

# Wolverhampton Speakers Club

## Choosing The Subject For Your Speech

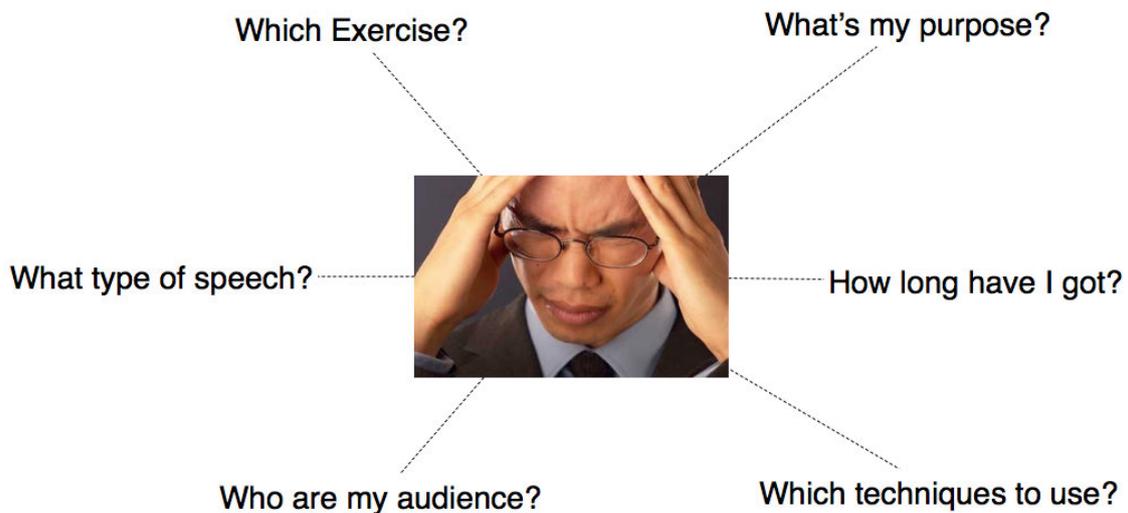
### What's So Difficult?



You'd think it was easy to choose a subject for your next speech, but sometimes it's not as straightforward as you might imagine, and your mind goes blank!

If you are speaking at an event or business meeting it is easy - you'll probably be told what to speak about ...but if you are not told what to do, or if you are speaking in club meetings, it can be a puzzle.

Just thinking what to speak about sometimes gets tricky because you have a commitment - say to do a particular exercise at WSC or you've been asked to speak at an old people's club - and you have to focus on your subject matter without any guidance and come up with something interesting and appropriate ...



### Your subject

You can see from what we've said that there are a lot of things to consider, but if you have a free choice look first at what interests you or what you know well - then ask yourself ...

*'Would my audience like it? Would they get bored? Is it appropriate? Can I do it well?'*

Then ask yourself ... *'What's the aim of my speech?'*



## What's The Aim?

You need to know what you are trying to achieve - this is the AIM of your speech and it will influence the type of speech you will do.

## Types of Speech

There are different types of speech - there are speeches to:



Persuade	Educate
Entertain	Sell
Motivate	Tell a story
Inform	Do an Exercise



## Speeches For Our Exercises

A speech to attempt one of our exercises can be of any type - but here are some hints about how to choose.



My first piece of advice is to read your **Guide to Public Speaking** to familiarise yourself so that your speech includes the things that are needed for you to meet the needs of that particular speech and then proceed to the next.



Who's he?

Don't know!



## Exercises 1 and 2 - 'Myself' and 'Speaking to a theme'

These are quite easy - exercise 1 is 'Myself', which means it's about you personally or something you're really interested in, while exercise 2 gives you a list of subjects.

## Exercise 3 - Speech construction

Here you should choose a subject that easily falls into three parts so that you can show up the structure - but best not to attempt a story or narrative speech.

## Exercise 4 - Use of notes

You could choose any type of speech, but a well-structured one will help you to remember where you are in your speech while you are speaking, so that you don't get lost. Again, something you know well is a help.

## Exercise 5 - Using your voice

This is an important speech because using your voice properly is central to public speaking and it's essential get the voice right, which means you need to have a speech subject that allows you to do just that.

So, to use your voice to best effect, and complete the exercise successfully, you will need to choose your subject carefully - a subject that allows you to use our favourite 4P's ...



Pronunciation  
Pitch  
Pace  
Pause

Choose a subject that allows you to VARY these as you go along - including varying the volume



You could choose a subject that involves persuading, showing emotions or speaking in another's voice. A subject you feel strongly about might be ideal for this exercise.

This exercise needs a bit of a performance, maybe exaggerating how you might normally express yourself so as to show the full range of your voice - without going over the top too much!

### Exercise 6 - Word painting

This one should be fairly straightforward because you are describing something using words, so what is a suitable thing to describe? There are a couple of examples on our 'Speech Archive' page on the club website.

A subject about a place or places gives you the opportunity to mobilise your language to describe, say, the sky - you **could** say 'overcast' but what about 'glowering', 'threatening' or 'sullen'? Subjects with descriptions of people give a wide opportunity to widen the language - 'moon-faced', 'angelic', 'gaunt', 'swaggering', 'diminutive', 'furtive' ...

### Exercise 7 - Speaking with your body

Here we are talking about gestures, including your face and eyes. A subject that may include action, such as a sport or a particular job, might be suitable. Everyday things can still benefit from gestures such as the very tall or the very small.

Some subjects, more than others, allow for use of gestures, so think carefully if your speech can include these naturally. As a general guide a speech to inform the audience gives less scope.

### Exercise 8 - Storytelling and narrative

This is self-explanatory and offers huge scope - but don't forget to include the techniques from the other assignments to give it life.

### Exercise 9 - Presentations

A huge subject, so a separate document on PowerPoint and visual aids is appropriate.

### Exercise 10 - Persuasion

This is a specialist area, akin to a debate, and requires a very careful consideration of the techniques you need to use. Obviously the subject should be suitable and may be a contentious issue where you might meet opposition - make sure you know your facts!