

Public Speaking Exercise

Many people are afraid of speaking in public, and, as women, we are often expected to listen more and speak less. However, communication is one of the most important leadership skills to have in your toolbox. Learning to communicate in front of a group is valuable no matter your choice of career- whether it be in the workplace, in the classroom, as a member of a community organization, or as a citizen articulating a concern to a public official.

The best way to learn and develop any skill is through practice. During NEW Leadership® you will have opportunities to practice your public speaking skills by introducing speakers. Each NEW Leadership® participant is assigned to introduce one of our speakers, panelists or facilitators during the program.

The best way to prepare for introducing a NEW Leadership® speaker is to familiarize yourself with their bio first- you can find the bios of all NEW Leadership® guests and staff members in chapter 4 of the notebook. In addition, we have asked the speakers to arrive 15 minutes before their session is scheduled to begin, so that you may have a few minutes to introduce yourself, ask any questions you have about anything in their bio, and learn some bits of personal information that you may want to include in your introduction. If you cannot find the person you are assigned to introduce please let a NEW Leadership® staff member know.

Speaker Introduction Instructions/Tips:

- **Introduce yourself to your audience first by letting them know your name and school.**
- **Keep it brief!** Introductions should run no more than 3 to 4 minutes.
- **Do not read the speaker's biography word for word.** Note some key points including their current positions and institution and then summarize the speaker's past accomplishments, rather than listing them (e.g. "Ms. Jones served in a number of elected positions before her current role as..."). People can always refer to the bios that they have in their notebooks later.
- **Mention briefly anything that you think might be of special interest to the audience, such as anything that might connect this speaker to someone who preceded her** (e.g. "We're especially interested in hearing from Jane Jones because Mary Smith told us yesterday about the important role Jane played in the campaign they worked on together").
- **Use a couple of personal anecdotes the speaker shared with you to enliven your introduction.** Did they tell you anything about their life, family, career, ambitions, or hobbies? Share one or two of these personal tidbits with the audience.
- **Find something that particularly intrigues you about the speaker and share it with the room.** What have they done that you admire, personally or professionally? Do you have a college or professional connection? Is there a common interest or experience that you share such as a college major or experience volunteering in the same type of organization?

Don't forget that you will be speaking in front of a friendly, supportive audience so remember to

Smile - Speak Slowly - Relax - and Have Fun!