

10 tips that make good sense from a random web site reached by doing a Google search on "effective speaking" (If you've read Tufte's work, please forgive the bullet list)...

- * Your audience is there to hear your message. Relax and deliver that message, instead of focusing on yourself.
- * Make sure that your speech is right for your audience. What was great for a youth group probably won't fly at a Rotary function. Encourage adults to take responsibility and set good examples and encourage the young people to take responsibility for their future.
- * Take your time. Don't read your speech word-for-word and don't rush through it. Be conversational, as if you were talking with a group of friends.
- * Don't stand up there like a stick, clenching the podium at both sides. Be natural and animated. Use hand gestures, drink water, move around a little. But don't rock back and forth - that conveys nervousness.
- * Keep it short and simple. The appropriate length varies according to the setting, but be aware of your audience's attention span. Sometimes "less is more."
- * Make eye contact with the audience. Connect with them. Get them to nod their heads to acknowledge what you're saying. Make them pay attention to you.
- * Practice your speech ahead of time. Take time to pause in the right places to make eye contact and catch your breath. You may want to mark your speech where you want to pause. Let your commitment show.
- * Take questions and answers when you're finished.
- * Don't get into a debate if someone disagrees. Talk with him/her after your speech.
- * Have fun with it! _____ doesn't have to be boring. Share a relevant personal anecdote or two. Remember . . . it's your character that counts!

Some are big fans of the Toastmasters' organization, a group dedicated to improving public speaking skills. I've never been but they are a possible resource.