

How to Give a Great Speech

Each speaker must craft a message that reveals who they are and what they want to accomplish.

Know your audience.

People want to hear what you say, but you need to do your homework before you can connect. Understand what the audience expects of you and tailor your remarks to resonate with their needs.

Acknowledge your limitations.

Many times, what a leader has to say is what they must say. Failure to acknowledge what you can do and what the organization must do is asking for trouble. People will simply tune out.

Address objections.

Everyone wants to give an uplifting speech that resonates with harmony and joy. Unfortunately, life is not like that. Leaders need to paint a realistic picture, citing the pluses and minuses. It is the leader's responsibility to be honest about the decisions and set the course forward.

Tell stories.

Reveal yourself through stories. Cite examples of individuals in organizations who are making positive contributions. No leader succeeds alone.

Issue the call to action.

Not every speech may need a formal call to action, but every public utterance needs to be understood as a call for unity, a coming together to achieve the mission. However, if there is a call to action — ask for their support. And back that up with your commitment to supporting them.

Give people a reason to believe in you because you believe in them.