You Put In Your Own Introduction?

It depends on the audience, your topic, and whether it's an informal or formal presentation. Include your qualifications and some of your major accomplishments. If you are giving a very short speech, say 5-10 minutes, you don't need a very long introduction. If the audience knows you, you don't need a long introduction.

If the environment is somewhat informal or you're speaking before an audience that knows you well, keep it short, and you might want to throw in some humor. For example, at a Toastmasters local club meeting, this introduction was used:

Allan Kaufman Introduction

Our speaker for this evening is well known throughout

Toastmasters District 18.

In fact, he's in WHO's WHO in District 18. Mention his name to anyone in District 18 and he or she will say "Who?...Who?"

His Toastmaster accomplishments are legendary and if you don't know what they are, I'm sure he will be happy to tell you about them later.

I will tell you that he was one of only five Showcase Speakers at the Toastmasters International Convention in August, 1988.

Now he doesn't want anyone to make a fuss over him—just treat him as you would any great man.

The title of his speech is "How to be Funny for Money."

Please help me give a dynamite welcome to Distinguished Toastmaster Allan Kaufman.

The following illustrates how to prepare a concise, effective introduction using the T I S formula.

Allan Misch Introduction

Our speaker, Allan Misch, believes that learning to be effective speakers can make us more successful. It can help us improve our bottom line. In other words, it can help us increase our income.

Allan is a principle in Allan and Allan, a communications consulting company. He is an adjunct instructor at Howard Community College. He gives seminars and workshops on speaking and on interpersonal communication strategies. He's written several published articles on speaking, and he co-hosts Speakeasy—a show about communications on Comcast Cable television.

Mr. Misch also is a member of Toastmasters International. He has earned the title of "Distinguished Toastmaster"—the highest honor given by Toastmasters International. Since 1924, only 5,000 members out of five million have been so honored.

So to speak to you on "Speak and Grow Rich," please welcome
Allan Misch.

Allan Kaufman and Allan Misch <http://www.nosweatspeaking.com> specialize in rapidly reducing public speaking fear and offer 2 valuable, bonus reports and public speaking tips in their complimentary monthly No Sweat Speaking(sm) Ezine <mailto:nssezine@nosweatspeaking.com?subject=Subscribe>.

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