

S100 Reflection Paper by Angel Chau

“There are always three speeches, for every one you actually gave. The one you practiced, the one you gave, and the one you wish you gave.” –Dale Carnegie

This quote is true because being a proficient and seasoned public speaker, it can take years of practice and dedication to perfecting and being comfortable as a public speaker. It is true that public speaking is the number one fear in America followed by the fear of death. From sweaty palms to cracking voices and rapid heartbeats, speaking publicly can be terrifying yet is a crucial skill to have in today's society. I was fortunate to learn from an excellent teacher and classmates this past week.

Since I had registered for the class last minute, I did not have much expectations going into the course. This is my first time taking classes from GCWMI and I had just finished taking an intensive course on Young Adult literature. I was physically exhausted having only slept 5-6 hours a night and also intellectually stimulated by the array of young adult books that we discussed. I was pleasantly surprised when the teacher asked me if I felt comfortable speaking in mandarin or English and was definitely in for a shock when I learned on the first day of class that we would be giving a formal speech to our classmates on the last day of class!

To become a compelling speaker, we watched many TED talks during our lectures. Each TED talk speaker had their own style and I enjoyed how we analyzed these lectures and found their ethos, pathos and logic. The content of the speeches is important as well as the delivery and the body language of each speaker. I was moved by Anting Liu's speech for *Teach for Taiwan* because she spoke with passion, belief, and conviction about this nonprofit she started to help rural students learn basic life skills, as simple as how to read and write. Her personal stories of how she went to 3rd world countries and the lessons her students taught her there forever impacted the course of her life.

We also learned about the “T-concept” of questioning and how it is crucial to our speech as we articulate to answer the questions of “Why, Then, Really, And Then?” The audience needs to clearly understand WHY we are giving the speech we are giving and the main points or ideas behind them. We also need personal stories, examples, and facts to illustrate our main topic. An excellent speechwriter will write an original manuscript so we can

revise and read the speech aloud. A moving speech is not a history lesson but a journey and can make the audience relate to their own lives as well.

It is true that we need to grab our audience's attention within the first minute or else they may not want to hear the rest of our speech. Plato said, "The beginning is the most important part of the work" and I could not agree more. When we speak, we have about 60 seconds to capture our audience's attention, establish credibility, orient them to our topic and motivate them to listen. Therefore, it is important and crucial we do not waste these precious 60 seconds.

Darlene Price, the president of Well Said, Inc. writes in *Well Said! Presentations and Conversations That Gets Results*, "If you waste those precious opening seconds with a joke, an agenda, an apology, housekeeping details, a string of thank-yous, or a rambling pointless paragraph littered with "ums" and "uhs," your audience's minds are likely to drift, and you may not get them back. "You, your message, and your audience deserve much more," Price says. "You need to put the art in the start, the most important part of the work." This is a tall order for any speaker and it requires us to develop and rehearse a well-crafted attention-getting opener.

Telling a captivating story is one of the most powerful and consistently successful ways to open a speech. From bedtime stories to campfires, to movies and Broadway theatres, the heroes, conflict, plots, dialogues and lessons draw us in and remind us of our own lives and hold our attention. The story can be about you personally, which tells the audience first-hand why you're invested in and passionate about the topic. Or you can tell a story about another person whom the audience can learn from.

Another way to open a speech is to ask a rhetorical thought-provoking question. This is a way for the audience to answer silently to themselves. When crafted and delivered well, rhetorical questions influence an audience to believe in the position of the speaker. In addition to yes or no questions, you can also motivate your audience to think about the answer. Other suggestions to open a speech is to show a compelling photo, use a powerful quote or use a prop or play a short video.

I enjoyed reading the speeches from President Lincoln's Gettysburg address, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I have a Dream" Speech as well as from Bertrand Russell. As an individual and as a class we analyzed the ethos, logos, and the pathos of all of these speeches and came to a new

understanding of how and why these speeches are considered the one of best speeches ever spoken.

Overall, this was a thought-provoking intensive course that can benefit anyone who desires to be a better writer and public speaker. I highly recommend this course for anyone who desires to improve in their writing and speaking skills. I appreciate the depth of knowledge and learning imparted to me from my teacher and classmates and hope you can benefit from this class as well! Remember to get plenty of rest, exercise and eat well before you sign up and look forward to hearing about your experience!