

Make your speech one to remember

When you give a speech, how do you avoid the embarrassment of boring your audience and falling flat?

Here are three tips to help you get your point across and make your speech memorable:

1. Use no more than three key messages in a 20-minute speech. People have little patience for long speeches and their attention spans are getting shorter. Three messages in 20 minutes is the limit of what people are willing to listen to and remember.

2. Keep your key messages short, simple and straightforward. A key message is a declarative sentence of no more than 15 words. For example, a chief financial officer might use these three key messages:

1) We will grow our revenue by 10 percent next year; 2) We will raise revenue by increasing market share in China; and 3) Our sales staff is prepared to meet this target.

3. Make your messages resonate with your audience. State a key message and then tell your audience what's in it for them or why they should

care by telling a story they can relate to, using an example, or stating an interesting fact.

Use your key messages throughout your speech. This outline will help:

► **Introduction** — “There are the three things I'd like to share with you today” and state your key messages.

► **Message No. 1** — State it and follow it with proof points, such as a story, an example or interesting facts.

► **Message No. 2** — State it and prove it.

► **Message No. 3** — State it and prove it.

► **Conclusion** — “In conclusion, let me summarize what I've shared with you today” and restate your key messages.

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