

Problem-Solution Speech Assignment Sheet

Purpose of This Assignment

This speech is to introduce you to persuasive speaking by working first on the logical substance, or *logos*, that is the essence of any persuasive effort. If you advocate a change, you should be able to clearly document the existence of some sort of a problem and then explain specifically what course of action is necessary to solve that problem. For this speech, assume that you are speaking to a logical, unbiased audience. You should relate to your audience through effective psychological orientation in the introduction and psychological closure in the conclusion, and through effective use of attention factors. However, the emphasis of this speech is on sound reasoning and solid support for your points.

Requirements

1. The topic should be timely, timeless [6] and controversial. Choose a topic on which you hold strong convictions and upon which you can realistically expect to influence an audience through reasoned argument.
2. The speech should be 6 to 8 minutes in length.
3. The three functional steps of the introduction [13] and the three functional steps of the conclusion [14] should be clearly identifiable.
4. There should be a definite, logical transition bridging each component of the speech [12].
5. The speech should follow the problem-solution format: Main point I should explicate the problem. Main point II should explain the solution [9, 10].
6. Delivery is to be in the extemporaneous mode [25]. Use only 4 or 5 note cards.
7. You are to use at least three different kinds of supporting material [15].
8. You are to use at least three different attention factors [18].
9. A typed outline, submitted on the day of the speech, should
 - state the specific purpose of your speech [6]
 - state your thesis [6] (PROPOSITION)
 - follow the correct outline format [11]
 - label the three functions of the introduction [13]
 - label the three functions of the conclusion [14]
 - label the three kinds of supporting material [15]
 - label the three kinds of attention factors [18]
- include a reference list of at least 5 sources in correct bibliographic form [8]

Criteria for Evaluation

First, you must meet all of the above requirements to receive a passing grade for the assignment. Then, points will be assigned based on how well you carried out each aspect of the assignment. In other words, if each requirement is present, expect to receive about 70% of the possible points in that category (C range). If you fail to meet one of the basic requirements, the grade will be lower on that component. If you not only meet the minimal requirements, but carry them out very well, expect to receive 80-89% (B range) or 90-100% (A range) of the possible points.

Suggestions for Preparation

Select a topic that you can research readily in the time available. Once again, strong organization is your best ally. Make your main points clear and be very explicit on how the subpoints relate to each other and to the main points. Use summaries and transitions like the following: "I have shown you the economic and social manifestations of the problem. Now let me tell you about its social impact." Do not rush through a long string of facts and statistics. Take time to explain them and to make clear what they mean.

Practice the speech several times but do not memorize it [24]. Time your speech when practicing. It is difficult to keep control of a number of facts and statistics. Students have a tendency to read this speech. To read or memorize it will affect your delivery grade. After you have written your outline, set it aside and practice speaking from *brief notes*. It is a real challenge to be very familiar with your material and still maintain a conversational delivery.