

TYPES OF PUBLIC SPEAKING

1. Briefings

a. Impromptu Speech

Impromptu speaking is when we respond during a meeting or “take the floor” at some type of gathering. It’s what we do when we speak publicly without warning or on a few moments notice.

b. Information Briefing

An information briefing is a specialized oral presentation designed to inform the listener. The information briefing only deals with facts; it has no place for recommendations. The explanation should be simple and precise. A good information briefing should include a short introduction indicating the topic to be presented; the body, stating the facts clearly and objectively; and a short summary, depending upon the length of your presentation and the complexity of your subject matter.

c. Advocacy Briefing

The advocacy or persuasion briefing is used to do just what it sounds like; persuade someone to do or not to do something.

d. Decision Briefing

Decision briefings are given where a decision from the commander is needed at the conclusion of the briefing. It differs from other briefings in that you end it by asking the commander for a decision. Decision briefings usually contain:

- Statement of the situation (problem).
- Background.
- Several courses of action.
- Your recommendation on a preferred course of action.
- Asking for a decision.

2. Presentations

a. Formal Briefings

Formal briefings tend to be the rule rather than the exception at higher levels of command. Formats are prescribed, strict time limits are set, and the contents of the briefings are fully coordinated and staffed.

b. Informal Briefings

Informal briefings are given at all levels of command. Such presentations often involve routine status reports at periodic gatherings. An example is a staff meeting update.

c. Classroom Instruction

Classroom instruction is similar to an informal briefing. You will have a basic lesson plan with objectives, but you will present your information in a relaxed atmosphere. The steps we discuss for briefings are applicable to classroom instruction.

d. Guided Discussions

Guided discussions are leader planned and guided learning experiences in which the sharing of information by a group leads to the achievement of learning objectives.

(1) Use with small groups

- (a) Student participation - maximizes student participation because the group interacts in response to the instructor's questions. Communication flow becomes a transaction among all students.
- (b) Promotes the understanding of concepts and principles and the development of problem-solving skills.
- (c) Develops individual and group thinking skills. Students develop the ability to think critically in appraising the ideas of others. Students get the opportunity to reason together and to develop group decision skills.
- (d) Research in social psychology supports the position that discussion is more effective than the lecture for changing student attitudes and behaviors. When students make a public commitment in a discussion, they are more apt to follow through with a change in behavior.

(2) Don't use with larger groups

- (a) Time-consuming and difficult method to execute (preparation, knowledge, etc.)
- (b) Requires specific skills to conduct a successful guided discussion.
- (c) May create friction