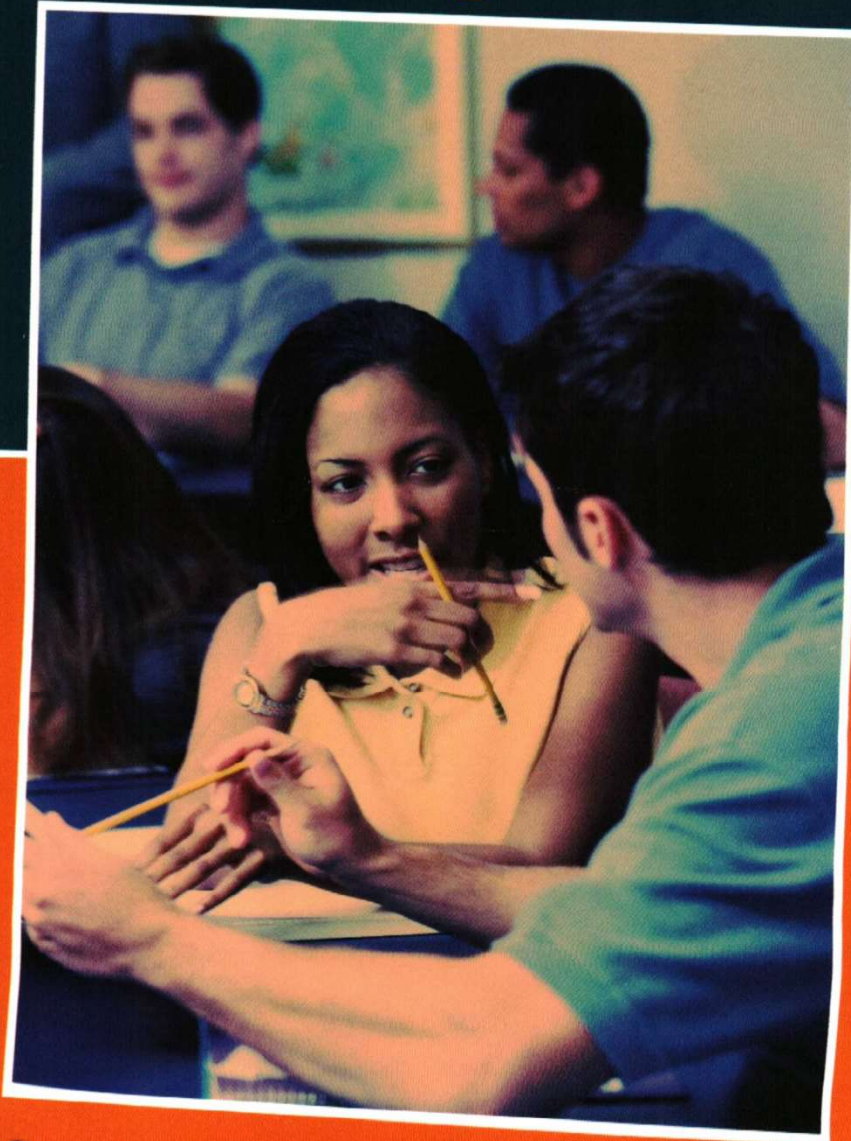


SECOND CUSTOM EDITION

Mastering Public Speaking



George J. Grieco • John F. St...

Cover Art: Courtesy of Photodisc, Purestock/Getty Images.

Taken from:

Mastering Public Speaking, Eighth Edition
by George L. Grice and John F. Skinner
Copyright © 2013, 2010, 2007, 2004 by Pearson Education, Inc.
Published by Pearson
Upper Saddle River, New Jersey 07458

Copyright © 2013 by Pearson Learning Solutions
All rights reserved.

Permission in writing must be obtained from the publisher before any part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying and recording, or by any information storage or retrieval system.

All trademarks, service marks, registered trademarks, and registered service marks are the property of their respective owners and are used herein for identification purposes only.

Pearson Learning Solutions, 501 Boylston Street, Suite 900, Boston, MA 02116
A Pearson Education Company
www.pearsoned.com

Printed in the United States of America

5 6 7 8 9 10 V092 17 16 15

000200010271724706

JA

PEARSON

ISBN 10: 1-256-95005-X

ments and benefits of each. Your final solution may be a combination of several of the proposed remedies. For example, the group working on the campus parking problem could issue a final report advocating a three-phase solution: short-range, middle-range, and long-range goals. A short-range approach may involve converting a little-used athletic practice field to a parking facility, creating more bicycle parking areas, and encouraging carpooling. A middle-range solution could involve creating a bus system between student apartments and the campus or trying to get the city transit system to incorporate new routes. The long-range proposal could involve building a well-lit multistory parking facility, not in the middle of campus but near the athletic complex, to be used during the week for general student parking and on weekends for athletic and entertainment events.

Suggest Strategies for Implementing the Solution. Once the small group has worked out a solution, members would normally submit their recommendations to another body for approval, action, and implementation. Sometimes, however, decision makers should not only select feasible and effective solutions but also show how they can be implemented. How would the small group incorporate suggestions for implementing its solution? Members may recommend coordinating their plan with the long-range master plan for the college. The group would probably also suggest a timetable detailing short- and long-range projects and might also identify possible funding sources.

In summary, the reflective thinking model enables a group to define a problem, analyze it, determine the criteria for a good solution, propose solutions, evaluate solutions, select a solution, and suggest ways to implement it. Decisions made by following this process are generally better, and group members are more satisfied with their work. This model can benefit groups in business, government, education, and other organizations, and it can improve your individual decision making.

The Responsibilities of Group Members

The ideal leader–member relationship is not an active–passive partnership. To enhance the quality of the group’s product, all members must participate actively. Productive group members undertake five key responsibilities.

Inform the Group. Group members should enlarge the information base on which decisions are made and action is taken. A decision is only as good as the information that supports it. You enlarge the group’s information base in two ways. First, you contribute what you already know about the issue being discussed. Hearsay is worth mentioning at this stage, as long as you acknowledge that it is something you have heard but cannot prove. Another member may be able to confirm or refute it, or it can be put on the agenda for further research.

Second, group members contribute to a group’s understanding of a topic by gathering additional relevant information. You may hear ideas

KEY POINTS

Responsibilities of Group Members

1. Inform the group.
2. Advocate personal beliefs.
3. Question other participants.
4. Evaluate ideas and proposals.
5. Support and monitor other group members.

that you want to explore further. You may need to check out facts before the group can clarify the dimensions of a problem or adopt a particular plan of action. The research and thought you give to a topic before the next meeting will make that meeting more efficient and productive.

Advocate Personal Beliefs. Group members should provide information to help make decisions and should use that data to develop positions on the issues being discussed. Participants should be willing to state and defend their opinions. A good participant is open-minded, willing to offer ideas, and then willing to revise or retract them as additional facts and expert opinion surface. Your opinions may change as they are challenged throughout the discussion.

Question Other Participants. Effective participants not only give but also seek information and opinions. Knowing how and when to ask an appropriate question is an important skill. As one advertisement claims, “When you ask better questions, you tend to come up with better answers.” Asking effective questions requires active listening, sensitivity to the feelings of others, and a desire to learn. Group members should seek clarification of ideas they do not understand and should encourage others to explain, defend, and extend their ideas.

Evaluate Ideas and Proposals. Too often we either accept what we hear at face value or remain silent even though we disagree with what is said. Yet, challenging facts, opinions, and proposals benefits the quality of discussion. It is the group’s obligation to evoke a range of positions on the issue being discussed and then separate the good ideas from the bad. Each idea should be discussed thoroughly and analyzed critically. Thus, all group members are obligated to evaluate the contributions of others and to submit their own positions to rigorous testing. This is sometimes difficult to do. Yet participants should not be defensive about their ideas but should instead be open to constructive criticism.

Support and Monitor Other Group Members. A group is a collection of individuals having different personalities. Some may be less assertive than others and may have fragile egos. Reluctant to express their ideas because they fear criticism, they may cause the group to lose important information and to rush into a decision. They may even foster group-think. In addition to providing support for reticent individuals, members should also take note of possible dysfunctional, self-oriented behaviors that impede the group’s progress. Ronald Adler and Jeanne Elmhurst describe some of these roles and behaviors:

- *The blocker:* Prevents progress by constantly raising objections.
- *The attacker:* Aggressively questions the competence or motives of others.
- *The recognition seeker:* Repeatedly and unnecessarily calls attention to self by relating irrelevant experiences, boasting, and seeking

ETHICAL DECISIONS

Leader and Member Responses When Groups Fail

An anonymous benefactor has contributed funds to sponsor a Career Day on Emily's campus. The president of the Student Government Association appoints Emily, a first-year student, to chair a committee charged with drafting a detailed proposal for Career Day activities. Despite Emily's efforts to encourage open discussion and to distribute the workload, two of the five committee members have contributed little. Kate, a junior, opposes most of the ideas offered by others, seldom volunteers any concrete suggestions of her own, and often wants to discuss issues unrelated to the committee's task. Gary, a senior, seldom attends meetings, and when Emily asks for his input, he usually shrugs and says, "Whatever you decide is fine with me." After three unproductive meetings with all five members present, Emily is concerned that the committee may not meet its deadline for the report. She decides to call a private meeting with the three productive members and draft the report. They finish it in a few hours and then present it to the full committee at the next meeting, allowing all the members to discuss and vote on it.

Is Emily's strategy an ethical one for a committee chair? When a group is not functioning effectively, should the leader do everything possible to ensure that all members participate in the decision-making process, or is it more important to ensure that the group takes action, even if it means giving more power to selected members? What responsibility do the members have to ensure equal participation?

- *The joker:* Engages in joking behavior in excess of tension-relieving needs, distracting others.
- *The withdrawer:* Refuses to take a stand on social or task issues; covers up feelings; does not respond to others' comments.⁸

The climate of the group should encourage openness and acceptance. It is the job of both the leader and the group members to create and reinforce this climate.

The Responsibilities of Group Leaders

Just as effective leadership depends on effective membership, so, too, does effective membership depend on effective leadership. Leaders have certain responsibilities that, if fulfilled, minimize negative roles and behaviors and help the group meet its goal.

Plan the Agenda. A group leader has the primary responsibility for planning an agenda. This does not mean dictating the agenda; rather, the leader offers suggestions and solicits group input into the process.

Orient the Group. How a meeting begins is extremely important in setting expectations that affect group climate and productivity. A leader may want to begin a meeting with some brief opening remarks to orient the group to its mission and the process it will follow. In analyzing business meetings, Roger Mosvick and Robert Nelson conclude, "The chairperson's orientation speech is the single most important act of the business meeting." They describe this speech as follows:

KEY POINTS

Responsibilities of Group Leaders

1. Plan the agenda.
2. Orient the group.
3. Establish an information base.
4. Involve all members in the discussion.
5. Encourage openness and critical evaluation.
6. Secure clarification of ideas and positions.
7. Keep the group on target.
8. Introduce new ideas and topics.
9. Summarize the discussion.
10. Manage conflict.

ETHICAL DECISIONS

Leader and Member Responses When Groups Fail

An anonymous benefactor has contributed funds to sponsor a Career Day on Emily's campus. The president of the Student Government Association appoints Emily, a first-year student, to chair a committee charged with drafting a detailed proposal for Career Day activities. Despite Emily's efforts to encourage open discussion and to distribute the workload, two of the five committee members have contributed little. Kate, a junior, opposes most of the ideas offered by others, seldom volunteers any concrete suggestions of her own, and often wants to discuss issues unrelated to the committee's task. Gary, a senior, seldom attends meetings, and when Emily asks for his input, he usually shrugs and says, "Whatever you decide is fine with me." After three unproductive meetings with all five members present, Emily is concerned that the committee may not meet its deadline for the report. She decides to call a private meeting with the three productive members and draft the report. They finish it in a few hours and then present it to the full committee at the next meeting, allowing all the members to discuss and vote on it.

Is Emily's strategy an ethical one for a committee chair? When a group is not functioning effectively, should the leader do everything possible to ensure that all members participate in the decision-making process, or is it more important to ensure that the group takes action, even if it means giving more power to selected members? What responsibility do the members have to ensure equal participation?

- *The joker*: Engages in joking behavior in excess of tension-relieving needs, distracting others.
- *The withdrawer*: Refuses to take a stand on social or task issues; covers up feelings; does not respond to others' comments.⁸

The climate of the group should encourage openness and acceptance. It is the job of both the leader and the group members to create and reinforce this climate.

The Responsibilities of Group Leaders

Just as effective leadership depends on effective membership, so, too, does effective membership depend on effective leadership. Leaders have certain responsibilities that, if fulfilled, minimize negative roles and behaviors and help the group meet its goal.

Plan the Agenda. A group leader has the primary responsibility for planning an agenda. This does not mean dictating the agenda; rather, the leader offers suggestions and solicits group input into the process.

Orient the Group. How a meeting begins is extremely important in setting expectations that affect group climate and productivity. A leader may want to begin a meeting with some brief opening remarks to orient the group to its mission and the process it will follow. In analyzing business meetings, Roger Mosvick and Robert Nelson conclude, "The chairperson's orientation speech is the single most important act of the business meeting." They describe this speech as follows:

KEY POINTS

Responsibilities of Group Leaders

1. Plan the agenda.
2. Orient the group.
3. Establish an information base.
4. Involve all members in the discussion.
5. Encourage openness and critical evaluation.
6. Secure clarification of ideas and positions.
7. Keep the group on target.
8. Introduce new ideas and topics.
9. Summarize the discussion.
10. Manage conflict.

by paraphrasing the ideas of a speaker (“So what you’re saying is that . . .”). This strategy confirms the leader’s understanding, repeats the idea for the benefit of other group members, and invites their reactions.

Keep the Group on Target. Effective leaders keep their sights on the group’s task while realizing the importance of group social roles. There is nothing wrong with group members becoming friendly and socializing. This added dimension can strengthen your group. However, when social functions begin to impede work on the task, the group leader must “round up the strays” and redirect the entire group to its next goal.

Introduce New Ideas and Topics. We’ve already mentioned that it is important for leaders to prepare for the first group meeting. In addition, the leader should be the most willing researcher among the group. If discussion stalls because the group lacks focus or motivation, the leader must be willing and able to initiate new topics for research and talk. If a lapse in the group’s progress signals that research and discussion have been exhausted, the leader must recognize this situation and be willing to move on to the next phase of group work.

Summarize the Discussion. A leader should provide the group periodic reviews of what has been decided and what remains to be decided. These summaries keep members focused on the group’s task. Leaders may begin a group meeting with an *initial summary*, a brief synopsis of what the group decided previously. They may offer *internal summaries* during the discussion to keep the group on target. At the conclusion of the group task, leaders should provide a *final summary* that reviews what the group accomplished.

Manage Conflict. Conflict is both inevitable and essential in group discussion. When ideas collide, participants must rethink and defend their positions. This process engenders further exploration of facts and opinions and enhances the likelihood of a quality outcome. It is important that a group manage, not discourage, conflict.

While conflict of ideas contributes to group effectiveness, interpersonal antagonism may undermine it. When conflict becomes personal, it ceases to be productive, as it disrupts the group. Some members may stop expressing their opinions for fear of attack. If the climate becomes too uncomfortable, members may withdraw from the group. Thus, when conflict surfaces, it is essential that the group respond appropriately. At some point, it may become evident that conflict cannot be solved by the group or in the presence of group members. In this event, the leader may have to meet with the disruptive member and discuss the problem.

When a group is composed of members and a leader fulfilling the various roles we have just outlined, it should produce quality results. At times, the problem solving will benefit the group alone and no external report is needed. Often, however, the group will be requested or will want to present its findings to a larger group: coworkers, company stockholders, or just an interested public audience, for example. In such cases, the group must