



TRAINING

FOR

SERVICE

PREFACE

This booklet is the product of the insight gained over the years in teaching training classes, in preaching the Gospel of Christ, and by perusing numerous books on the subject. Some points covered are the result of listening to speakers (in churches and other settings), and attempting to analyze why some were engaging while others failed to hold the audience's attention.

It is my prayer that this booklet be found useful by those who desire to receive "training for service."

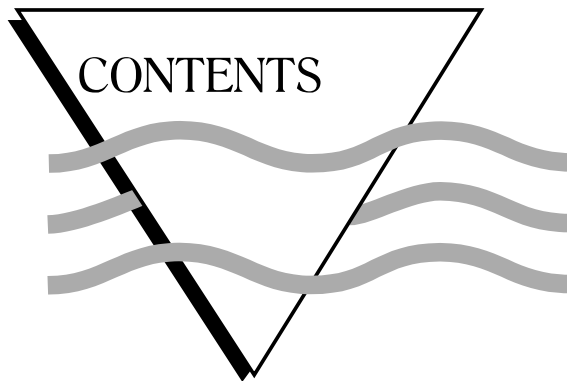
RON ADAMS
San Diego, California

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TRAINING FOR SERVICE

OBJECTIVE

To give instruction to those who desire to take a leading role in the assembly, in order that they may be able to effectively (1) make announcements, (2) lead in prayer, (3) serve communion, (4) read Scripture, and (5) present a lesson.



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MAKING ANNOUNCEMENTS

PREPARATION

Gather the information. Often it will be up to you to collect the facts. Know the persons who can give you the information. Allow sufficient time to gather the information and ascertain its accuracy.

Understand the announcements. If the information is not clear to you, ask to have it explained. If it is not clear to you, it's difficult to make it clear to the audience.

Know the purpose of the announcement. It is difficult to convey the message if you are uncertain as to why it is being announced.



MAKING THE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Secure the audience's attention before beginning. Wait as long as necessary for all the confusion and noise to subside.

Speak loud enough to be heard by all. An announcement not heard is an announcement not made.

Speak with the thought that all announcements are important—just some are more important. Any announcement to be made is important, otherwise there would be no need to make it.

Emphasize the facts. Use voice inflection (raised or louder) for emphasis. Repeat details such as dates, times, etc.

Be brief and concise. Your function is to make the announcements. Say what needs to be said and sit down.

Be pleasant. Chances are you will be the first person to speak at the gathering. Your demeanor should reflect the reverence and importance of the occasion. Also, your cheerful and positive attitude will affect the visitors as well as the members.

Speak from notes. Dates, times and names are easily confused. Make notes that mean something to you when you read them.

LEADING IN PRAYER

ACTIVITY

Prayer is offered on behalf of the congregation.

It is to be spoken so all in attendance may hear.

It is to be from the heart, earnestly and sincerely.

It should not consist of a long list of borrowed phrases and clichés. There is nothing wrong with using common phrases if such are the expression of a sincere heart.

CONTENT

To be in accordance with the revealed will of God.

Expressions appropriate for the whole congregation, not just the speaker.

When possible, mention by name those who are in need of God's help.

Opening prayer should be just that: a prayer opening the service.

Closing prayer, likewise, should contain appropriate thoughts about the service being concluded, and what lies ahead.

EXAMPLE

We can learn much from Jesus teaching His disciples how to pray:

- Pray to the Father in heaven
- Give praise and recognition to God the Father
- Express thanks for blessings (spiritual and physical)
 - Petition for spiritual and physical needs
 - Ask for forgiveness while being forgiving
 - Request care, keeping and protection
- Understand the purpose of "in Jesus name"
- Conclude with "amen" (so be it, so let it be)

SERVING COMMUNION

THE OCCASION

It is a solemn occasion. Mat.26:26-30, 1Co.11:23-29

It is a time for calling to remembrance the great sacrifice made on our behalf.

It is a time to look forward to our Lord's return.

It is a time of self-examination.

SERVING

It is to be served in an orderly and reverent manner.

Appropriate prayer is to be made for the unleaven bread and the fruit of the vine.

“Give thanks” or “bless”: asking God’s blessing upon the elements, and the purpose for which they are to be used; or, consecrating the elements to a special purpose by prayer.

Say what needs to be said first—then add other thoughts as deemed appropriate. Avoid becoming long-winded about incidentals, and then forget to say what needs to be said.

METHOD

There is no “standard” time or method. The time and method is determined by each congregation, usually at the direction of the elders.

Before participating, become familiar of how it is to be served in the congregation, and your part in serving it.

It is not up to you to change the method (although most congregations allow some latitude in the method).

Brief comments before serving can help the congregation focus on the purpose of communion.

Remember, prayers are addressed to God, not to the audience. The audience is to say “amen” to your prayer.

SPEAKING IN THE ASSEMBLY

THE SPEAKER

To be an able speaker, one must be an able person. Effective speaking cannot be built on bluff or pretense.

One must discover what needs to be said, and become enthusiastic about it being said. Avoid the deadening effect of superficial or artificial motivation.

Beginning speakers are often troubled about how to speak. First, one needs to be concerned with what to say. When first things are put first, the “how” comes easier.

THE VOICE

Develop your own voice. Do not attempt to copy another (such is impossible because of differences in physical characteristics, training, ability and background).

Work to speak distinctly and powerfully. There are many proven techniques available to help you.

Tension is part of public speaking. Learn to master it, rather than have it overpower you.

Maintain good posture (standing tall, but not “frozen”). This enhances your voice.

Tempo is important. Don’t speak too slowly or rapidly. Vary your tempo for emphasis and variety.

Use pauses to refresh your mind and to let the audience digest what has been said. A pause following an emphatic point gives the audience time to absorb the full impact.

SPEAKING WITH CONFIDENCE

When you begin, go into action. Don’t hesitate. Make no apology for what you are about to say. Work to keep your audience interested.

Speak up so everyone can hear what you are saying. Become involved in your material, rather than yourself.

Conquer fears by facing facts. Use this “super energy” to help, rather than defeat you.

READING SCRIPTURE

SELECTION

Select an appropriate passage (if given a choice). The selection should contain a complete thought. Lengthy readings should be avoided, unless requested or required.

Become familiar with the text. Glean the essence of it. Become familiar with any difficult words in the passage.

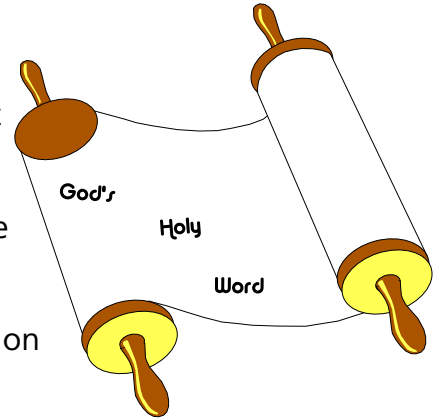
Practice reading it aloud beforehand, to get the “feel” of the flow of the words.

Be set in position and gain the audience attention before beginning.

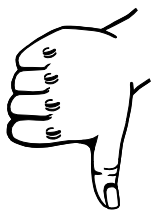
Decide if you want the audience to follow along in their Bibles. If they are to follow, announce the place at least twice and give the audience time to find the passage.

Use a Bible that has print easily seen while placed on the rostrum (large print preferred). Have the selection marked with a bookmark of some kind. Holding the Bible is not recommended for beginners. Use a finger as a reference to keep your place while looking up at the audience.

Speak reverently, distinctly, unhurried.



COMMON FAULTS IN PUBLIC SPEAKING



Inadequate preparation.

Failure to comprehend the material being presented.

Lack of sincerity.

Wandering from the original material (and getting lost).

Speaking too fast, too soft, or indistinctly.

10 RULES FOR EFFECTIVE SPEAKING

1 TAKE AIM, SELECT A GOAL WHICH YOU CAN ACHIEVE



Set a goal for yourself before facing an audience. Decide what you aim to accomplish. Write it out in a purposeful sentence or proposition.

2 CHOOSE A FIT SUBJECT

Chose one that fits you, the occasion and the audience. The subject of a lesson is determined by (1) your background of information and experience, (2) the occasion, and (3) the interest, training and disposition of the audience.

3 EARN THE RIGHT TO SPEAK

Invest an adequate amount of time and study. You have an obligation to give the audience something worthwhile in exchange for their attention. You are to give them food for thought, and food must be prepared before serving.

4 TOUCH THE BASIC HUMAN MOTIVES

It's comparatively ineffective to tell others they need to study their Bibles. Instead you need to point out that study produces knowledge of God's word, which is profitable for them in this life and in the life to come. Touch the "springs of response."

5 MAKE A THOROUGH OUTLINE

People are seldom moved by a careless, haphazard presentation. An outline is to the lesson what the skeleton is to the human body.

6 BEGIN AND END IN A FORCEFUL MANNER

The beginning must be forceful to gain the audience's attention. The first few sentences will either turn the audience on or off. The last few minutes can either wrap up the lesson, or let it all unravel and fall apart.

7 BE CONCRETE, PICTORIAL AND VIVID

Use words which clearly establish your points. Paint “word pictures” so the audience will carry away vivid impressions, not just vague concepts.

8 KEEP MOVING TOWARD THE GOAL

A lesson is structured toward reaching a conclusion. That conclusion must be reached. While hundreds of interesting side roads beckon, they must not be traveled. Save the side roads as topics for other lessons.



9 PRACTICE ALOUD

Go over and over the outline until the plan is clear in your mind. Do this well in advance. Make any last-minute changes to “smooth” the rough edges.

10 BE ENTHUSIASTIC

Enthusiasm must be evident in your speech for it to be effective. Speak simply, directly and with fervor. Without enthusiasm your lesson will be “still-born,” dead-on-arrival.

CHOOSING A SUBJECT

SUBJECTS OF INTEREST TO THE AUDIENCE

There are four basic areas of interest:

- Vital concerns
- Solutions to definite problems
- Timely and new information
- Subjects of controversy

GENERAL AIMS OF SPEECH

- To stimulate
- To convince
- To actuate
- To inform



They can be, and often are, combined.

FORMS OF VERBAL SUPPORT

- Explanation (exegesis, definition, interpretation)
- Comparison (association, relationship, analogy, simile)
- Illustration (hypothetical and actual)
- Specific examples (Biblical, historical or current)
- Testimony (documentation, evidence, witness)
- Statistics
- Restatement

FIVE STEPS OF SPEECH

ATTENTION

Securing the audience's attention

Desired response: I'm (we're) ready to listen

NEED

Describing a specific need or problem that requires attention

Desired response: Something needs to be done

SATISFACTION

Presenting a solution or remedy

Desired response: This is what needs to be done

VISUALIZATION

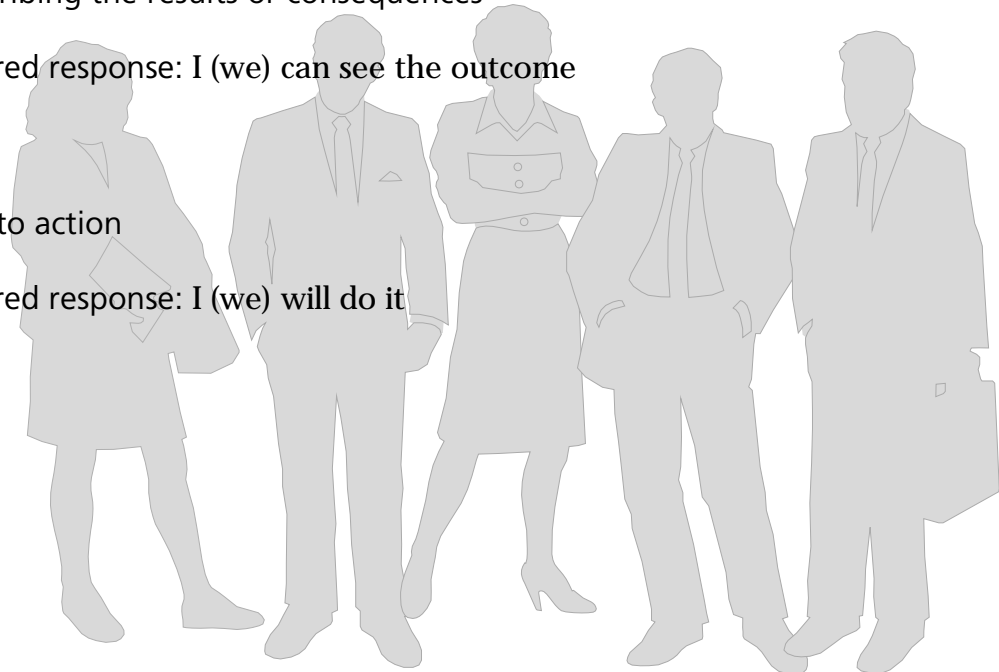
Describing the results or consequences

Desired response: I (we) can see the outcome

ACTION

Call to action

Desired response: I (we) will do it



RESEARCH MATERIAL

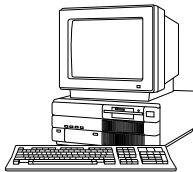
CONCORDANCE

An alphabetical listing of the principal words in the Bible, with a brief reference to the passage where the words occur. Only exhaustive concordances list all the words found in the Bible. Newer computer Bible programs are extremely fast in locating words or phrases, vastly outperforming bound volumes.

Practical use: It enables you to find passages where certain words or phrases are found.

BIBLE DICTIONARY

An alphabetical listing of proper names and prominent places and events mentioned in the Bible. Most contain maps, charts, tables of weights and measurements, etc. A few delve into doctrinal matters. Bible dictionaries are now available for computers, and some are available on CD-ROM disks.



Practical use Provides specific information on a given subject.

BIBLE DICTIONARY OF WORD MEANINGS

A list of common words found in the Bible, giving Greek and Hebrew words and meanings. Vine's Expository Dictionary of N.T. Words is an example. This work, and others, are now available for computers.

COMMENTARIES

Reference books containing comments on the books of the Bible, usually arranged in a verse-by-verse format. They are not inspired, infallible, or authoritative. They contain the author's understanding and explanations. Their use should be for greater understanding, not to form viewpoints for you.

PAMPHLETS AND TRACTS

Printed material usually covering a specific subject, not the whole Bible. They are brief and concise, providing a quick reference. Their use, as with commentaries, must not be viewed as authoritative, even if written by a brother in Christ.

[Bible computer software programs with their search capabilities make research much easier and faster.]

GATHERING MATERIAL

MAKE NOTES

Ideas are fleeting, don't put off writing them down. Otherwise, they can be lost. Carry a note pad with you.

Writing helps clarify your ideas. It causes you to focus your thoughts on the subject. Writing is "seed-planting." The more planting you do, the greater the harvest of material. It's amazing how an idea can grow in the subconscious. Remember, though, not all seeds germinate.

Do not attempt to organize your notes at this time.

Do not rush your note gathering, allow ample time.



KEEP THE AUDIENCE IN MIND

What would they ask or say by way of interruption (if they were allowed to do so)?

You are going to speak to your audience; what you say must be for them.

WRITE DOWN THOUGHTS

Formulate your thoughts concerning the material you have assembled. Exhaust your thoughts on the subject.

Elaborate on the points you have written down.

Don't be concerned with organization, that comes later.

You will seldom use all of the material gathered, but it is better to have a large collection from which to choose rather than a meager accumulation.

When you present the results of your own research and thought-processes, you'll have a more realistic communicating spirit. You're telling what you know and believe.

MAJOR METHODS

TOPICAL

The theme of the lesson is based on a particular topic. The main points are selected by the speaker based on their relationship to the topic. The material may be gleaned from various sources.

TOPICAL TEXTUAL

The main points are suggested in a selected passage. By drawing out the points found in the text, a list is compiled. The points, which become the main focus of the lesson, are incidental to the primary teaching of the passage.

TEXTUAL

Covering one or more verses, where a significant thought is presented. The main points are based on thrust of the text. Incidentals and related subjects, if included at all, are consigned to a minor role.

TEXTUAL EXPOSITORY

A theme, found in one passage, is followed into other related passages and material. The main points of the lesson are found in the various passages.

EXPOSITORY

An explanatory discourse. A lengthy passage (sometimes a whole chapter or short book) is examined and explained. The text is the outline. The main points of the passage are illuminated by supporting material. The goal is to bring out the original meaning.

SUMMARY

TOPICAL	Begins with topic Composed of points related to the topic
TEXTUAL	Begins with text Composed of points suggested in the text
EXPOSITORY	Begins with a passage Composed of the points made in the text

ARRANGING THE MATERIAL

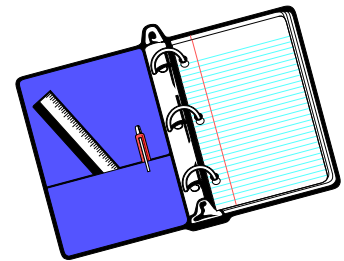
OUTLINE

The outline is to the speech what the skeleton is to the body. It's what holds all the parts together in a functional form.

INTRODUCTION

The part of the speech where your audience is told what is to be covered.

It's a time for orientation. A time for the "meeting of the minds." It's where the scene is set for what is to follow. It's where the material to be covered is delineated.



An adequate introduction prepares the audience for the body of your lesson.

BODY (DISCUSSION)

The part of the speech where the lesson is carefully built. Each point lending support to the main theme of the lesson.

Each point is presented in a logical sequence. Like an archer, who (1) picks up a bow, (2) draws an arrow, (3) inserts the arrow, (4) draws back the bow, (5) aims, and (6) releases the arrow.

The points are compiled until the climax is reached (when all the material has been presented).

After this, the "resolve" or "determinations" are to be made.

CONCLUSION

The summing up what has been said. The audience is asked to consider what has been established.

Restatement of the main points (briefly), drawing out the "determinations."

The audience is asked to respond to what they have heard.

NOTES

Whatever is mentioned in the introduction must be covered in the body. No new material should be introduced in the conclusion.

THE AUDIENCE'S ATTITUDE

SEQUENCE OF ATTITUDES

There is a logical sequence of attitudes that an audience goes through as they listen to someone speak.

FIRST ATTITUDE: "WHAT IS IT THIS TIME?"

Here you must grab their attention. The importance of a good introduction cannot be minimized.

SECOND ATTITUDE: "WHY BRING THAT UP?"

Here you bridge the gap between your topic and the listeners' interest. Give them reason to listen.

THIRD ATTITUDE: "FOR INSTANCE...?"

Having gained their attention, proceed with the matter at hand. Justify the expenditure of their time. A solid, meaty and logical presentation is most important.

FOURTH ATTITUDE: "SO WHAT?"

You must now show the audience the full impact of the material presented, as it pertains to them individually and collectively. A good conclusion "nails it down."

SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION	orientation, meeting of minds, setting scene, delineations
DEVELOPMENT	compilation, climax, resolve
CONCLUSION	re-establishment of introduction, restatement of main points, appeals

DELIVERING THE LESSON

Stand up to be seen, speak up to be heard, sit down when finished.

SCRIPT

It is difficult to speak heart-to-heart or person-to-person while reading from a prepared script. You will be able to convey exactly what you have written down, but you will be locked in to what is written down. In preaching it is better to speak from notes.

NOTES

Notes are the “road map” for your presentation. They should be extensive enough to be of help, but not so detailed that they “enslave” you.

Notes are to be “idea reminders.” When you look at them, they should remind you of what you planned to say.

Notes help you relax, by taking away the strain of trying to remember what comes next.



SCRIPTURE

Whether to read, recite from memory, or paraphrase a passage is determined by the amount of impact you want it to have.

References which support your main points should be read. This allows the audience to read the text themselves. Seeing the words in their Bibles makes a powerful impact. Allow the audience sufficient time to find the reference before reading it.

MEMORIZATION

Reciting from memory is difficult. Memory is famous for letting you down when you count on it the most. The pressure of speaking in public often causes one’s mind to go blank.

Remember ideas, not words.

LENGTH

It should be long enough to develop your points. It should end when you are finished.



The length of the lesson is governed by the speaker's ability to hold the audience's attention. The length is also governed by the audience's ability and desire to listen.

Rehashing a short lesson in order to make it longer is a fatal error. Both the speaker and the audience are agonized.

PROHIBITIONS

Don't make comments about "not being adequately prepared." If you are not prepared, give it your greatest effort and hope for the best.

Don't apologize for the content of your lesson. It's too late to rework your material, so present it and let the audience decide its worth.

Don't apologize for your inability to speak in public. All the audience and the Lord expect from you is your best.

Audiences are turned off by such comments. If you regard the lesson as not worth listening to, and will be inadequately presented, they will adopt a similar negative attitude toward your presentation.

BASIC PITFALLS

Unnecessary sounds ("uh," "and uh") made to fill the dreaded silence

Repeated phrases such as "you know"

No eye contact

Not knowing how to begin

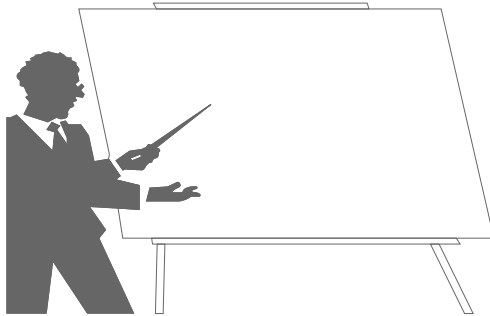
Not knowing how and when to end

MAINTAINING RAPPORT WITH THE AUDIENCE

The audience needs to be involved in more than listening. If they only listen, without participating, their minds can easily wander.

INVOLVING THE AUDIENCE

Ask the audience to follow along in their Bibles when reading Scripture.



Use visual aids (charts, overheads, board, handouts, power point) to involve the eye as well as the ear.*

Ask questions (asking them to respond mentally, not verbally).

Encourage them to write down some thought or important point.

Present a light-hearted comment to obtain a response.

Use anecdotes (brief stories of an entertaining character) to illustrate a point.

WAYS TO INVOLVE YOUR AUDIENCE IN A CLASS SETTING

Use handouts. Have a student read aloud the portion being discussed.

Give assignments, with students reporting back to the class.

Assign memory work. Drill in class.

Prepare worksheets that require completing, with answers recited in class.

* Visual aids should be "aids," not a "show." What's important is the message, not the medium or method of presentation.

THE SPEAKER'S MANNERISMS

APPEARANCE

Attire should be dignified; clean and neat, appropriate for the occasion.

Your appearance can “turn off” an audience if they view it as inappropriate. Avoid this problem at all cost.

APPARENT ATTITUDE

Sincerity must be evident. Evince humble faith in God and His Word.

Never be ashamed of the truth—and never bring shame upon the word.

GESTURES

Gesticulating with hands, arms, facial expressions help convey your points.

Gestures must be natural, not artificial. Artificial gestures distract.

(If your hands seem to be in the way, let them hang down at your sides, or hold on to the lectern. Don't put them in your pockets.)

MOVEMENT

The audience will sense your tension and may be affected by it. Movement can be used to reduce tension and help relax the audience.

Avoid standing at attention, but don't move about like a caged lion.

NERVOUSNESS

All speakers are affected to some degree with being “up tight.”

The pressure cannot be avoided, but adequate preparation will keep it to a minimum.

Think of it as “super energy” and use it to your advantage.

Your nervousness is more apparent to you than to your audience.

SPEAK TO YOUR AUDIENCE, NOT AT THEM

You are speaking to specific individuals, not a faceless assembly. Keep your audience in mind. The difference must be understood to be an effective speaker.

EXTENDING AN INVITATION

WHAT IT IS

Extending an invitation is nothing more than a call to action. Whenever the Word is presented there is the anticipation that one may need and desire to respond to the Lord's invitation. Extend the invitation with expectation.

CALL TO ACTION

Those in the audience are called upon to consider their condition before God.

Hearers are asked to respond to the love of God by obeying His Word.

Those outside of Christ are being persuaded to obey the Gospel.

Christians, who are not living right, are admonished to set things right with God.

TWO METHODS

DOVETAIL—In your concluding remarks, pick out some point in the lesson to use as a transition, and move seamlessly into the invitation.

SEPARATE—If the content of the lesson makes it difficult to make a smooth transition, finish your lesson. Then offer a separate invitation (actually a mini lesson).

WHEN ONE RESPONDS

The one coming forward has a need. Find out what it is. Don't assume anything. Don't attempt to fill in the unknown facts with assumptions. This only invites problems.

Have a plan of action. Have in mind what you will do. If you want an elder or another person to handle the situation, let them know beforehand.

