Top 10 Tips for Public Speaking
By Professor of Speech Communication
Julie R. Corff

1.) **Start Strong!** The audience is busy taking their own "mind trips." Grab their attention and focus it on your speech. Examples, present a person or object, invite audience participation, use audio or video, use film or power point, read a quote, tell a story, and/or use humor.

2.) **Look Directly at Your Audience!** The only way to adapt to your audience is to look at them. Notes are to help you if you forget the information or to keep you organized. Do not read to your audience.

3.) **Give Credit where Credit is Due!** Be sure when stating facts, statistics, and/or quotes during your presentation, that you orally cite your credibility sources.

4.) **Put Your Personality into Speech!** When researching your speech, find information that will be interesting to your audience. Your job is to get their attention and keep their attention during your presentation.

5.) **Delivery Matters!** Stand balanced on two feet, not on one hip or with crossed ankles. Use the podium for your notes only. Do not hang, lean, touch, or ride the podium. Keep gestures above the waist. Take steps of purpose to keep the attention of your audience. Avoid pacing or random movement. Hands may rest at your sides or clasped in front when not gesturing. Avoid hands in your pockets, behind your back, crossed in front of your chest, or fidgeting with hair or jewelry.

6.) **Speak Loudly!** As a speaker you must project your voice loud enough for your audience to hear you. If they cannot hear your message they will quickly lose interest.

7.) **Visual Aids Help Your Audience Remember!** Use visual aid(s) to reinforce or explain your information. The visual aid should relate in some manner to the information that is being discussed. Some examples of visual aids are power point slides, pictures, video clips, objects, models, overhead transparencies, and hand outs. Be sure your visual aid(s) are really aiding your speech. Do not talk to your visual aid(s) or the screen, talk to your audience about the visual aid(s). Put away, cover, or "shutter" the visual aid(s) when they are no longer being used.
8.) **Dress to Impress!** Research shows that we do make assumptions about people based on their clothing. Communicators who wear special clothing often gain persuasiveness. Clothing communicates nonverbally trustworthiness.

9.) **Practice, Practice, Practice!** Write a word or phrase outline on 2-3 note cards. Practice saying your speech several times to yourself, to a friend, or in front of a mirror.

10.) **End Strong!** Just like the start of your speech, the conclusion of your speech should be strong. It should clearly let the audience know when you are finished. Ways to end strong could be ending with a quotation, telling a story, using a striking fact, etc... "Thank you" should be stated after the note of finality is given, not as the note of finality. Do not end with an apology, "That's all I have," or "That's it!"
