
SELF-ANALYSIS MEMO

TO: Dr. Carolyn Clark, Communication Dept., Salt Lake Community College
FROM: Abigail L. Kaden, Comm 1020-049
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RE: Self-Analysis

During my speeches, I found that most of my focus was on remembering my lines, making sure I wasn't nervous, and trying to keep a calm, steady voice. Most of my insight has come from directly observing my speech pattern, eye contact, and body language in the recordings produced for the class. The video's and feedback from Dr. Clark, as well as other students, helped point out some of my strengths and weaknesses, which, in return, helped me focus more on improving upon some of my deficiencies. As a result, my speeches slowly improved with each new attempt, which should be apparent from my summary below.

In my Self Analysis Memo I will review the organization of my ideas and how I incorporated supporting material, i.e. logos, ethos, and pathos into my speeches. I will then discuss how I delivered the material, the audience assessments, and how I adapted my speeches in response. I will conclude by describing some of the lessons I have learned throughout the duration of this class.

Organization of ideas:

Organizing one's thoughts isn't always easy to do. I found the organization of my speeches to be the most difficult aspect of the whole process for me to master. However, with each try it became a bit easier and the next step clearer. It is only after you select the topic of your speech, that you are able to move onto the next step, which is how you plan to present it. You then have to choose which organizational pattern will work best with your speech and the point you are trying to make. Personally, I found the chronological pattern, also referred to as a temporal pattern, easiest to work with because it follows the natural chronological order of the speech's main points.

In general, a speech consists of three major parts: The introduction, the body, and the conclusion. The introduction should illustrate the purpose of the speech; the body presents the main points, which include the supporting material; and the conclusion closes the speech out by restating the main purpose and demonstrating why the thesis is important to the audience. These three components help organize an entire speech outline, but are just the initial necessities when putting together a good speech. As the authors point out in chapter 3 of *A Pocket Guide to Public Speaking*, "a well – organized speech is characterized by unity, coherence, and balance." Unity is achieved when the presenter sticks to the main points implied by the purpose and thesis statements. Speeches display coherence when they are logical and clearly organized. To do this, it is important to stay focused on coordination and subordination, which are the means by which we place like ideas together in a chronological progression of relative significance to lead our audience in a logical manner from our stated purpose to our conclusion. Balance is suggested to give the appropriate weight, or emphasis to each individual part, and the theme. When organizing my speeches, I typically started by establishing an introduction and conclusion, and tried to finish by building my body in a way that bridged the gap between the two with unity, coherence, and balance. This has proved harder to do in practice than in theory, but knowing the principles to focus on has helped improve the organization of my outlines throughout the class.

Use of Supporting material:

In online Lecture 6, Dr. Clark states that "effective supporting material demonstrates worthiness, depth (not breadth), redundancy, variety, and helps you achieve your specific goal." I believe this can be accomplished by including all three types of support; ethos, logos, and pathos. I will admit that trying to include all three types of support was difficult at times, however, I did my best to accomplish this in each of my speeches. Below, I provide a brief discussion of each type of support and how I used them within my speeches.

Ethos:

Ethos refers to supporting material intended to establish the credibility of the speaker to the audience. Dr. Clark considers this the first function of supporting material because without it, audiences are typically less inclined to listen to what a speaker has to say about a given subject matter. In short, people don't like to waste their time listening to people who do not know what they are talking about. Dr. Clark also states that you can establish ethos in two ways. The primary method is to incorporate your own personal expertise into your speech, and the secondary method is to rely on researched expertise. When utilizing the secondary method, it is important to reference people who are well known as experts on your subject matter since building credibility via hearsay is only effective if the audience deems the source to be worthy of their attention. To this end, I incorporated over three well known, and credible, references in each of my speeches.

I tried to accomplish a good use of ethos in my applied speech by picking a subject that I was knowledgeable about and had experience in. By providing examples of techniques that I had employed while working at a local Pony Club, I believe that I was able to convey a sense of expertise about my subject matter when discussing horse grooming. Since they were then more likely to listen to me, establishing this level of credibility likely helped me reach my end goal of informing the audience about different techniques associated with the hygienic care of horses.

Logos:

Aristotle used the term logos to refer to persuasive appeals to reason and logic. (O'Hair, 2010, p.299) This method of persuasion is considered to be the 2nd most important function of supporting material, and consists of providing evidence in support of claims made during a presentation. The idea here is that the more hard evidence there is to support a given claim, the more likely an audience will be to believe that claim. Evidence can include: facts, statistics, definitions, examples, demonstrations, graphs, charts, photos and explanations. In online lecture 6b, Dr. Clark states that using logos is especially important if your audience is well educated, as most people require some form of evidence before they will accept or even consider someone else's claims or proposition.

I used logos the most in my informative speech about vegetarianism. In that speech, I found it useful to reference various statistics about the dietary needs of our bodies and how they may be met following various sub-categories of vegetarian diets. In that, and other speeches, I believe I did a good job of not cherry-picking my data, which is when you search for statistics that confirm a previously held opinion or belief. Not only is such practice ethically dubious, it can be detrimental to the logos of a presentation since it is easy to discredit the legitimacy of statistics gathered in this way. To aid the audience, I typically tried to round off my figures and provide right-brain comparisons to help represent the significance of the numbers that I presented. However, I can see from the recordings of my speeches that I still need to work on making numerical evidence more relatable to those that I am speaking with.

Pathos:

Pathos is the third function of supporting material. Opposite to logos, pathos is connected with the right side of your brain, and appeals to your emotional side. A good way to incorporate it into your speeches is by using narratives, mini short stories, famous sayings, analogies, visuals, and/or personal impact. Incorporating pathos is very important, especially in the introduction and the conclusion. In all of my speeches, I would begin or end with a quote, or a narrative, which I believe helped bring the audience's attention to life. I feel I instilled a good amount of pathos into all of my speeches, and felt this was reconfirmed by the comments I received from my peers after my presentations. After delivering my persuasive speech, which asked the audience to reconsider attending circuses that contain animal acts, Dr. Clark mentioned how all the photo's I used in my Power Point slides added to the feeling of the speech, and were a good use of pathos. I plan to improve the pathos of my future presentations by becoming better at incorporating short mini-stories. I believe this will help my audience, as well as myself connect more with my speeches in the future.

Delivery:

"Listeners learn more and respond most positively to speakers who create a perception of physical and psychological closeness, called nonverbal immediacy, between themselves and audience members." (O'hair, 2010, p.152) A good way to establish good immediacy between you and your audience is by having frequent eye contact, good facial expressions, natural body movement, and an enthusiastic vocal delivery. There are many things you want to try to avoid when presenting your final speech. Some of which deal with your vocal delivery, such as using unnecessary fillers such as, "uh," "hmmm", "you know," or "I mean." Others deal with body language, and how your audience reads what you're saying. From your facial expressions alone, an audience can tell whether the speaker is excited or indifferent towards their speech. In *A Pocket Guide to Public Speaking* the author's state, "Few behaviors are more effective for building rapport with an audience than smiling." Smiling is a good tool that can help you and your audiences relax, however, the rule should be to do what is natural and normal for each individual speech. (O'hair, 2010, p.149) In my first speech nervousness got the best of me, and you can see it portrayed in my facial expressions, as well as in my voice. From this class I have noticed that when I get nervous I tend laugh at my own jokes, or things that I find funny, which speakers should try to avoid. However, with each new speech I presented, I believe that I became progressively better in this regard. I learned to calm my nerves, control my facial features, and maintain a more natural voice pattern while speaking in front of others. This last point is something that I likely need to devote my most attention to for the future. Since I made a point of memorizing my speeches, I think my voice seemed a bit monotone during my presentations because I was overly focused on remembering my lines, rather than presenting my material as if I was having a conversation with the audience. After reviewing my speeches again, I also noted that I sometimes spoke too fast, and didn't take time to pause between certain points. In chapter 5 *Delivery*, under the section *Using the Body*, O'hair states that "many expert speakers recommend practicing your speech about five times in its final form." I couldn't agree more with this statement. The more I practiced my speech, especially in front of a mirror, the more calm I became. The words that once jumbled around in my speech became clearer, and my facial features, and body language became more natural. Practice is definitely a major key to presenting a successful speech

Audience Assessment and Adaptation:

Investigating who your audience is through audience analysis is a good way to tailor your speech to better connect with those listening to it. Many of my speeches were completed online, so the only way I was able to get to know my audience was through their speeches and their comments on my own and other students speeches. I found this method to be the most effective way to understand the level of information I could portray to them. In classes with random topics that we are able to pick, and present, at will, I think it is much harder to "hit home", or completely engage the audience since everyone is coming from different backgrounds, with their own attitudes and beliefs towards each subject matter. To help bridge the gaps in our varied backgrounds, I tried to talk about subjects of broad significance that everyone would have at least some minimal exposure too. In the future, if and when I am asked to give a speech, the first thing I will do is assess who my audience is. The person asking you to speak is a good place to start. They will most likely have a good idea of who will be present in the audience. Another method of audience analysis is research conducted wither online, or in person. By visiting the organization that is asking you to speak you can get a better feeling or understanding of the people involved in their company, who they represent, and the clients that service.

Lessons Learned:

The lessons I have taken away from this class are countless. Moving forward, it is up to me to continue to utilize the information I have learned. I believe that the tools I have gained from the class will benefit me in school and in the business world later on. Most notably, I have learned the importance and usefulness of analyzing my audiences, practicing my speeches, and making sure my facial features and body language come across as natural. The impromptu speeches have especially taught me to be brief and to the point, and that sticking to the point is vital when trying to convey something in a short amount of time. This is an area that I have always seemed to have trouble with because I always seem to add too much fluff. By continually reviewing what I was saying out loud, I was able to achieve shorter, and more to the point, speeches. Dr. Clark also states in the impromptu lecture that it is important to mentally organize

what you're about to say, and to make sure your speech has an introduction, body and conclusion. Through giving and reviewing my own, and other student's, impromptu speeches, I have learned to pause, give myself a moment to collect my thoughts, and calm myself before actually speaking. During the speech I found it useful to stop and pause anytime I needed to collect my thoughts, instead of continually speaking and saying "uhhh", or "umm". In practiced speeches I didn't find that this was as prevalent as it was in my impromptu speeches, but I believe this can be overcome by practicing this type of speech more often in everyday situations. Although my public speaking is still in need of much improvement, I believe through this class I have established the stepping stones that will help prepare me for future speeches that I am sure to encounter throughout my life, and career.

Works Cited

Dr. Carolyn Clark, Communications 1020 Online Lectures (Salt Lake City, 2011) Salt Lake Community College

Dan O'Hair, Hannah Rubenstein, and Rob Stewart, *The Pocket Guide to Public Speaking* (Boston*New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2010)