

Six Keys for a Winning Impromptu Speaking Presentation

By Allan Kaufman, DTM and Allan Misch, DTM

1. **Go for it as often as possible.** The more you do Impromptu Speaking, the easier it gets and the better you present. So volunteer!
2. **Repeat the topic out loud.** This gives your mind a few extra seconds to think of something to say.
3. **Remember an off the cuff topic is a mini-speech with an opening, a body, and a closing.** Begin your Impromptu Topic with an opening sentence such as: “There are three reasons why I like to vacation in Hawaii.” Think of three reasons. If time is running out and you see the warning signal, say: “Due to a lack of time, I will share the remaining two reasons the next time I get this topic.” End by summarizing what you said. Then turn control back to your introducer. For example, in one speaking organization you would say, “Mr. (or Madam) Topics Master.”
4. **Personalize your response**—even if you need to make up your answer: “This reminds me of what happened to me (or to my brother or my daughter).” or, “I remember when....”
5. **If you know nothing about the topic, do not panic.** Just tell what you don’t know about the topic: “What a great topic. I know nothing about the topic. But I will make it a point to study up on the subject just in case I ever get it again. I will research it on the Internet, assuming I can spell it. I may even go to the library. On second thought, why should I bother? Let’s face it. The topic just does not interest me. If it did, I would already know about it. To summarize, I know nothing about ____ and care not to. Mr. Topics Master.”
6. **Stay within time.** Watch the timing signals. Consider ending just after seeing the warning signal and before the out of time signal.

Follow these six strategies and we guarantee you’ll develop into a dynamic off the cuff speaker and give winning impromptu presentations.

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