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As We Speak : Extension Circular 0-43-2

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Harlan H. Adams

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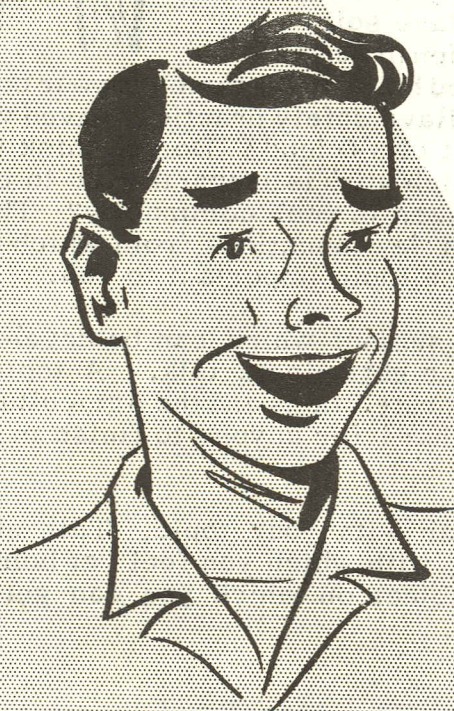
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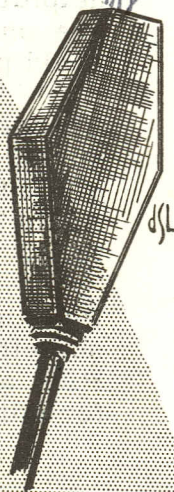
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1952

as we SPEAK



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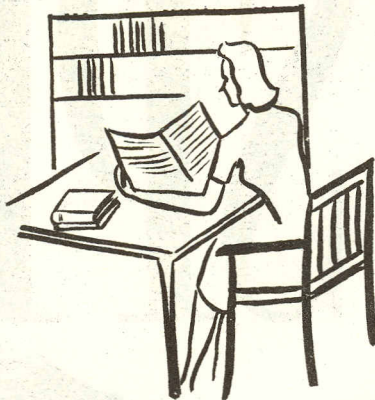


EXTENSION SERVICE
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE
AND U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
COOPERATING
W. V. LAMBERT, DIRECTOR

Julia Crom and Harlan H. Adams¹

I. PREPARATION OF MATERIAL

- A. Choose a timely interesting subject. The topic should be related in some way to what you like to do most in your 4-H Club work. Pick something on which you feel strongly and about which you can offer some suggestions for changes and improvement. Then you can "crusade" a little. Has good nutrition improved your health? Have soil conservation practices helped build up the farms in your community? Have safety practices saved your life or that of a friend? Do you think that your 4-H club work is preparing you to be a helpful citizen in your community? These are only a few questions from which you could pick a topic important to you.



Choose a subject which can be developed during an eight-minute talk. A topic as big as Labor Relations and the Agriculturist would be hard for anyone to finish in that time.

Be familiar with your topic. Talk about something with which you feel "at home". Pick a subject on which you can get information.

Julia Crom is Assistant State 4-H Club Leader, Harlan H. Adams is Instructor, Speech Department, University of Nebraska.

B. Read and gather material.

Current books and magazines will be of help. Be certain that the facts you gather are true. Do not use statements you cannot prove.

C. Organize your thinking

Combine what you have read and heard, and what you know from personal experience.

Decide the main point you are trying to get across. Cut out material that does not pertain to this point. Add facts and illustrations that will emphasize your idea. Remember that illustrations will be retained by your audience after cold facts have been forgotten.

Be unusual. Old truths and familiar facts can be dressed in new styles.

D. Include an introduction, the main body of the speech and summary.

Limit your main points to three or four. Be sure they are related, and carry through a central idea.

Make your outline simple. A brief, well organized outline will be of help to you. A long, poorly planned one will be confusing.

E. Prepare actual speech.

Be ready to give your speech from a very few notes, or from memory.

G. Use clear diction

Avoid carelessness in speech habits. Remember to put a final "g" on such words as "joining" and "going". "Get" is not pronounced as though it were spelled "git". Use words with which you are familiar. Use lively words that add interest to your talk. Short, direct sentences are more easily understood than long complex ones. Use a tape recorder or any other type, if available, and listen to the faults in diction. Try it over and over until you can leave out unnecessary sounds and pauses.



H. Pronounce words in an accepted manner.

Make use of a good dictionary when there is any doubt.

I. Develop a natural, convincing manner.

Become familiar with your topic. This means practice. Practice will develop self confidence and ease in talking. Omit apologies. Say what needs to be said, no more. Speak with a purpose, and to the point.

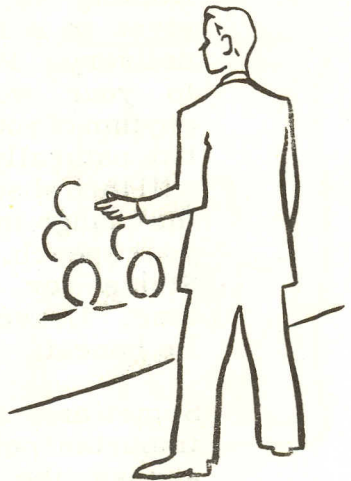
Speak with sincerity and enthusiasm, and your words will become effective in expressing your ideas.

II. DELIVERY OF SPEECH

A. Use a good, erect posture without being stiff. The position in which you feel right and look right is the best one for you. If you have practiced standing erect, your natural posture will be pleasing to others, too. Do not stand tense and rigid, as if you are made of wood. Stand relaxed and smiling.

B. Make all movements meaningful and easy.

Aimless, nervous movements will detract from your speech. Don't be a "weight-shifter", a "hand-wringer", a "ring-twister", or a "finger-twitcher". Be at ease. Be interested in putting over your speech.



Use gesture for emphasis if it is possible to do so naturally. Avoid a gesture for its own sake. If it emphasizes a point, use it. If it detracts, leave it out.

C. Keep eye contact with entire audience.

Smile at the entire audience as you begin, not just at your best friend. Keep that friendly contact with your audience as you talk. Avoid gazing at the walls or ceiling.

D. Adjust your voice to the room and audience.

Make sure that everyone can hear, without speaking too loudly. A friend sitting in the rear of the room can indicate how your voice is being heard. If you give some figures, give them slowly. If you think the audience is not hearing you, speak more slowly and distinctly and a little more loudly. Do not begin to shout or raise the tone of your voice to a high, strained pitch.

E. Use variety in your voice.

Nothing is more deadly than a speech given in a monotone. Vary your rate of delivery. Put some lilt and inflection into your words. Change the force and rhythm of your speaking, not methodically, but naturally and easily. Your audience will then absorb what you are saying. Use the change in force to emphasize points of your speech. Avoid a high-pitched quality. Strive for a pleasing, well modulated tone. Leave no doubt as to your sincerity. Be honest.

Sometimes a deliberate pause after an important point is very effective in putting across the point. Give your audience time to think along with you. Do not go too rapidly, or they will not be able to keep pace with you.

F. Watch your grammar.

This is important. Many an otherwise excellent talk is ruined by use of incorrect grammar. Let someone correct your mistakes. Then practice.

III. GENERAL SUGGESTIONS

A. Remember that your job is one of oral communication. Your talk is meant to be spoken and heard. Think of your audience throughout the preparation, practice, and delivery of your speech. You are the link between your speech and your audience. Many times a well written theme makes a poor speech.

B. Practice, practice, practice.

If your family and friends wear out, use a large mirror for an audience.

C. Make a pleasing appearance. Dress conservatively, and yet tastefully. Your appearance must not detract from your speech.



Keep a smile in your voice, and occasionally one on your face.

D. Be yourself. Don't try to imitate someone else.

Use your best style in your best way.

SCORE CARD FOR PUBLIC SPEAKING

The following has been set up to help in preparing and scoring speeches.

Subject matter _____ 30%

Includes importance and suitability of topic; accuracy, and composition.

Presentation _____ 40%

Includes voice, stage presence, expressions.

General Effect _____ 30%

Extent to which the speech is interesting, understandable and convincing.