



DELIVER SOCIAL SPEECHES

LEVEL 3 PROJECT



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INTRODUCTION



Social speeches can be any speech given at a social occasion or event. They are personalized to those being honored or recognized and are usually shorter than informative or persuasive speeches. Depending on the occasion, often the purpose of a social speech is to remember, praise, or celebrate.

In this project, you will learn how to compose a speech appropriate for a social occasion and recognize the characteristics of a toast, a eulogy, an acceptance speech, and a speech to praise an individual or group. You will also learn to adapt and personalize anecdotes for speeches in different situations.

YOUR ASSIGNMENT

Purpose: The purpose of this project is to practice delivering social speeches in front of your club members.

Overview: Develop two different social speeches—each 3 to 4 minutes—and present them at two separate club meetings. You may choose any two types of social speeches that appeal to you or that you would like to practice.

Throughout this project you will see icons in the margins next to the text. These icons indicate additional resources available online.



Video: Sign in to Base Camp to watch a video that supports this project.



Interactive Activity: Sign in to Base Camp to complete an interactive activity.



Resource: Sign in to Base Camp to view this resource online.

For all assignment details and requirements, review the Project Checklist on page 11.



ASSESS YOUR SKILLS

Evaluate your current skill level by rating each statement.



Select the appropriate number based on your skills today:

5
EXEMPLARY

4
EXCEL

3
ACCOMPLISHED

2
EMERGING

1
DEVELOPING

Pre-Project					Statement	Post-Project				
5	4	3	2	1	I can compose a speech appropriate for a social occasion.	5	4	3	2	1
5	4	3	2	1	I recognize the characteristics of a toast, a eulogy, an acceptance speech, and a speech to praise an individual or group.	5	4	3	2	1
5	4	3	2	1	I can adapt and personalize anecdotes for speeches in different situations.	5	4	3	2	1
5	4	3	2	1	I recognize how this project applies to my life outside of Toastmasters.	5	4	3	2	1

COMPETENCIES

The following is a list of competencies that you will learn and practice in this project.

- Compose a speech appropriate for a social occasion.
- Recognize the characteristics of a toast, a eulogy, an acceptance speech, and a speech to praise an individual or group.
- Adapt and personalize anecdotes for speeches in different situations.

THE BASICS OF SOCIAL SPEECHES

It is important to understand the value of developing the skills required to deliver a successful social speech. Many members begin their Toastmasters journey ahead of a speech they will present at a life event—such as a toast, an introduction, or acceptance speech at an awards ceremony. Fear of delivering a social speech can cause some people to avoid participating in important events.

Knowing the basic structure and effective delivery techniques for these types of speeches can alleviate many of the stressors around the delivery. Social speeches are similar to any other speech with the added responsibility of honoring a person or an organization.

Many social speeches require you to speak in praise of an individual or group being honored. To develop this type of speech, review the positive qualities and characteristics of the honoree. When possible, include memories or anecdotes to personalize your speech and make it more meaningful.

Depending on the setting and tone of the event, you may consider using humorous stories or appropriate quotations to highlight the honoree's character or successes. It is essential that your content is appropriate and respectful. If you are unsure of the impact a particular story or fact will have on the honoree or the audience, leave it out. It is better to err on the side of caution than to offend your audience.

PREPARE IN ADVANCE

Although the tone and presentation of social speeches may be personal in nature, prepare in the same way you would for any speech. This is especially true if you are speaking about an emotional topic or at a meaningful life event, such as a memorial service or wedding. The same techniques used for other speeches are applicable.

A successful social speech requires preparation. Develop an introduction, body, and conclusion. Research stories or facts you may not know by speaking to colleagues or family members before the event. By organizing your material in advance, you are more likely to feel prepared and deliver a polished, successful speech.

PRACTICE YOUR DELIVERY

The most successful social speeches flow with ease from the speaker—they may even seem impromptu to the audience. The best way to achieve a high level of ease before a speech is to practice. Using techniques that you would for other speeches, such as recording your presentation to review, practicing in front of a friend or colleague, or working with your mentor, will help you reach a level of comfort that mimics impromptu delivery.

As with all speeches, be aware of your vocal variety and body language. Effective use of both can help you convey your emotional investment and commitment to your words and the honoree, elevating your speech and creating a strong connection with audience members.



TYPES OF SOCIAL SPEECHES

There are many different reasons to give a social speech, but most speeches fall into the following categories.



Toast

A toast is the action of raising your glass in honor of someone or something. Toasts are typically given at weddings or other noteworthy events. It is important to remember that the most significant person at the event is the person or persons you are honoring. Though you are the speaker, you want audience members to focus on the honoree.

Be aware that some cultures do not commonly toast at events. If you have not been specifically invited to give a toast or you are unfamiliar with the customs of the host culture for an event, seek permission before leading a toast.

Acceptance Speech

You may be called upon to speak when accepting a prize, honor, or award. The opportunity to give an acceptance speech is a privilege. If the award or honor is a surprise, it may be difficult to recall your intended speech. Prepare in advance by making notes and practicing so the opportunity to speak is managed with respect and humility.

Speech in Praise of an Individual or Group

A speech that praises an individual or group typically takes place when presenting an award or honoring someone who has passed away.

When presenting an award, your goal is to honor the individual or group for their accomplishments and remind the audience why they are being honored.

When honoring an individual who has passed away, your goal is not only to recognize the individual, but also to acknowledge her impact on others in attendance. Including stories, facts, and anecdotes that put the honoree in the best possible light will praise the subject of your speech and leave the audience with a positive feeling.

COMPOSING SOCIAL SPEECHES

TOAST

When composing your toast, create a speech that fits the occasion in both mood and language. For formal gatherings, a good toast is dignified, although some humor may be appropriate.

For informal occasions, where guests are likely to be acquainted with one another, toasts can be lighter in tone and phrased to fit the relaxed atmosphere. It is generally best to avoid clichés, as they may be perceived as insincere or shallow.

ACCEPTANCE SPEECH

Express your gratitude and be genuine when composing an acceptance speech. This speech is your opportunity to demonstrate why you are deserving of the honor being bestowed on you. Let your behavior at the event and during your speech demonstrate your highest nature. Recognize the people who may have helped you achieve success. Be sure to respect the time allotted for your acceptance speech and end on time.

SPEECH IN PRAISE OF AN INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP

If you are praising an individual or group, you may be presenting an award or delivering a eulogy. When presenting an award, review the honoree's positive characteristics and qualities. Maintaining a positive tone is essential when highlighting the honoree's accomplishments that led to receiving recognition. Review how these actions benefited others.

Depending on the time allotted to you for your award presentation, you may choose to write the speech based on the individual's life or organization's history. For shorter, more concise timeframes, you may choose to focus and elaborate on one or two specific attributes.

THE EULOGY

A eulogy is a speech that honors someone who has passed away. Eulogies can present challenges to even the most seasoned speakers. You may be hesitant to speak for fear of becoming upset or concerned that your words will not be enough. As you write your speech, consider all the ways the honoree impacted your life and the lives of others. Know that your speech will be appreciated.

If you are overcome with emotion when delivering your speech, remember that all in attendance understand and relate to your emotional state. To help you prepare for this emotional challenge, practice your speech. If you are worried about being unable to finish your speech, ask someone ahead of time to finish for you in the event that you are unable. Many attendees admire and respect the person who delivers a eulogy because they recognize the challenge of presenting a sensitive speech in a difficult situation.

As with all speeches, conducting personal research will help you develop your content with confidence. There are many sources of information available, including books and the internet to expand your knowledge. You may choose to search for information on social speeches, toasts, eulogies, or any type of speech you are developing. It may be helpful to watch or listen to more examples of effective social speeches as you compose yours.

The Social Speech Basics resource on page 17 offers tips for composing successful social speeches.



REVIEW AND APPLY

Before you complete the assignment, take a moment to read through the questions you see here. If you are not able to answer them comfortably, review the project.

- What other Toastmasters skills might you be able to apply to speaking socially?
- Are there any behaviors to avoid while giving the speech?
- How can social speaking help your professional life?
- How can you ensure your humor is appropriate for the event?
- What is the value of having your speech reviewed by a trusted friend, family member, or colleague before you deliver it?

COMPLETE YOUR ASSIGNMENT



Now that you have read through the project, plan and prepare your speech or report.

Review: Return to page 3 to review your assignment.



Organize: Use the Project Checklist on page 11 to review the steps and add your own. This will help you organize and prepare your assignment.

Schedule: Work with the vice president education to schedule your speeches.



Prepare: Prepare for your evaluation. Review the evaluation resources on pages 12–16 and share all resources with your evaluator before your speech. You may choose to share your evaluation resources online.

PROJECT CHECKLIST

Deliver Social Speeches

Purpose: The purpose of this project is to practice delivering social speeches in front of your club members.

Overview: Develop two different social speeches—each 3 to 4 minutes—and present them at two separate club meetings. You may choose any two types of social speeches that appeal to you or that you would like to practice.

This project includes:

- The Social Speech Basics resource
- Two 3- to 4-minute speeches

Below are tasks you will need to complete for this project. Please remember, your project is unique to you. You may alter the following list to incorporate any other tasks necessary for your project.

Schedule your speeches with the vice president education. Each 3- to 4-minute speech is to be presented at a different club meeting.

Select two different types of social speeches to present to your club.

Write your speeches.

Rehearse your speeches.

After you have completed all components of the assignment, including your speeches, return to page 4 to rate your skills in the post-project section.

EVALUATION FORM

Deliver Social Speeches—First Speech

Member Name _____ Date _____

Evaluator _____ Speech Length: 3 – 4 minutes

Speech Title

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this project is for the member to practice delivering social speeches in front of club members.

Notes for the Evaluator

The member completing this project has spent time preparing a social speech.

Listen for: A well-organized, well-delivered speech with appropriate content for the type of social speech. You may be evaluating one of the following types of social speeches:

- A toast
- An acceptance speech
- A speech to honor an individual (the presentation of an award, other type of recognition, or a eulogy)
- A speech to honor an organization

General Comments

You excelled at:

You may want to work on:

To challenge yourself:

For the evaluator: In addition to your verbal evaluation, please complete this form.

5 EXEMPLARY	4 EXCELS	3 ACCOMPLISHED	2 EMERGING	1 DEVELOPING	
Clarity: Spoken language is clear and is easily understood					Comment:
5	4	3	2	1	
Vocal Variety: Uses tone, speed, and volume as tools					Comment:
5	4	3	2	1	
Eye Contact: Effectively uses eye contact to engage audience					Comment:
5	4	3	2	1	
Gestures: Uses physical gestures effectively					Comment:
5	4	3	2	1	
Audience Awareness: Demonstrates awareness of audience engagement and needs					Comment:
5	4	3	2	1	
Comfort Level: Appears comfortable with the audience					Comment:
5	4	3	2	1	
Interest: Engages audience with interesting, well-constructed content					Comment:
5	4	3	2	1	
Topic: Content fits the topic and the type of social speech					Comment:
5	4	3	2	1	

EVALUATION FORM

Deliver Social Speeches—Second Speech

Member Name _____ Date _____

Evaluator _____ Speech Length: 3 – 4 minutes

Speech Title _____

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this project is for the member to practice delivering social speeches in front of club members.

Notes for the Evaluator

The member completing this project has spent time preparing a social speech.

Listen for: A well-organized, well-delivered speech with appropriate content for the type of social speech. You may be evaluating one of the following types of social speeches:

- A toast
- An acceptance speech
- A speech to honor an individual (the presentation of an award, other type of recognition, or a eulogy)
- A speech to honor an organization

General Comments

You excelled at:

You may want to work on:

To challenge yourself:

EVALUATION FORM – Deliver Social Speeches—Second Speech

For the evaluator: In addition to your verbal evaluation, please complete this form.

5 EXEMPLARY	4 EXCELS	3 ACCOMPLISHED	2 EMERGING	1 DEVELOPING	
Clarity: Spoken language is clear and is easily understood					Comment:
5	4	3	2	1	
Vocal Variety: Uses tone, speed, and volume as tools					Comment:
5	4	3	2	1	
Eye Contact: Effectively uses eye contact to engage audience					Comment:
5	4	3	2	1	
Gestures: Uses physical gestures effectively					Comment:
5	4	3	2	1	
Audience Awareness: Demonstrates awareness of audience engagement and needs					Comment:
5	4	3	2	1	
Comfort Level: Appears comfortable with the audience					Comment:
5	4	3	2	1	
Interest: Engages audience with interesting, well-constructed content					Comment:
5	4	3	2	1	
Topic: Content fits the topic and the type of social speech					Comment:
5	4	3	2	1	

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Deliver Social Speeches

This criteria lists the specific goals and expectations for the speech. Please review each level to help you complete the evaluation.

Clarity

- 5 – Is an exemplary public speaker who is always understood
- 4 – Excels at communicating using the spoken word
- 3 – Spoken language is clear and is easily understood
- 2 – Spoken language is somewhat unclear or challenging to understand
- 1 – Spoken language is unclear or not easily understood

Vocal Variety

- 5 – Uses the tools of tone, speed, and volume to perfection
- 4 – Excels at using tone, speed, and volume as tools
- 3 – Uses tone, speed, and volume as tools
- 2 – Use of tone, speed, and volume requires further practice
- 1 – Ineffective use of tone, speed, and volume

Eye Contact

- 5 – Uses eye contact to convey emotion and elicit response
- 4 – Uses eye contact to gauge audience reaction and response
- 3 – Effectively uses eye contact to engage audience
- 2 – Eye contact with audience needs improvement
- 1 – Makes little or no eye contact with audience

Gestures

- 5 – Fully integrates physical gestures with content to deliver an exemplary speech
- 4 – Uses physical gestures as a tool to enhance speech
- 3 – Uses physical gestures effectively
- 2 – Uses somewhat distracting or limited gestures
- 1 – Uses very distracting gestures or no gestures

Audience Awareness

- 5 – Engages audience completely and anticipates audience needs
- 4 – Is fully aware of audience engagement/needs and responds effectively

- 3 – Demonstrates awareness of audience engagement and needs
- 2 – Audience engagement or awareness of audience requires further practice
- 1 – Makes little or no attempt to engage audience or meet audience needs

Comfort Level

- 5 – Appears completely self-assured with the audience
- 4 – Appears fully at ease with the audience
- 3 – Appears comfortable with the audience
- 2 – Appears uncomfortable with the audience
- 1 – Appears highly uncomfortable with the audience

Interest

- 5 – Fully engages audience with exemplary, well-constructed content
- 4 – Engages audience with highly compelling, well-constructed content
- 3 – Engages audience with interesting, well-constructed content
- 2 – Content is interesting but not well-constructed or is well-constructed but not interesting
- 1 – Content is neither interesting nor well-constructed

Topic

- 5 – Content is exemplary for both the topic and the type of social speech
- 4 – Content fully supports the topic and the type of social speech
- 3 – Content fits the topic and the type of social speech
- 2 – Content could be improved for the topic and the type of social speech
- 1 – Content seems inappropriate for the topic and/or the type of social speech

SOCIAL SPEECH BASICS

Use the tips below to guide you as you craft your social speeches. For more in-depth guidelines and examples, research online.

Toast

- Prepare an opening, body, and conclusion, just as you would with a longer speech.
- Make sure the mood and language of the speech fit the occasion.
- Be sensitive to your audience and to the occasion. Avoid embarrassing anyone.
- Be sincere.
- Avoid clichés.
- Use vocal variety.

Acceptance Speech

- Include the following three components:
 - Gratitude. Thank one or two people who played a major role in your achievement.
 - Recognition. Recognize the organization giving you the award and express your appreciation.
 - Sincerity. Give an honest and unexaggerated expression of gratitude.
- Remain modest and dignified as you speak. Avoid statements such as, “I really don’t deserve this.” as well as, “I’ve wanted this for so long!”

Speech in Praise of an Individual or Group

- Create an opening statement that you are confident you will be able to deliver. If you become emotional when you practice, consider adjusting the sentence.
- Relate the meaning of the individual’s life to lives of those in attendance. You can achieve this by:
 - Sharing important stories about the individual’s life
 - Elaborating on one or two specific attributes that best characterize the individual
- Personalize your speech by talking about the individual’s attributes or accomplishments, such as:
 - The qualities that define his or her legacy
 - The inspiration received or the lessons learned from the individual
 - The individual’s place in history
- Conclude your speech with a positive statement, anecdote, or quote that fits the occasion and your message.



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