



# PUBLIC SPEAKING

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## STEP 1

Participants are presented with a variety of examples of rhetorical figures and invited to each pick one of these. They should choose one which appeals to them (for different possible reasons). Some rhetorical figures are represented with more than one example. Participants should choose only one example from these.

## STEP 2

Participants should then (individually) think about how they would present or speak their statement or quotation (not the name of the rhetorical figure or the explanation of it, only the actual exemplary sentence itself). They should think of the following aspects among others:

- a. How loud should this phrase be spoken?
- b. How fast should it be spoken?
- c. At which moments should the presenter take a short break and/or take a breath?
- d. How long should these breaks be?
- e. How should the tone and the volume and the breaks evolve/develop throughout the statement?
- f. Which emotions would the presenter like to use at which moments / on which words?
- g. Which gestures would the presenter use at the same time?
- h. Which (body) posture would the presenter adopt during her/his presentation?

Remark: you can mention these aspects to them once, stressing that they don't need to keep all the above-mentioned aspects in mind. These aspects might be too many to be taken into account at once. They are only suggestions which will later be analysed together on the basis of all performances.)

Ask participants to memorise their statement so that they will be able to present it without their little paper.



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### STEP 3

You may ask who would like to present first. You may add that the first one will have the easiest job because the more people will present, the more difficult it will become, as subsequent presenters will also need to keep in mind the advice given to previous speakers.

### STEP 4

The person who volunteered to speak will be invited to leave the room (and close the door behind themselves) and come in after a short while (about 20 seconds). During this time, the other participants (and you as the facilitator) will stand in a half-circle facing the door. In this way, when the speaker comes back into the room, there will be a public waiting to hear their statement or see their performance.

Note: While a speaker comes in, also focus on their posture, their body language, their eye contact with the group, their pace, the way how they close the door (do they turn their back on the public?) and other aspects which you may notice. Later, after their statement, you will also ask the other participants about these aspects. In fact, a speech or presentation does not begin when we start to speak; it begins as soon as we enter the room. Our first visual appearance has a big effect on our public, so we already need to keep in mind how we would like to appear and which effect we would like to have on our public. Likewise, observe whether the speaker first stands firm with their two feet on the ground before they start speaking or whether they already speak while walking in. Usually, the speaker appears stronger and more self-assured if they first walk into their position, stand firmly, and then start to speak. The position of their feet can also make a difference: a speaker who has their legs crossed usually appears less confident for example than a speaker who stands in a “feet below shoulders” position.

### STEP 5

While the speaker enters the room, everyone (including you as the facilitator) keeps quiet and just focuses on the speaker.

When the speaker finishes speaking, try not to react immediately and focus on the end of the presentation.





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**Note:** the beginning of a presentation (when we enter the room) and the end of it (after we've spoken our last words) are very important moments. At the end of their statement, focus on whether the speaker remains in the same position for a short while (2-3 seconds) without moving in order to give more emphasis to their statement, or if they immediately let their gaze wander or change their body position or posture.

### STEP 6

After each statement, first ask the group of participants to provide feedback to the person who just presented. As the moderator, you will try to make sure that all feedback is provided in a constructive manner. Ideally, each person giving feedback starts with one or a few positive aspects and then makes recommendations on what to improve. First, let participants come up with their own feedback. Thereafter, you will round off the exchange by touching upon aspects which have not been mentioned yet and which seem important to you in relation to the performance you've just seen. These aspects can be related to the elements that participants were invited to keep in mind in the first place:

- a. What was the effect of the first appearance of the speaker? How did they enter the room?
- b. How suitable was the loudness of the statement/speech?
- c. How suitable was the pace of the presentation? Were there any changes in pace during the presentation? Were they deliberate or not?
- d. How deliberately did the speaker use pauses? When did the speaker breathe?
- e. Did these elements enhance the performance in the right ways? Were they used to make it more effective?
- f. Was there a progression in tone, volume, pace and pauses? If no, why? If yes, was it suitable?
- g. Which emotions did the presenter use at which moments / on which words? Was this use deliberate and effective?
- h. Which gestures did the presenter use? Were these used deliberately and effectively?
- i. Which (body) posture did the presenter adopt during her/his presentation? Was it deliberate and effective?
- j. How did the presenter "close" the performance?



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## FINAL REMARKS

- Try not to give too much feedback yourself as a facilitator and make sure the other participants give as much feedback as possible. You don't need to mention all aspects to each presenter: for each speaker, try to focus on what was most obvious. With each new speaker, you can add feedback on elements which haven't been mentioned yet (but you may also touch upon previously mentioned elements of course).
- At the end of or during the feedback round, you can ask the public to guess which figure of speech the presenter was using. First, let the group guess and then ask the presenter to reveal the figure and its name, while explaining how it works.
- When a new person leaves the room in order to re-enter, you may change your position as the "public". For example, you may decide to sit down, stand further away from each other or closer together, in order to add a short moment of surprise for the presenter.
- In many cases, it makes sense to ask a participant to perform one more time after having heard the feedback from their fellow participants. We need to also keep in mind the overall timeframe, however, so you need to see how important it is for someone to repeat their performance and strike a balance between learning outcome and overall time at your disposal.
- While ideally each participant should get the chance to perform at least once, it is more important to give sufficient time and space to each presenter so that the experience is satisfying and overall positive for them and for the public. In any case, make sure that each presenter receives feedback from at least 3 persons of their team and from yourself. Depending on the reactions of the speaker, the overall mood of the team in the moment, whether you've already touched upon certain aspects or not, and other factors, you will decide on how much feedback a presenter should receive.
- In 25 minutes, it seems realistic to have 4 or 5 performances with short feedback sessions.