

Activity Four

Q and A

Project Skill

Giving a speech with a question-and-answer session

Objective

Participant will prepare and give a speech on a subject and answer at least three audience questions afterward.

Success Indicator

Participant is knowledgeable about his or her subject and has a consistent demeanor during the Q-and-A session.

Message Makers

- Speech outline

Set The Stage

Have you ever heard a person say something, then fumble when someone asks him or her to explain or clarify it? You can learn some lessons from this experience that will make you a better public speaker. If you know your subject well, you will appear more confident and convincing. You also should have a consistent style of speaking. That means you need to “be the same person” the entire time you’re before an audience—whether you’re delivering the speech or answering questions afterward.

Speak Out

Prepare a 3- to 5-minute speech about a subject you know something about. Your topic should be something you enjoy and are excited about, such as a hobby or an activity you participate in.



Consider the audience for your talk. Who will be listening to you? Is the subject something they are familiar with? If so, what can you tell them that they might not know already? Try to imagine in advance what their questions might be. Use those thoughts to help you decide what to include in your speech.

Give your talk. Afterward, ask the audience if they have any questions about your topic or if you can explain anything further.

Stretch The Message

Ask the audience to give you handwritten questions you didn't have time to respond to. Read the questions and decide how you could change or revise your speech to accommodate your audience's interests. Better yet, rewrite your speech and deliver it again to a different audience.

Open Mike

Share

- What are the advantages of speaking about a familiar subject? What are the disadvantages?
- Was it easier to speak during your presentation or answer questions from the audience? Why?

Process

- Why did you select your topic?
- How does considering your audience make you a better communicator?

Generalize

- What other times is it helpful to appear confident?
- What things about other speakers do you admire? What things have you heard or seen other speakers do that you would avoid? Why?

Apply

- If you were more comfortable during the Q-and-A session, how could you use some of those same talking techniques in your speech?
- If you were more comfortable and confident during your speech, how could you use some of those delivery techniques when responding to questions?

Always slowly and clearly repeat something asked by an audience member so that the entire group hears the question you are answering. This is also a calming way to collect your thoughts before responding.

