

Public Speech and Presentation

Objective

By the end of this chapter you should have learnt about:

- Public Speech and Presentation
- Things to keep in mind while speaking in front of Public
- Some Great Public Speeches

Introduction

Public speech or presentation is one such form of mass communication where one addresses a (large) gathering of people. Giving a speech is a craft that one needs to inculcate in oneself in order to succeed in academic and professional life. It is not that only a political leader needs to know the craft of addressing large audience, but there are various kinds of jobs throughout the world where the art of addressing mass is a prerequisite. Think about a situation when you are heading an institution or you are the Public Relations Officer or the Media Coordinator of an institution, it becomes essential for you to address large audience. Moreover, think about you making a presentation for a company, are not you addressing public? So, public speech/presentation are significant in our professional life.

Public Speech is different from presentations in the sense that in public speech one is speaking to divergent mass whose background one is not aware of, whereas in presentation one is speaking to a select group of people whose academic and professional background are more or less similar to you and who have (more or less) similar interests. So a presentation is of a different nature than that of a public speech, but in both forms of oral communication what is needed is to catch the attention of the people which can be done either by speaking something new which the audience is not aware of or by saying things in such a manner which

catches the attention of people. New ideas, new information is something that makes people attentive to the listener, but in all contexts it is essential that one needs to use a language which the audience will be accustomed with. For a presentation one can and one should use a subject-specific language (register), as the select group of audience is aware of such subject-specific terminologies; but when it comes to a public speech it is essential that one uses as simple and straightforward language as possible.

Note: The topics suggested in Group Discussion may be used for public speech and presentation also.

In Public Speech, one has to be rhetorical to catch the attention of the audience. It is very important to gauge the pulse of the audience as soon as possible and then react according to it. When one is a public leader, one has to figure out what are the expectations of the audience and one needs to present oneself according to those expectations. But at the same time one needs to go beyond those expectations to mark oneself as a good speaker.

Activity 1

'Public Speech is all about rhetoric.' Do you agree? Give reasons to justify your answer.

In a speech or a presentation whether in a classroom or an office or a boardroom, etc, one has to keep in mind various things. They are -

- **Time Limit:** Usually in a speech /presentation there is a time limit given and one should try to wrap up one's presentation within that time as there should be post-presentation discussion about what you presented. Moreover, keeping within the time limit is necessary as the audience's time should be valued.
- **Prepare yourself by writing:** Though in a speech or presentation one speaks as one does in an extempore, but it is to be kept in mind that speeches are to be prepared beforehand and if possible even rehearsed so that you do not miss anything. Often it is good to write down the speech and if not write down the whole thing then at least make a structure in a piece of paper so that you have a framework ready. Examples, anecdotes, etc. should also be noted so that it is helpful during the speech and one does not miss anything.
- **Non-verbal cues** are very important during speeches and presentations as one's body language, facial expressions, postures,

- etc. speak a lot about what one intends to say. The conviction and confidence in what one is saying is brought forward in one's presentation /speech through the body language. Moreover, keeping an eye contact with the audience is a must as it ensures that your words are meant for them and it also helps in understanding their responses so as to mould the presentation accordingly. If one's gaze is constantly fixed at the written document from where you are presenting, then it may cause boredom in your audience. Never read the speech or presentation, but speak from it.
- A speech or presentation ending with a bang always is significant as it makes the audience have a strong impression about you as well as your presentation.

Some Famous Speeches

Addresses at the Parliament of Religions

Response to Welcome

Chicago, September 11, 1893

From <http://www.ramakrishna.org/chcgfull.htm>

Sisters and Brothers of America,

It fills my heart with joy unspeakable to rise in response to the warm and cordial welcome which you have given us. I thank you in the name of the most ancient order of monks in the world; I thank you in the name of the mother of religions, and I thank you in the name of millions and millions of Hindu people of all classes and sects.

My thanks, also, to some of the speakers on this platform who, referring to the delegates from the Orient, have told you that these men from far-off nations may well claim the honor of bearing to different lands the idea of toleration. I am proud to belong to a religion which has taught the world both tolerance and universal acceptance. We believe not only in universal toleration, but we accept all religions as true. I am proud to belong to a nation which has sheltered the persecuted and the refugees of all religions and all nations of the earth. I am proud to tell you that we have gathered in our bosom the purest remnant of the Israelites, who came to Southern India and took refuge with us in the very year in which their holy temple was shattered to pieces by Roman tyranny. I am proud to belong to the religion which has sheltered and is still fostering the remnant of the grand Zoroastrian nation. I will quote to you, brethren, a few lines from a hymn which I remember to have repeated from my earliest boyhood, which is every day repeated

The seed is put in the ground, and earth and air and water are placed around it. Does the seed become the earth, or the air, or the water? No. It becomes a plant. It develops after the law of its own growth, assimilates the air, the earth, and the water, converts them into plant substance, and grows into a plant.

Similar is the case with religion. The Christian is not to become a Hindu or a Buddhist, nor a Hindu or a Buddhist to become a Christian. But each must assimilate the spirit of the others and yet preserve his individuality and grow according to his own law of growth.

If the Parliament of Religions has shown anything to the world, it is this: It has proved to the world that holiness, purity and charity are not the exclusive possessions of any church in the world, and that every system has produced men and women of the most exalted character. In the face of this evidence, if anybody dreams of the exclusive survival of his own religion and the destruction of the others, I pity him from the bottom of my heart, and point out to him that upon the banner of every religion will soon be written in spite of resistance: "Help and not fight," "Assimilation and not Destruction," "Harmony and Peace and not Dissension."

Jawaharlal Nehru's Speech

Jawaharlal Nehru, gave this following speech as India's first Prime Minister to the Constituent Assembly in New Delhi at midnight on August 14, 1947.

'Awake to freedom' "Long years ago we made a tryst with destiny, and now the time comes when we shall redeem our pledge, not wholly or in full measure, but very substantially.

At the stroke of midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom. A moment comes which comes but rarely in history, when we step out from the old to the new, then an age ends, and when the soul of a nation, long suppressed, finds utterance. It is fitting that at this solemn moment we take the pledge of dedication to India and her people and to the still larger cause of humanity.

At the dawn of history India started on her unending quest, and trackless centuries are filled with her striving and the grandeur of her successes and her failures. Through good and ill fortune alike she has never lost sight of that quest or forgotten the ideals which gave her strength. We end today a period of ill fortune and India discovers herself again.

The achievement we celebrate today is but a step, an opening of opportunity, to the greater triumphs and achievements that await us. Are we brave enough and wise enough to grasp this opportunity and accept the challenge of the future?

Freedom and power bring responsibility. That responsibility rests upon this assembly, a sovereign body representing the sovereign people of India. Before the birth of freedom we have endured all the pains of labour and our hearts are heavy with the memory of this sorrow. Some of those pains continue even now. Nevertheless, the past is over and it is the future that beckons to us now.

That future is not one of ease or resting but of incessant striving so that we might fulfil the pledges we have so often taken and the one we shall take today. The service of India means the service of the millions who suffer. It means the ending of poverty and ignorance and disease and inequality of opportunity. The ambition of the greatest man of our generation has been to wipe every tear from every eye. That may be beyond us but so long as there are tears and suffering, so long our work will not be over.

And so we have to labor and to work, and work hard, to give reality to our dreams. Those dreams are for India, but they are also for the world, for all the nations and peoples are too closely knit together today for any one of them to imagine that it can live apart. Peace has been said to be indivisible, so is freedom, so is prosperity now, and so also is disaster in this one world that can no longer be split into isolated fragments.

To the people of India whose representatives we are, we make appeal to join us with faith and confidence in this great adventure. This is no time for petty and destructive criticism, no time for ill-will or blaming others. We have to build the noble mansion of free India where all her children may dwell."

Presentation

Whereas speeches are given by eminent personalities at different functions (whether formal and informal); presentations are much more an academic and professional thing as we present our views, information, thoughts, etc. for academic grades or for approval of projects, or for the initiation, development or other aspects of projects that we undertake. Thus

Presentations are much more of an academic and professional need. Often, when we apply for a research grant; we are asked to present our research proposal before a panel so as to help the panel decide whether our research proposal has enough validity, contextual appropriateness and value for the grant to be sanctioned. Or when a researcher does some new research, s/he presents his or her research findings in front of a panel of experts related to that field or in a workshop or seminar so as to help the academic community aware of the new researches in that particular field of study. Often for getting a research degree, the researcher is required to present his or her contribution in the particular field of study.

Often in our professional life, we do presentations for the sake of getting approval of a particular project or to ascertain the development of a project or probably after the successful completion of the project. For example, in a advertisement company, a client (an Advertiser) is provided with a presentation by the Creative Department and the Finance Department about the possible advertisements that can be made and the costs involved in making different kinds of advertisement so as to make the client choose from the available options the best one based on his or her budget, competitor's media and other factors.

Thus we have to make presentations at different times in our lives to fulfill our academic and professional needs. So a presentation needs to be very specific and should be done in such a manner that in least possible time, we are able to make the most significant aspects of our presentations reach the intended audience so as to get to our objective. In other words, presentations are intended to make a selected group of people aware about certain specific things. Whereas during a speech, the audience is heterogeneous; but in most cases of presentations, the intended audience is not so. Therefore a presenter has to think in quite different terms to prepare his or her presentation than when he or she is preparing for a speech.

Michael J. Wallace in his book *Study Skills in English*, mentions five steps crucial for making a presentation—

1. Make sure you understand the topic.
2. Make sure you understand the frame
3. Generate your own preliminary ideas on the topic.
4. Research the topic.
5. Write the topic

Note

Do you think Advertisement is a presentation?

It is, in some ways. As in an advertisement, the advertiser tries to present an image of his or her product / service / idea, etc. to a particular group of people who are his or her intended customers so as to woo them to buy their product or service or an idea and even information in some cases (social service ads). An advertisement is a short presentation in the form of an audio-visual advertisement, a great cost is involved. So the duration of an advertisement is always short and within that short span of time, the creative team of the ad tells a story and within a story they talk about a particular product / service / idea so as to make it get across to the intended public. Usually the advertisements that we get in television of other audio-visual media is about 15 to 30 seconds and within that time, it tells a story in such a way so as to make the audience not swap the TV channel and moreover get hooked to the story under the garb of which the creative time of the advertisement blends the idea of the product or the service so as to woo the audience to buy it. So it can be said that an advertisement is a short presentation - a presentation that we see all around us happening all the time.

It is therefore essential to think while watching an advertisement, the elements which the creative teams have combined to make a good advertisement. It is usually thought that there is a golden rule of advertisement making - it's called KISS - Keep it Simple and Stupid. The simpler and stupider an advertisement is, the better are the chances of it being liked by the people.

Now think about some advertisements that you liked and some which you did not like and figure out reasons behind each of them. As you figure them out you will understand that the same applies for a presentation too where the things that you liked should be followed while making a presentation and the things that you disliked should be avoided as far as possible while making a presentation.

If you have got yourself involved in the above exercise, then probably you have made a list (if not written, but in your mind) about the things that should be followed and avoided during presentations; then look at the following lists below to figure out if you have thought about these or not.

The following things should be followed while preparing and making your presentations -

- A presentation should be as precise and crisp as possible; otherwise people tend to lose attention of your presentation and it mars the whole purpose.
- One should not deviate too much from the topic of presentation; otherwise the presentation will not make sense to people.
- One should try to be as brief as possible, though it does not mean that one should not explain or elaborate things.
- One should try to use a language based on the kind of audience one is addressing. If the audience is selected and is more or less from same subject or professional field, then it is advisable that one uses the subject-specific jargons. Though in case of heterogeneous audience, one should detain from any kind of jargons. One should avoid clichés, circumlocutions and other such things in a presentation as it makes the presentation unnecessarily tedious and boring.
- One should dress according to the occasion. So during a presentation it is always better to be in formal get up to show that you are into serious business.
- In the days, when computers and audio-visual means are so common; one should try to present with the help of audio-visual aids as that makes presentations more interesting and understandable for the audience. These days, most presentations are done with slide shows which help the audience as well as the presenter - the presenter can make graphic details of the presentation so as to make the audience get the things in a better fashion.
- Often the framework of the presentation is circulated within the audience so that they are aware of the framework one is following during presentation. These days, people often take help of multimedia devices during presentation to make things clear.
- It is important often to provide an overview about what you are presenting as it makes it easier for the audience to follow it.
- It is also important that you emphasize what your main points are and where you are digressing as well as give them a summary of your presentation as the end of the talk.
- At the end it is also important to ask audience for their comments, queries, suggestions, etc.

According to Michael J. Wallace (in *Study Skills in English*, Cambridge University Press 2004, Rpt 2013 pp 124-126) the following are some practical guidelines for making a presentation in a classroom in an office or a boardroom etc

1. *Time limit.* You may be given a time limit, or you may be allowed to decide for yourself. If it is the latter, let your audience know what it is and make sure it leaves plenty of time for discussion. Do not exceed your limit.
2. *Full version of presentation.* Write out everything you have to say, including examples and so on, then rehearse it until you feel comfortable with it.
3. *Outline notes.* Reduce your talk to outline notes. Rehearse your talk again, this time from the outline notes. Speak from the outline notes. (But bring along the full version, just in case!)
4. *Shared outline with audience.* It will probably help your audience if you share your outline notes, or perhaps just the main headings, with them. Some ways of doing this are:
 - *OHP (overhead projector).* Make sure that what you have written can be easily read, even from the back of the room.
 - *Chalkboard/ Flipchart.* Preferably written up beforehand . . .
 - *Handout.* Leave plenty of room between the headings for participants to make their own notes.
 - *Powerpoint (computer) presentation.*
5. *Eye contact.* As far as possible, look at your audience while you are speaking. While you are looking at your audience, try to sense if they understand you. You will never make an eye contact with your audience if you are constantly fixed on the paper in front of you.
6. *Helpful overview.* Start by briefly reminding your audience of the topic and summarising in a sentence or two what you are going to say and/or how you are going to deal with the topic.
7. *Signposting.* Your talk should be clearly structured, and the language you use should signpost the structure (that is making clear to the audience what the structure is: main point/ examples/digressions/ summary and so on).
8. *Strong ending.* Leave time for a strong ending. One way of doing this is simply to emphasize the most important point that you have made in

your talk, but you may think of another good way of ending depending upon the topic. Welcome comments from the other participants."

Taken from Neerja Nagpal's Chapter on "Oral Communication" from the book *Business Communication* by Prema Malhotra, Neerja Nagpal, Yashini and Deb Dulal Halder, published by Book Age Publications, New Delhi, 2015.

An example of a full presentation

Good Morning everyone. Feel very welcome to my presentation. Let me just introduce myself. My name is Cesar Ramirez, and I am a trademark solicitor, and this morning, I am going to give you an overview of what I do, and I have chosen a particular topic and that's called 'trade dress'. So, it tastes like, it smells like and it looks like, but its not the same thing. I'll be addressing three main points in my presentation. The first one will be what I mean by 'trade dress' what the subject matter is, and the definition of that and I'll give you several examples along the course. And in my second point I would like to talk about the different actions that we may take to stop trade dress infringement. And finally in my third point I'll be looking at why we actually protect trade dress and why it's actually important, and relevant to the public.

So, moving on to first point, the subject matter, what trade dress is? Trade dress is briefly the general experience, or the visual appearance of a particular product so to illustrate my point, I will be looking at three different examples of trade dress. The first one will be the configuration of a product, the second one will be the shape of the product and the third one will be the design of the product.

So, moving on to my first example: The configuration of a product. Here, we have got two different products, Right, two tins of Coke. So, this is, as you all know this is a tin of coke, Right, and next to it we've got its twin, right, and what I mean by 'trade dress' is basically the copying or imitation of certain characteristics of an original product and used on a different product, to actually make it look like the same product. In this case, for example we've got the colour, right which is red, the graphics, the script is very similar-Coke to Cola - and also the use of commonplace words in this case Cola, Coke, Coca-cola and Cola or Classic Cola. Cola is a generic word which can be used by all traders.

Moving on to my second example, this concerns the shape of the product. In this case we have got some head and shoulders shampoo. In this case right, shape of the product, the general appearance of the product has been copied, there was no reason for it, because they could have chosen a completely different shape of the bottle. Nevertheless the shape was copied, and also certain elements of visual appearance and size of it were copied. As you can see for example, Head and Shoulders is very similar to Head Way, right, and this combination of colours was also sort of copied on the fake product.

Moving on to my third point: The design of a product. In this case, for example, Corn Flakes made by Kellogg's uses a very particular space-well, it's not very particular because it's mainly used by most cereals, right, nevertheless the sort of graphic configuration, the arrangement of the colours, and certain patterns within the design of Corn Flakes were copied, and at the same time or by doing that, the new product, the new entrant is actually transferring some of the imagery or some of the commercial attractions, some of the commercial magnetism of the first product, the famous product onto the new product. So at this point I have actually looked at three different ways or three different products that have been copied, and imitated in three different forms. The first one was the configuration, then the shape, and then the design of the product.

So enough about the subject matter, let's move on to my next point which is the infringement action. And so, in this regard let me just say that in order to tackle these 3 problems, a trade mark practitioner would normally use three different sorts of action the first one is the traditional likelihood of confusion. The second one is a traditional, not traditional, sorry, the new form of dilution, and the third one is unfair competition. . . The first one I've mentioned, confusion, is normally a bit, rather limited, because it does not cover instances where space. . . to prove confusion, consumer confusion would be very difficult. . . The second action, which is dilution is a more complicated one, but suffice to say at this point that it is normally used when there is some damage - not to the public . . . in the form of confusion but it's damage to the market self to the brand itself. . .

So, moving on to my last point let me just say a few words of why we are interested in protecting trade dress and at this point there are three main interests the first one is the investment of the trader, in this case the owner of Coca Cola, the Kellogg's company and the owner of Head and Shoulders company. They invest in not only advertising, but developing other products.

and they are obviously interested in preserving the commercial magnetism which they actually develop through understanding. The second interest which I believe is the most important one, the key stone, is the public interest,

And the last interest is fair practices. That one trader should not actually free-ride gain an advantage of another without actually spending money, time and effort.

So to summarize what we've looked at: the definition of a trade dress, and to illustrate my definition I gave you three different examples. And the second point we looked at was the three different actions which can actually invoke to get protection, and the third one was the different interests at stake when protecting trade dress. I trust that you have got a very clear insight into what I do regarding trademark infringement actions, in particular dress. I am very happy to answer any questions, and to thank you very much for listening.

(Erica J Williams, *Presentations in English*, Macmillan, 2008, pp.111-112)

Taken from Neerja Nagpal's chapter on "Oral Communication" from the book *Business Communication* by Prerna Malhotra, Neerja Nagpal, Yamini and Deb Dulal Halder, published by Book Age Publications, New Delhi, 2015.

Summary

In this Chapter we have learnt that -

- Public speech and presentations are such form of mass communication where one addresses a (large) gathering of people. Giving a speech or a presentation is a craft that one needs to inculcate in oneself as in academic and professional life it comes to much use.
- Public Speech is different from presentations in the sense that in Public Speech one is speaking to divergent mass whose background one is not aware of, whereas in presentation one is speaking to a select group of people whose academic and professional background are more or less similar to you and who have (more or less) similar interests.