Guidelines for Demonstrations

Q: **What's the difference between a speech and a demonstration?**
A: Like speeches, demonstrations are intended to inform, entertain or persuade. The big difference is that a demonstration actually shows the audience how to do something or provides a chance to see what's involved in making something happen.

Q: **How much detail should the demonstration provide?**
A: A demonstration should be built around one main idea or concept so the audience won't be overwhelmed with too many details. For example instead of trying to show how to prepare an entire Thanksgiving dinner, it would be much better to demonstrate how to bake the pumpkin pie. That way, key steps can be emphasized and described.

Organizing a Demonstration

Most demonstrations are arranged chronologically in a time sequence or as a step-by-step process. Like a speech, a good demonstration needs the following major parts:

- An interesting introduction that captures the attention of the audience and introduces the subject to be demonstrated. Not just your name and title.
- A well organized body that shows the audience how to do something or make something happen.
- A brief summary that reviews the main points that were covered in the demonstration. Go back over supply list and site your source (book, internet or from a person)

Demonstrators need to pay the same kind of attention to the way they deliver their demonstration as do other public speakers. That means speaking clearly and distinctly, looking directly at the audience, using appropriate gestures and making sure that they don't go too fast or too slow.

Using Props

Charts, posters, and props add a lot to a demonstration if they have been chosen carefully so they serve a purpose. Unnecessary props can be very distracting to an audience. Materials should always be neatly arranged and well organized. Here are some other things to keep in mind about using props:

- Use charts and posters to list key points or to review the steps in a process. They should be covered or turned face down until the speaker is ready for them and removed when finished.
- Allow plenty of preparation time so that charts and posters look attractive.
- Use neat, easy to read lettering that can be seen from a distance. Lower case printing is easier to read then words written in all capital letters.
- Keep diagrams and charts as simple as possible and try not to cram too much information on a poster.
- Choose a poster and ink colors that provide good contrast, such as black and white, black and yellow, or red and white.
- Be sure to practice using charts, posters, and props ahead of time instead of waiting until the last minute.
- Remember you have 5 minutes for your presentation. Please take advantage of all this time