

# Public Speaking

Authored by  
**mohammad looti**

November 19, 2022

## RECOMMENDED CITATION

mohammad looti (2022). *Public Speaking*. PSYCHOLOGICAL SCALES. Retrieved from <https://scales.arabpsychology.com/?p=38487>

Public speaking is the process of speaking to a group of people in a structured, deliberate manner intended to inform, influence, or entertain the listeners. It is closely allied to "presenting", although the latter has more of a commercial connotation.

In public speaking, as in any form of communication, there are five basic elements, often expressed as "who is saying what to whom using what medium with what effects? The purpose of public speaking can range from simply transmitting information, to motivating people to act, to simply telling a story. Good orators should be able to change the emotions of their listeners, not just inform them. Public speaking can also be considered a discourse community. Interpersonal communication and public speaking have several components that embrace such things as motivational speaking, leadership/personal development, business, customer service, large group communication, and mass communication. Public speaking can be a powerful tool to use for purposes such as motivation, influence, persuasion, informing, translation, or simply entertaining. A confident speaker is more likely to use this as excitement and create effective speech thus increasing their overall ethos.

In current times, public speaking for business and commercial events is often done by professionals, with speakers contracted either independently, through representation by a speakers bureau paid on commission of 25-30%, or via a new crowdsourced model such as the [speakerwiki.org](http://speakerwiki.org) website.

## History

The first known work on the subject was written over 3000 years ago, and the principles elaborated within it were drawn from the practices and experience of orators in ancient Greece. In ancient Greece and Rome, oratory was studied as a component of rhetoric (that is, composition and delivery of speeches), and was an important skill in public and private life. Aristotle and Quintilian discussed oratory, and the subject, with definitive rules and models, was emphasised as a part of a liberal arts education during the Middle Ages and Renaissance.

The art of public speaking was first developed by the ancient Greeks. Greek oration is known from the works of classical antiquity. Greek orators spoke as on their own behalf rather as representatives of either a client or a constituency, and so any citizen who wished to succeed in court, in politics, or in social life had to learn techniques of public speaking. These skills were taught first by a group of self-styled "sophists" who were known to charge fees, to "make the weaker argument the stronger," and to make their students "better" through instruction in excellence. Plato, Aristotle, and Isocrates all developed theories of public speaking in opposition to the Sophists, and their ideas took on institutional form through the development of permanent schools where public speaking was taught. Though Greece eventually lost political sovereignty, the Greek culture of training in public speaking was adopted virtually wholesale by the Romans.

After the ascension of Rome, Greek techniques of public speaking were copied and modified by the Romans. Under Roman influence, instruction in rhetoric developed into a full curriculum including instruction in grammar (study of the poets), preliminary exercises (progymnasmata), and preparation of public speeches (declamation) in both forensic and deliberative genres. The Latin style was heavily influenced by Cicero, and involved a strong emphasis on a broad education in all areas of humanistic study (in the liberal arts, including philosophy), as well as on the use of wit and humor, on appeal to the listener's emotions, and on digressions, often used to explore general themes related to the specific topic of the speech. Oratory in the Roman empire, though less central to political life, remained important in law, and became (under the second Sophistic) an important form of entertainment, with famous orators or declaimers gaining great wealth and prestige for their skills.

This Latin style was the primary form of oration in the world until the beginning of the 20th century. After World War II there began a gradual deprecation of the Latin style of oration. With the rise of the scientific method and the emphasis on a "plain" style of speaking and writing, even formal oratory has become less polished and ornate than in the Classical period, though politicians in democracies today can still make or break their careers on the basis of a successful (or unsuccessful) speech. Abraham Lincoln, Adolf Hitler, Marcus Garvey, John F. Kennedy, and Bill Clinton have all advanced their careers in large part due to their skills in oratory.

These basic principles have undergone modification as societies, and cultures have changed, yet remained surprisingly uniform. The technology and the methods of this form of communication have traditionally been through oratory structure and rely on a large or sometimes somewhat small audience. However, new advancements in technology have allowed for more sophisticated communication to occur for speakers and public orators. The technological and media sources that assist the public speaking atmosphere include both videoconferencing and telecommunications. Videoconferencing is among one of the more recent technologies that is in a way revolutionizing the way that public speakers communicate to the masses. David M. Fetterman of Stanford University printed in his 1997 article Videoconferencing over the Internet: "Videoconferencing technology allows geographically disparate parties to hear and see each other usually through satellite or telephone communication systems". This technology is helpful for large conference meetings and face to face communication context, and is becoming more widespread across the world.

## **Training**

Effective public speaking can be developed by joining a club such as Rostrum, Toastmasters International, Association of Speakers Clubs (ASC), Speaking Circles, POWERtalk International or Speakeasy Inc.in which members are assigned exercises to improve their speaking skills. Members learn by observation and practice, and hone their skills by listening to constructive

suggestions followed by new public speaking exercises. These include:

### Oratory

The use of gestures

Control of the voice (inflection)

Vocabulary, register, word choice

Speaking notes, pitches

Using humor

Developing a relationship with the audience

The new millennium has seen a notable increase in the number of training solutions offered in the form of video and on-line courses. Video can provide significant training potential by revealing to the student actual examples of behaviors to emulate in addition to verbal knowledge transfer. There are also numerous agencies who offer one to one training in the delivery of a speech.

### General

The objectives of a public speaker's presentation can range from simply transmitting information, to motivating people to act, to simply telling a story. Professional public speakers often engage in ongoing training and education to refine their craft. This may include seeking guidance to improve their speaking skills--such as learning better storytelling techniques, for example, or learning how to effectively use humor as a communication tool--as well as continuous research in their topic area of focus.

People who speak publicly in a professional capacity are paid a speaking fee. Professional public speakers may include ex-politicians, sports stars and other public figures. In the case of high profile personalities, the sum can be extraordinary.

The common fear of public speaking is called glossophobia (or, informally, "stage fright"), although many people simply confuse normal nerves and anxiety with a genuine phobia.

Public speaking and oration are sometimes considered some of the most importantly valued skills that an individual can possess. This skill can be used for almost anything. Most great speakers have a natural ability to display the skills and effectiveness that can help to engage and move an audience for whatever purpose. Language and rhetoric use are among two of the most important aspects of public speaking and interpersonal communication. Having knowledge and understanding of the use and purpose of communication can help to make a more effective speaker communicate their message in an effectual way.

Leaders such as Martin Luther King, Jr., Sukarno, and Adolf Hitler are notable examples of effective orators who used oratory to have a significant impact on society. The speeches of

politicians are often widely analysed by both their supporters and detractors.

ARABPSYCHOLOGY.COM