

# Chapter 1

*Exploring Public Speaking*

Open Resource Textbook for Basic Public Speaking Course

Authors: Faculty of Dalton State College, Dalton, Georgia

# Overview of chapter

- Defining public speaking
- Anxiety and public speaking
- Understanding the process of public speaking
- The value of learning public speaking in your life
- Some starting principles in public speaking

# Defining public speaking

- Organized
- Face-to-face
- Intentional (purposeful) attempt
- To inform, entertain, or persuade
- A group of people (usually five or more)
- Through words, physical delivery, and perhaps visual/audio aids

# Anxiety and public speaking

- Glossophobia: a severe fear of public speaking
- Most people's anxiety is lower than a true phobia
- Sources of anxiety:
  - All or nothing thinking
  - Overgeneralization of experiences
  - Fortune telling
  - Fixed mindset about intelligence, skill, and learning
  - Fear of failure and rejection

# Addressing anxiety in public speaking

- Mental preparation
  - Focus on message rather than self
  - Be realistic about experience and what's at stake
- Physical preparation
  - Protein rather than high sugar content
  - Sleep well the night before
  - Wear comfortable clothes and shoes
  - Utilize stretching techniques

# Addressing anxiety in public speaking

- Contextual preparation
  - Know the venue, circumstance, and audience
  - Arrive early
- Speech preparation
  - Do not procrastinate: Kiss of Death for a speaker!
  - Practice several times beforehand in a setting and way as close to the real setting as possible; Record self
  - Amy Cuddy: “Fake it til you become it.”
  - YOU NEVER LOOK AS NERVOUS AS YOU FEEL.

# Understanding the process of public speaking

- “Enlarge or projected conversation”
- Commonalities with other forms of human communication
- Seven elements: People, Context, Message, Channel, Noise, Feedback, Outcome

# Understanding the process of public speaking

- First element: People
- Senders/receivers
- Exchange roles



# Understanding the process of public speaking

## □ Second element: Context

- Historical
- Cultural (“the system of learned and shared symbols, language, values, and norms that distinguish one group of people from another” Floyd, 2017)
- Social (relationship)
- Physical

# Understanding the process of public speaking

- Third element: Message
- May be informal and spontaneous (conversation)
- May be formal, intentional, and planned (speech)

# Understanding the process of public speaking

- Fourth element: Channel
- “Means through which a message gets from sender to receiver”
- Face-to-face and immediate as opposed to mediated (computer, phone)
- Verbal and nonverbal
- Face-to-face adds to urgency, immediacy, and “linear” nature

# Understanding the process of public speaking

- Fifth element: Feedback
  - Verbal
  - Nonverbal
  - Used to evaluate effectiveness and decide next steps in interaction

# Understanding the process of public speaking

- Sixth element: Noise (Interference)
  - Contextual
  - Physical
  - Psychological (stressors, anxieties, past experiences, etc.)
  
- Seventh element: Outcomes
  - Internal, external
  - Short-term, long-term

# Understanding the process of public speaking

- Encoding: putting thoughts and feelings into words or symbols
- Decoding: putting words and symbols into personal meaning
- Models of communication
  - Linear, transmissional – Weaver (bowling)
  - Interactive (ping-pong)
  - Transactional (Charades)

# The value of learning public speaking in your life

- Career: one of many desired communication skills
- Academic: expect to give any presentations in college
- Personal
  - Critical listening and thinking skills
  - Gain confidence, overcome fear
  - Find voice
  - Influence your world
  - Make friends!

# Some starting principles in public speaking

- Timing is everything (comply with time limits)
- Public speaking requires muscle memory
- Like all communication, public speaking has a content and relationship dimension
- Emulate good speaker, but don't imitate
- Build on strengths, address weaknesses
- Remember the power of story