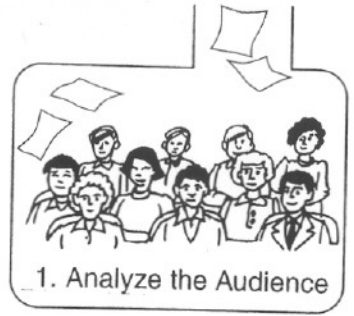


## 1. ANALYZING YOUR AUDIENCE

Start preparing for your informative speech by getting as much information about your audience as you can. This information will help you prepare a speech that is relevant and interesting to your listeners. What do you need to know about your audience in order to be able to do this?



### Age Range

What is the age range of your audience? What topics would interest them? If they are young, an appropriate speech topic might be choosing a career. However, if they are middle-aged, a good topic might be planning for retirement.

### Gender

What is the gender of your audience? If there are both men and women, choose a topic that is interesting to both. On the other hand, if there are only men or only women, you can choose a topic of specific interest to that group.

### Occupation(s)

Is your audience made up of college students who don't work? Or do most of your classmates have jobs? If they have jobs, where do they work? What do they do? If members of your audience have occupations in common, you could build your speech on this shared background.

### Economic Level(s)

What is the financial position of your audience? You would not, for example, try to inform the average college student about how to negotiate the purchase of a luxury yacht. However, it might be a great topic for a group of wealthy retirees.

### General Background

What are the general backgrounds, attitudes, and religious beliefs of your audience? It would not be appropriate, for example, to talk to vegetarians about the best steak restaurants in Buenos Aires. Similarly, people who are against smoking would probably not be interested in a speech about different types of cigars. Other questions should also be considered in order to choose a topic that is of interest to everyone.

- Are your listeners married?
- Do they have children?
- What are their racial and ethnic backgrounds?

It is also important to avoid statements that may offend people in your audience. For example, senior citizens might not like to be called "the elderly," and women may object to being called "girls." To be on the safe side, avoid biased generalizations based on sex, occupation, economic level, or general background.

## SURVEY YOUR CLASSMATES

Your classmates will be your audience for most speeches. You should have a good idea about the makeup of your class. They already shared autobiographical information in the self-introduction speeches presented earlier.