

Wolverhampton Speakers Club

Speaking at Wolverhampton SC

Wolverhampton Speakers Club is a mutual self-help organisation - a group of people who come together to help each other gain confidence and learn a valuable life skill.

We are not like a college course or a speaking forum, instead we learn about public speaking by:

- Speaking to the various Exercises that are available to us in our own **Guide to Public Speaking**
- Listening to and watching speeches given by members
- Listening and watching education speeches given by experienced members
- Participating in workshops
- Speaking in Topics (impromptu speaking)
- Participating in lots of other speaking activities
- By having fun!

Our system works because there is no substitute for experience gained in having a go, gaining feedback and absorbing experience by listening and watching others.

Our method

Our method for your introduction to public speaking is to break it down into its constituent parts. For our Initial Speaking Course there are ten of these parts and we learn about them and practise them one-by-one - we then put them all together for the 'Certification Speeches' that give you one of our certificates. We call these steps Exercises.

Every member proceeds through the Exercises, each one being Evaluated by an experienced member. This is done in a friendly and non-destructive way and you can learn a lot from the wise counsels of the experienced members of the club.

You will be told whether you are ready to move on to the next Exercise or whether you would be better off having another try.

Our exercises

The initial training programme will cover the following skills:

1. Myself
2. Speaking to a theme
3. Constructing a speech
4. Use of notes
5. Use your voice effectively
6. Word painting
7. Speaking with your body
8. Storytelling and narrative
9. Giving a presentation
10. Persuasive speaking

Please turn over to see some of our speaking conventions and practices.

Our Speaking Conventions

The salutation

We begin each speech with a salutation to the person chairing the meeting and to the audience. Our convention is that we use one of the following forms of salutation:

- Mr Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen
- Madam Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen
- Madam Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen

This is to cover different people's expectation regarding appropriate gender recognition.

We try not to use any salutation that would upset members - if in doubt ask the person chairing the meeting what they prefer.

What can I speak about?

Normally you can speak about any subject you choose, but we do have some speaking conventions. We do not speak about subjects that might offend other members. In practice this means that we do not explicitly speak about:

- Sex
- Politics
- Religion

We need to clarify this convention because it is not as inflexible as it might seem.

Sex

We do not want our speeches to be smutty or prurient, and some in the audience might feel embarrassed about the subject. However we have no wish to veto speeches about such things as gender issues etc.

Politics

We understand that many issues have a political dimension so the only things we veto are party political speeches or propaganda.

Religion

Again, this can be upsetting or insulting to some and, in our multifaith city, reference to religion is best avoided and the club is no place for evangelism.

Remember also that some members will have no faith.