



A GUIDE TO **ORATORIA**

The Art of Public Speaking

Inspire. Influence. Persuade. Present.

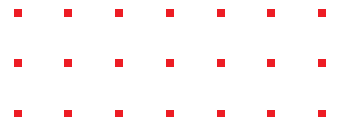
For : Students, educators, and anyone building their communication skills

Level : Suitable for learners aged 13 and up, and their coaches

Format : A self-study training & practice guide

WELCOME

A Message from the Author



Every great leader begins as a communicator.

The ability to speak clearly, tell compelling stories, and defend ideas with logic is one of the most valuable skills in the AI-native world we are all now living in.

Communication is not a fixed talent you are born with — it is a craft anyone can learn. This guide is a journey toward becoming an influential communicator: someone who can walk into any room, any boardroom, any stage, and move people with clarity and conviction.

This manual has been designed as your self-learning guide. It will not simply tell you what good speaking looks like; it will walk you through the frameworks that produce it, one step at a time.

Read it carefully. Practise every exercise. Then put these skills to work — in the classroom, on stage, or anywhere you need to be heard.

We look forward to hearing your voice.

— The Author

Prof. Satya Kiran Sastry
Vice President, Strategic Initiatives
ETHames Business School

HOW TO USE

How to Use This Guide



I have spent years watching young speakers freeze at the very moment they had something worth saying. Almost always, the problem was not a lack of ideas — it was a lack of structure. Confidence follows structure, not the other way around.

This manual exists to give you that structure before you ever step under a spotlight. Every framework inside it — from Mehrabian's research on how we are perceived, to the discipline of PREP, to the rhythm of the Rule of Three — has been chosen because it is simple enough to learn in a week and powerful enough to use for the rest of your life.

You will notice each chapter follows the same pattern: what the idea means, why it works, an example of it done well and done poorly, a practice exercise you can do today, and a short summary you can revisit whenever you need it.

Do not skim this book. Practice it out loud, in front of a mirror, with a friend, or on video. Public speaking is not learned by reading — it is learned by speaking. This manual simply tells you what to practice, and why.

I wish you a confident, purposeful voice.

— The Author

Prof. Satya Kiran Sastry
Vice President, Strategic Initiatives
EThames Business School

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is a complete, self-study guide to public speaking. It takes the frameworks that professional communicators rely on and turns them into a clear, self-paced learning path that anyone — a student, a teacher, or a self-learner — can work through independently to build real, lasting skill.

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What This Booklet Delivers

- A structured route from foundational theory to stage-ready delivery, organized into three parts: *Orientation*, the *Oratoria Framework*, and *Application & Practice*.
- Six evidence-based communication frameworks — Mehrabian's 7-38-55 Rule, PREP, the 5 Ps of Vocal Delivery, STAR, the Rule of Three, and Body Language & Stage Presence — each taught through a consistent meaning-example-practice-summary sequence.
- Practice exercises, real-world models, and a self-assessment summary of how work is judged, so students can rehearse against the real standard.
- A timeless training resource: this booklet stays the same, year to year. It focuses purely on the subject, preparation, and practice — all competition Rules live in the separate Rules & Regulations document known as the Rulebook.

How to Use This Document

Part I orients you to the Challenge and this track.

Part II is the instructional core — study it framework by framework, completing every practice exercise.

Part III helps you apply the frameworks and self-assess. When you are ready to compete, turn to the shared Rulebook.

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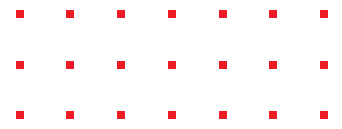
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PART I

Orientation



What this guide covers, who it is for, what you will learn, and how to work through it.



1 About This Guide

This guide is built around one belief: in an age where routine analytical work is increasingly automated, the ability to think clearly and speak persuasively is one of the most valuable skills a person can develop. It is a craft, and like any craft it can be learned, practised, and mastered.

Purpose

To identify, train, and certify young communicators across three distinct disciplines — public speaking, storytelling, and debate — through a structured, self-paced learning journey rather than a single high-pressure audition

Objectives

- Build verbal articulation and stage confidence in students from a wide range of schools and backgrounds.
- Teach transferable frameworks — not just performance tips — that remain useful well beyond the competition.
- Ensure every competitor arrives on stage prepared, through a mandatory certification standard rather than open entry.

COMPANION DOCUMENT

This booklet covers the Oratoria subject, preparation, and practice only. All event details — eligibility, rules, and judging — live in the separate 'Rules & Regulations' document known as the Rulebook that applies to all three tracks.

2 Who Oratoria Is For

Oratoria is the Challenge's public speaking discipline, inspired by classical Toastmasters paradigms and speech structures. It rewards speakers who can build a message from a blank page, control a room with voice and body, and land it inside a strict time limit.



Future CEOs and organizational leaders who will need to brief, persuade, and rally teams.



Anchors, hosts, and broadcast-facing communicators.



Motivational and inspirational speakers who want to move a room, not just inform it.



Anyone who wants to stop dreading the moment they are handed a microphone.

3 Learning Objectives

By the end of this manual, you will be able to:

- ✓ Explain the Mehrabian 7-38-55 rule and use it to align your words, voice, and body language.
- ✓ Structure any speech using the PREP framework, on the spot, with no preparation time.
- ✓ Control your pace, pitch, power, pause, and projection deliberately rather than by accident.
- ✓ Answer any interview- or jury-style question using the STAR framework. Use the Rule of Three to make your ideas more memorable.
- ✓ Read and use body language — your own and your audience's — with intention.
- ✓ Rehearse against the same five criteria the judges use, so you always know what to improve next.

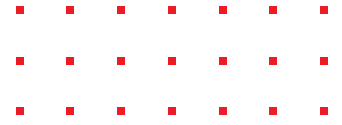
4 How to Study This Manual

This is a self-study manual. It is designed to be worked through in order, not skimmed. Follow this loop for every framework chapter:

- 1** *Read the framework and its meaning.*
- 2** *Study the Good Speaker / Poor Speaker example.*
- 3** *Complete the practice exercise – out loud, not just in your head.*
- 4** *Review the Key Takeaways and Quick Summary box.*
- 5** *Move to the next framework only once you can explain the previous one to someone else.*

PART II

The Oratoria Framework



Six core frameworks, each taught through a consistent sequence: meaning, example, practice, and summary.

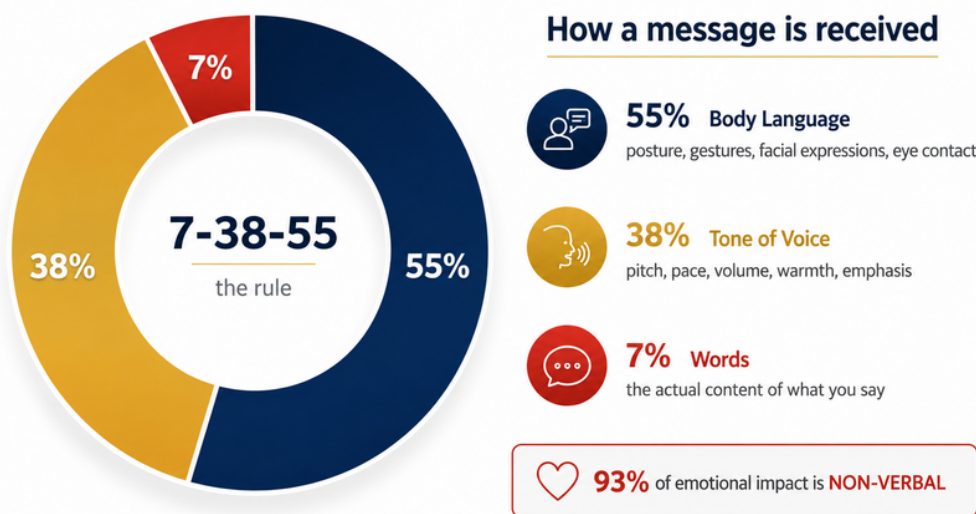


5 Framework 1 :

The Mehrabian 7-38-55 Rule

Meaning

Psychologist Albert Mehrabian's research found that in situations where feelings and attitudes are being communicated, listeners are influenced by three channels: the actual words (7%), the tone and quality of voice (38%), and body language and facial expression (55%).



Simple Explanation

People don't only hear you. They experience you. A speech that is perfectly written but delivered in a flat voice with closed-off body language will fail to move a room — no matter how good the words are on paper.

WHY IT WORKS

Why it works: the three channels must agree. When your words say one thing but your face and voice say another, audiences believe the body and the voice — not the words. Great speakers win by making all three channels tell the same story, so the message feels sincere rather than rehearsed.

Example

Good speaker: Stands tall, makes eye contact with different parts of the room, varies tone to match meaning, and lets a smile or a serious expression reinforce the message being spoken.

Poor speaker: Reads from notes without looking up, speaks in one unchanging tone, and stands rigid with arms crossed — even if the script itself is excellent.

5 Framework 1: The Mehrabian 7-38-55 Rule

Practice Exercises

- 1. Mirror check (2 minutes):** Stand before a mirror and deliver any short paragraph you know well. Observe your eye contact, your smile, and your hand movement. Note one thing you would change if a jury were watching.
- 2. Muted playback:** Record 60 seconds of yourself speaking, then play it back with the sound off. If you can still tell roughly what you were feeling from your face and body alone, your non-verbal channel is doing its job.
- 3. Mismatch drill:** Say a neutral sentence (e.g., "The meeting is at 4 o'clock") three times — once with excited body language, once with bored body language, and once with angry body language. Ask a partner to guess the emotion each time using only your body, not your tone.

Key Takeaways

- Words alone are not enough — voice and body carry most of your message's emotional weight.
- Practicing in front of a mirror or camera reveals habits you cannot feel from the inside.
- This rule applies specifically to emotional/attitude communication, not to pure factual accuracy.

Remember

People don't only hear you. They experience you.



Watch & Learn

Your Body Language May Shape Who You Are

Amy Cuddy, TED — scan the QR code or visit

[tted.com/talks/amy_cuddy_your_body_language_may_shape_who_you_are](https://www.ted.com/talks/amy_cuddy_your_body_language_may_shape_who_you_are)

6 Framework 2 : PREP

Meaning

PREP stands for *Point, Reason, Example, Point*. It is the fastest reliable way to structure a persuasive answer or short speech, especially under time pressure.



The Point–Reason–Example–Point structure makes your message clear and impactful.

Simple Explanation

State your point clearly. Give the reason behind it. Support it with a concrete example. Then restate your point to close the loop. This structure works whether you have five minutes to prepare or five seconds.

WHY IT WORKS

Why it works: PREP forces a complete thought in seconds. The opening Point tells the listener where you are going, the Reason and Example earn their agreement, and the closing Point locks the message in memory. Because the shape is fixed, your mind is free to focus on content, not structure – which is exactly why it holds up under pressure.

Example

Good speaker: "Schools should teach financial literacy (Point) because most students graduate without knowing how to manage money (Reason). I didn't understand compound interest until I got my first credit card bill (Example). That's why financial literacy belongs in every classroom (Point)."

Poor speaker: Wanders through several loosely related ideas about money, schools, and adulthood without ever stating a single clear point the listener can repeat afterward.

6 Framework 2 :

PREP

Practice Exercises

- 1. Solo build (5 minutes):** Pick any Table Topics prompt from the appendix. Give yourself 60 seconds to build a PREP response, then deliver it aloud in under 90 seconds without notes.
- 2. Rapid-fire PREP:** With a partner, take turns giving each other a random topic. You have 20 seconds to think and 45 seconds to answer in full PREP form. Do five rounds each and track how your prep time shrinks.
- 3. Point-echo check:** Record a PREP answer, then transcribe just your opening and closing sentences. If they are not nearly identical, rewrite the closing line so it echoes the opening — then re-deliver it.

Key Takeaways

- PREP works for impromptu speaking, interview answers, and jury Q&A alike.
- The final 'Point' should echo the opening 'Point' almost word-for-word — this repetition is what makes the message memorable.
- One strong example beats three vague ones.

Remember

PREP stands for Point – Reason – Example – Point.



Watch & Learn

The Secret Structure of Great Talks

Nancy Duarte, TED — scan the QR code or visit

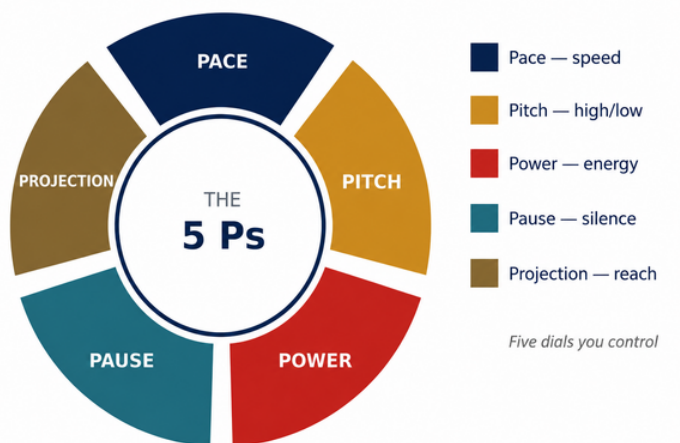
ted.com/talks/nancy_duarte_the_secret_structure_of_great_talks

7 Framework 3 :

The 5 Ps of Vocal Delivery

Meaning

The **5 Ps** — *Pace, Pitch, Power, Pause, and Projection* — are the five vocal dials every speaker can consciously control to shape how a message lands.



Simple Explanation

- **Pace:** how quickly or slowly you speak.
- **Pitch:** how high or low your voice rises and falls.
- **Power:** how much energy and conviction is behind your words.
- **Pause:** strategic silence — sometimes called a dramatic pause — used to let a key line land.
- **Projection:** how far and clearly your voice carries across a room without shouting.

WHY IT WORKS

Why it works: the voice is an instrument, and these are its controls. A flat delivery uses none of them; a compelling one moves between them constantly — slowing for weight, dropping in pitch for seriousness, pausing before a key line. Varying even two or three of the five is enough to transform how a message lands.

Example

Good speaker: Slows down for the most important sentence, drops volume slightly to draw the audience in, then pauses for a full two seconds before delivering the punchline.

Poor speaker: Speaks at the same fast pace throughout, rushing the most important line as if it were no different from any other.

7 Framework 3 :

The 5 Ps of Vocal Delivery

Practice Exercises

- 1. The five-dial read:** Read the same sentence aloud five times — once for each of the 5 Ps, deliberately exaggerating that one dial each time. Record yourself and notice which dial you naturally underuse.
- 2. Pace ladder:** Deliver a 60-second passage three times — slow, medium, fast — while keeping meaning and emphasis identical. Ask a listener which pace made the content easiest to follow and which made it most engaging; they are often not the same pace.
- 3. Pause insertion:** Take a paragraph you already know and mark two places for a two-second pause. Deliver it with the pauses, then again without them, and compare how each version lands with a listener.

Key Takeaways

- Personality is not one of the 5 Ps — it is what emerges when all five are used well together.
- Strategic silence is a tool, not a mistake — resist filling every pause with 'um' or 'like'.
- Projection is about clarity and reach, not volume alone.

Remember

Strategic silence in speaking is known as a pause — and it is one of your most powerful tools.



Watch & Learn

How to Speak So That People Want to Listen

Julian Treasure, TED — scan the QR code or visit

ted.com/talks/julian_treasure_how_to_speak_so_that_people_want_to_listen

8 Framework 4 : STAR

Meaning

STAR stands for **Situation, Task, Action, Result**. It is the standard framework for answering any question that asks you to describe an experience — exactly the kind of question a jury may ask in cross-examination or Q&A.



Use STAR anytime you need to share an update, an example, or an achievement.

Simple Explanation

- **Situation:** Briefly set the scene.
- **Task:** what you needed to achieve or solve.
- **Action:** what you specifically did — this should be the longest part of your answer.
- **Result:** what happened, ideally with a measurable or memorable outcome.

WHY IT WORKS

Why it works: STAR answers the question the audience is really asking — 'so what did you actually do, and what happened?' By front-loading the Situation briefly and spending most of your time on Action and Result, you keep the focus on impact rather than backstory, which is what listeners and judges remember.

Example

Good speaker: "Our debate team was down to the final round with no case prepared (Situation). We needed a workable argument in fifteen minutes (Task). I split the team into three roles and we built a case around one strong statistic (Action). We won the round and the statistic became our signature line for the rest of the season (Result)."

Poor speaker: Describes the situation in great detail but never clearly states what they personally did, leaving the jury unsure what the speaker actually contributed.

8 Framework 4 : STAR

Practice Exercises

- 1. First draft:** Think of a time you solved a problem under pressure — in school, sport, or at home. Write a four-line STAR answer and deliver it in under 60 seconds.
- 2. The 'I' audit:** Take your STAR answer from Exercise 1 and circle every instance of 'we.' Rewrite the Action step so it uses 'I' wherever you are describing your own specific contribution.
- 3. Jury cross-examination:** Ask a partner to interrupt your STAR answer with one follow-up question (e.g., "What would you have done differently?"). Practice answering it in one sentence without losing your original Result.

Key Takeaways

- STAR keeps answers concrete instead of vague or rambling.
- The Action step should always use 'I,' not 'we,' when describing your specific contribution.
- A STAR answer with no clear Result feels unfinished to a listener.

Remember

STAR turns any experience into a clear, complete answer: Situation – Task – Action – Result.



Watch & Learn

How to Use the STAR Interview Response Technique

Indeed Career Guide — scan the QR code or visit

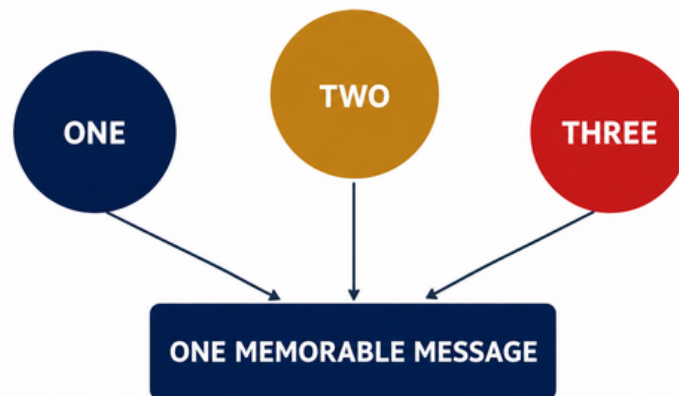
[indeed.com/career-advice/interviewing/how-to-use-the-star-interview-response-technique](https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/interviewing/how-to-use-the-star-interview-response-technique)

9 Framework 5 :

The Rule of Three

Meaning

Ideas presented in groups of three are more memorable and more rhythmically satisfying when spoken aloud than ideas presented in *twos, fours, or long lists*.



"Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" • "Blood, sweat, and tears" • "I have a dream"

Ideas grouped in threes are more memorable and more satisfying to hear.

Simple Explanation

- "Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." "Blood, sweat, and tears." "Veni, vidi, vici." The human ear and memory are drawn to threes — use this deliberately when structuring key lines, especially openings and closings.

WHY IT WORKS

Why it works: three is the smallest number that creates a pattern, and the human mind loves patterns. Two items feel incomplete; four or more blur together. Three lands as complete, rhythmic, and memorable — which is why the most quoted lines in history so often come in threes.

Example

Good speaker: "We don't need more rules. We need more trust, more time, and more truth." — three parallel words that are easy to remember and repeat.

Poor speaker: "We need trust, and also more time, understanding, patience, and honesty from each other." — a five-item list that blurs together and is forgotten within seconds.

9 Framework 5 : The Rule of Three

Practice Exercises

- 1. Closing-line rewrite:** Take the main message of your current or upcoming speech and rewrite its closing line as a Rule of Three. Read both the original and the revised version aloud and note which one is easier to remember without looking.
- 2. Parallel-form check:** Write three versions of a Rule of Three line on the same idea, each using a different grammatical form (single words, short phrases, full clauses). Say all three aloud and identify which parallel structure sounds most natural.
- 3. Recall test:** Teach a partner a Rule of Three line and a five-item list on unrelated topics. Wait two minutes, talking about something else, then ask them to repeat both back. Compare what they remembered.

Key Takeaways

- The Rule of Three works best when the three items are structurally parallel (same grammatical form).
- It is a tool for memorability, not a rule that every sentence must obey.
- Use it sparingly — for openings, closings, and calls-to-action — so it retains its impact.

Remember

The Rule of Three improves memorability, not speech length.



Watch & Learn

The Secret Structure of Great Talks

Nancy Duarte, TED — scan the QR code or visit

ted.com/talks/nancy_duarte_the_secret_structure_of_great_talks

10 Framework 6 :

Body Language & Stage Presence

Meaning

Body language is the physical half of the Mehrabian rule made practical: gesture, posture, movement, and eye contact, used deliberately to reinforce (not distract from) your spoken message.



Simple Explanation

- **Eye contact:** use a slow scanning pattern across the room rather than fixating on one person or the floor.
- **Gesture:** let your hands illustrate ideas naturally; avoid rehearsed, mechanical movements.
- **Posture:** stand tall with weight evenly balanced — avoid swaying or shifting from foot to foot.
- **Purposeful movement:** move to signal a shift in idea, such as stepping forward for a call-to-action, not out of nervous habit.

Example

Good speaker: Plants both feet, opens both hands toward the audience during an inclusive line, and takes one deliberate step forward before delivering the call-to-action.

Poor speaker: Paces back and forth continuously, crosses arms during the most emotional line, and avoids eye contact with the jury entirely.

10 Framework 6 :

Body Language & Stage Presence

Practice Exercises

- 1. Gesture audit (filmed):** Deliver a one-minute speech on video without any instruction on gesture. Watch it back and log every gesture as purposeful, neutral, or distracting. Re-deliver, replacing distracting gestures with purposeful ones.
- 2. The lighthouse scan:** Seat three or more people around the room, not just facing you. Deliver a 90-second excerpt, practicing a slow scanning pattern that gives each listener 3–4 seconds of genuine eye contact before moving on. Ask afterward whether each person felt individually seen.
- 3. Stillness at the peak:** Identify the single most important line in your speech. Practice delivering the whole speech normally, but freeze completely — no gesture, no swaying — for that one line. Compare how it feels to a version where you keep moving throughout.

Key Takeaways

- Stillness at your most important line often reads as more confident than movement.
- Video review reveals physical habits that are invisible to the speaker in the moment.
- Body language should mirror verbal intent naturally, not feel inserted or performed.

Remember

Your body speaks before your words do — make sure it is saying the same thing.



Watch & Learn

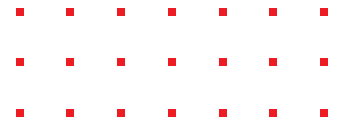
Your Body Language May Shape Who You Are

Amy Cuddy, TED — scan the QR code or visit

ted.com/talks/amy_cuddy_your_body_language_may_shape_who_you_are

PART III

Application & Practice



Turning the six frameworks into performance: real-world models, a self-check, and common mistakes to avoid.



11 Voices That Inspire: Real-World Examples

Studying real speakers is the fastest way to see these frameworks in action. Watch (or read transcripts of) speeches by the communicators below and identify which frameworks from this manual they use.

WHY IT WORKS

Why it works: an audience reads your body before you say a word, and keeps reading it the whole time you speak. Confident, open body language gives your words permission to be believed; closed or nervous body language quietly undercuts even a brilliant script. Controlling it is the fastest way to look – and feel – more assured.

“ Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam

Known for grounding complex national vision in simple, direct language and a warm, unhurried pace – a masterclass in Power and Projection used without aggression.

Barack Obama ”

Frequently structures key addresses around a Rule of Three and uses deliberate pauses before his most quotable lines.

“ Malala Yousafzai

Combines quiet vocal power with unwavering eye contact, demonstrating that conviction does not require volume.

Narayana Murthy ”

Uses concrete personal example (STAR-style storytelling) to make abstract ideas about enterprise and values feel immediate and credible.

“ Sudha Murty

Known for warm, conversational pacing and body language that puts an audience at ease before delivering a firm, memorable point.

As a practice task, choose one speaker above, watch a five-minute clip of their speech, and identify at least two of the six Oratoria frameworks they are using.

12 Oratoria Checklist

BEFORE YOU TAKE THE STAGE, CAN YOU...

- ☐ Maintain steady eye contact across the whole room, not just one section?
- ☐ Control your pace deliberately, slowing down for your most important line?
- ☐ Use at least one strategic pause without filling it with 'um' or 'like'?
- ☐ Open your speech with a hook, not a warm-up sentence?
- ☐ Close your speech with a clear, memorable call-to-action?
- ☐ Explain the Mehrabian 7-38-55 rule in your own words?
- ☐ Build a PREP response with under 60 seconds of preparation?
- ☐ Identify your own weakest of the 5 Ps and name a fix for it?

13 Common Mistakes to Avoid

As you practise, watch for the errors that most often cost marks. Each maps directly to one of the six frameworks in this booklet.



Memorizing a script word-for-word and freezing when a single line is forgotten — deliver from structure, not memory.



Speaking faster as time runs low instead of trimming content beforehand.



Avoiding eye contact out of nervousness — use the lighthouse scan from Framework 6.



Ending abruptly without a clear call to action.



Relying on words alone and neglecting voice and body — remember the Mehrabian 7-38-55 rule.

14 Glossary

Term	Definition
Ethos	Persuasion through the speaker's credibility and character.
Logos	Persuasion through logic and reasoning.
Pathos	Persuasion through emotion.
Modulation	Deliberate variation in pitch, tone, or volume of the voice.
Cadence	The rhythmic flow of spoken language.
Pause	A deliberate moment of silence used for emphasis.
Projection	The clarity and reach of the voice across a room.
Hook	An opening device used to capture audience attention.
Call-to-Action (CTA)	A closing instruction telling the audience what to think, feel, or do.

14 Glossary

Term	Definition
Table Topics	An impromptu speaking format with minimal preparation time.
Stage Presence	The overall command and confidence a speaker projects physically.
Filler Word	An unnecessary word ('um,' 'like') used to fill silence.
Rule of Three	A rhetorical device grouping ideas in threes for memorability.
PREP	A framework: Point, Reason, Example, Point.
STAR	A framework: Situation, Task, Action, Result.
Mehrabian Rule	The 7-38-55 model of words, tone, and body language in communication.
Vocal Dynamics	Deliberate control of pace, pitch, power, pause, and projection.
Extemporaneous Speech	A speech delivered with minimal advance preparation.
Rhetoric	The art of effective or persuasive speaking.
Diction	Word choice and clarity of pronunciation.