

Honing Your Public Speaking Skills-Effective Message Delivery

Susan Demers, St. Petersburg College, Clearwater Bar Association

WATCH THE CLOCK!

- Begin and end on time.
- Timing is everything-in all performance settings and not just in comedy.

BE PREPARED

- Know your audience/know your room.
- Know what you are going to say.
- Your intro should say why the audience should listen.
- Remember the rule of primacy and recency.

BE HEARD –AND UNDERSTOOD

- Know the acoustics of the room.
- Do a dry tech.
- Pay attention to the way your voice interacts with various types of microphones.
- Use the microphone.

DON'T SLAY 'EM

- Death by bullet points is painful.
- Technology should support your presentation of your message.
- A fresh battery is the cheapest insurance you'll ever buy!
- If you need to prepare a handout, do so.

TAKE STAGE

- Think about how you use the podium-or don't.
- Look your audience in the eye before you begin.
- Take time to grab your audience's attention at the beginning.
- Use the full power of your voice.
- Never complain, never explain.

Public speaking is a performance art. You can get better with practice but your skills degrade if you do not choose to actively hone them.

Pay no attention to nerves. Adrenaline proves you're alive and improves your performance so your audience will not wilt away. They came to enjoy themselves so you should as well!