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Informative Speech Topic Ideas

By **Brian B. Carter, MS, LAc**

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Need an Informative Speech Topic?

I've never had trouble choosing an informative speech topic— I started speaking after I was already learning alternative health, and there's plenty that people don't know about that.

What makes a good or bad informative speech topic?

I was already part of the way there— my speech topic was interesting. So when you choose your informative speech topic, don't pick something your audience is going to groan about as soon as they hear it! Gun control has been done. Drunk driving is old. Abortion is too polarized. Legalizing marijuana... all of these are a death sentence, and so is capital punishment. You can't talk about them without bias, and even if you could your audience won't put aside theirs. Save them for a challenging persuasive speech topic.

What kind of informative speech does your audience want to hear?

Choose an informative speech topic either your audience knows nothing about, or that hasn't given much thought to – for the second one, I mean things that are commonplace, but when you think about it, you realize you don't know how it works or what it is – e.g., what is escrow? Why does inflation happen? What happens to your trash after the garbage truck takes it? Who determines TV and radio ratings? And so on. Look around your life and see if something like this sticks out.

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Your informative speech topic should be entertaining, or useful. What happens to your trash is trivial unless you make it funny, or there's an ethical implication. But don't get into persuading – just inform!

What does Toastmasters say about informative speech topics?

According to Toastmasters International, the best known public speaking organization, people learn when the information is relevant, relates to what they already know, involves them, is clearly organized, is presented in an interesting way, is repeated, and involves visual aids.

So, in some ways, your informative speech topic is not as important as the spin you put on it, how you package it, and how you present it.

First it must be interesting to you. Second, the information must reach your audience by being interesting to them... there are all kinds of presentation tricks you can do to involve them, but that's another topic!

But here's an example– I wanted to inform people about something specific with acupuncture. People are afraid it will hurt. Yet, most of my patients think it's basically painless, and were pleasantly

surprised the first time how good it made them feel. I wanted to contrast the negative expectation with the positive reality. So my informative speech topic was "How Acupuncture Feels" but I used surprise as a tactic to deliver the message. I also used analogy, because the "Acu Buzz" was so elusive– I compared it to a number of good and complicated experiences (swimming and the taste of oysters) that were hard to describe but fairly commonplace. I answered their questions, kept it interesting, delivered something unexpected, and related it to something they already knew about.

Brian has been a public speaker for five years, a guest on national radio shows, is president of his local speaking club, teaches medicine, and is the author of *Powerful Body, Peaceful Mind: How to Heal Yourself with Foods, Herbs, and Acupressure* (<http://www.pulsemed.org/>).

Importance Of Listening When Doing A Speech

By James Masterson

Try listening to other expert speakers as much as possible during a speaking event especially the guest speaker since they may be able to provide useful tips while hearing them talk. This could also eliminate redundancy and add more bits and pieces when it is time to speak in front of the audience. Also, this is to save a speaker from any embarrassment, since other speakers at some point try to use materials of the same kind.

Aside from listening to the other speakers, try to listen to the majority of the audience. By knowing the audience, a speaker can have a clearer idea on what is really sought after and what the audience may not like to hear. Here are some tips that can be accomplished before making that big speech.

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- Whenever possible, go to the entrance hall and try to mingle with the audience as they arrive. Greeting them will remove the tension and putting a smile on their faces at the start could let it stay there when the speech begins.
- Feel the room. Being familiar with the people and the place can be helpful in knowing the audience type.
- Remember that people came there to listen and the event has been probably scheduled ahead of time and the last thing that the listeners would want to hear is a speaker giving apologies.
- Do some research. Knowing who you are delivering the speech to and the place where these people came from will definitely give ideas on how to properly talk to them.
- Study their facial expressions. They may not be saying anything but their actions and the way they tense their muscles would definitely mean either they do not understand what the speaker is saying or they have other questions to support what was earlier spoken. If this happens, open the floor for questions. Begin by raising one's own hand to invite people with questions.
- The audience would especially want a speaker who is interesting, very informative, and can provide entertainment. · If they have questions, make sure to understand each and answer them in the most informative and non-offensive way as possible if the topic is very sensitive. Put seriousness in if the topic calls for it, but for minor issues, a little keynote for an icebreaker will surely help.
- A speaker must know when to halt during the speech. Practicing the speech at home by using a timer would help a speaker eliminate unnecessary words or phrases during the speech. Unimportant words are not needed since he would not like his audience to end up being bored and not having to understand the speech all together in the end.

James Masterson is Stand out, Be Recognized and Be Remembered keynote speaker. Click Here To read his latest advice

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