

Speechcraft

Is fear in the way of your success? Are you afraid to stand up and speak your mind? If you are, you're not alone. According to "The Book of Lists," speaking in public is the number one fear held by most people.

But you can conquer that fear, painlessly and enjoyably. How? By attending the Speechcraft program conducted by a local Toastmasters Club.

What is Speechcraft?

Speechcraft is unique. It's an eight-session program to develop your public speaking abilities. It's not done in a classroom, and you don't receive a grade. Experienced Toastmasters present the fundamentals of public speaking in the relaxed, enjoyable atmosphere of a Toastmasters Club. Through participation you'll become an experienced and poised speaker.

In eight short sessions, you might not get rid of the butterflies in your stomach, but you will have them flying in formation!

Learn by doing

In Speechcraft, you will practice what you've learned. Your own Toastmasters advisor will help you prepare for your short talks. You'll gain confidence in all aspects of communication, including written and impromptu speeches, audiovisual aids, body language and listening.

How will it help me?

Speechcraft will help you communicate more effectively at work and at home. On the job, you will be able to work more effectively with your employer, associates, subordinates and customers. And your conversation at home with your family will be more fun and productive. You will be more effective in your community activities too.

Speechcraft will improve your performance in:

- Meeting the public
- Conducting business meetings
- Motivating people
- Interviewing for jobs
- Selling ideas or products
- Solving problems

What can Speechcraft do for me?

Speechcraft programs are short courses in public speaking that are offered by Toastmasters for people not wishing to make the full commitment to join a Club. In a Speechcraft course you will:

- Improve your communication skills so that you are less afraid to talk in front of people.
- Prepare a number of speeches in quick succession.
- Find that your improved presentation skills will win you the respect and admiration of your colleagues.
- Benefit because participation in Speechcraft will increase your management potential.

How can Speechcraft meet my needs?

Speechcraft can help you because:

- Speechcraft is a program designed for beginners in public speaking.
- The hands-on program provides the "how-to" and the practical experience so critical to progress.
- The Speechcraft program is cost effective, as volunteers who are themselves training to be better communicators provide it.
- An atmosphere of professional camaraderie makes each course a unique learning environment dedicated to personal improvement.
- The program can be tailored to meet your personal objectives.

How does the Program work?

The Speechcraft program exposes each participant to a wide range of communication experiences. Each participant receives a Toastmasters Speechcraft Handbook plus other materials prepared by the Club. These provide valuable reference material after the program is finished.

- The initial prepared speeches are designed with the novice speaker in mind. You need no experience.
- A variety of assigned short speeches help participants develop competency.
- During each meeting, a Table Topics session is conducted to help participants learn to think on their feet by delivering short impromptu speeches.
- After giving a prepared speech, each participant receives a constructive speech evaluation. This process recognises speakers for their strengths and provides valuable guidance on how future presentations may be improved.
- Upon completion of the basic course you may continue your training at Onehunga Toastmasters Club or any other Toastmasters Club.

When and Where is Speechcraft conducted?

Onehunga Toastmasters Club conducts two or three Speechcraft programs each year, depending on demand. The programs are conducted at the Club's meeting room at the Onehunga Library. The meetings are held on Wednesdays at 6.30pm for a 7.00pm start and run for 2 hours. The cost is \$150 and places must be pre-booked. Attendance is limited to 15 participants, to facilitate individual attention.

A Note for Employers

Speechcraft is high quality training at a price that every firm can afford. If staff lack confidence when speaking in public, that is a handicap. But if they are prepared to put the effort into the course work, you will probably want to help them.

First study the requirements of the course and satisfy yourself that this is an effective program. Then offer to pay the course fees (or part of the fees) for your staff. When you have seen the results of the course, your firm could develop a policy of encouraging other staff members to take the Speechcraft course, and to continue their education by joining a Toastmasters Club.

In-house courses

As an alternative, employers can consider conducting an in-house course for their staff, either in or partly in working hours. Onehunga Toastmasters Club is able to run such in-house courses over an 8-week period. Phone 630 6376 for further details.

Further Development

Onehunga Toastmasters Club also offers opportunities for further skill development in areas such as leadership, public speaking and conducting business meetings through the conduct of special seminars. These seminars are especially effective as in-house training and can be tailored to meet the needs of your company.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a Speechcraft course?

A Speechcraft course is a short practical course in public speaking for the novice speaker. You'll be joining several other people who want to learn the basics of public speaking quickly in a supportive, friendly environment. Everyone is involved in all the activities each session. You'll make new friends, learn new things, and have a lot of fun! It's a great way to start your public speaking career!

How will I benefit from a Speechcraft course?

A Speechcraft course will help you to:

- Gain confidence in public speaking
- Develop your communication and language skills
- Learn to think quickly and clearly
- Become an effective listener
- Use body language and visual aids
- Advance your social skills

- Improve your job or promotion prospects

How are Speechcraft courses run?

Each Club may run the Speechcraft course slightly differently depending on the type of Club, their meeting times, availability of venues etc. Some Clubs run the course on separate nights from their normal Club meetings, while others run the course in conjunction with their regular meetings.

The Club appoints a Speechcraft Coordinator who is responsible for the organisation and running of the course, with experienced Toastmasters helping out with educationals, evaluations and support. The Course Coordinator will gladly discuss details and tell you exactly what's involved. Onehunga Toastmasters will tailor courses for employers as needed.

What will I have to do?

During this practical course, you'll prepare and deliver several speeches. These will be 4-6 minutes long and will be on a subject of your choice. You'll also participate in impromptu speaking sessions (known as "table topics") and you'll learn how to evaluate other speakers using the criteria in the Speechcraft manual. Experienced Toastmasters will also deliver "educationals," where you'll learn how to prepare your speech, hear tips on delivery techniques, and find out how to evaluate other speakers.

What manuals do I get?

When you begin the Speechcraft course, you'll be given your own personal Toastmasters Speechcraft manual. This manual sets out the speech projects (or assignments) you will complete during the course. Each project has set objectives, notes on how to prepare your speech, and an evaluation guide for your evaluator.

For example, you will deliver an "icebreaker" speech, where you introduce yourself to your fellow Speechcrafters. Other projects include using your voice effectively, using props or body language, speaking with sincerity about a topic, using correct and concise word choice, and organising your speech into a specific format. Each project will challenge you, and the valuable information in the Speechcraft manual will help you prepare your speech.

Where can I get help from if I need it?

Every Speechcrafter is assigned a mentor. Mentors are usually experienced Toastmasters who are available for advice, help and support during the course. The Speechcraft Coordinator is always available for help as well.

What happens at the end of the course?

At the end of the course, you'll "graduate," and receive a Toastmasters International Speechcraft Course Completion Certificate. Some Clubs organise a special graduation night, while others may include graduation as part of their normal meeting. You'll be advised of the arrangements near the end of the course, or you may even get to organise your own graduation!

Remember, this is a short course only, and it is not possible to learn everything in just eight weeks. To get the most benefit from the Toastmasters programme, it is likely to be in your best interests to join a Toastmasters Club so you can continue your learning by participating in the Toastmasters Communication and Leadership programme.

What have people said about the Speechcraft course?

Here's what previous Speechcrafters at other Toastmasters Clubs have said about the Speechcraft course:

- "I joined the course so that I could extend myself - step out of my 'comfort zone' and learn to speak confidently in public."
- "A great way to meet a new group of people with a very diverse range of backgrounds."
- "I feel so much more confident and would recommend the course to anyone wanting to learn public speaking."
- "I found the whole learning experience was fun."
- "I have considered joining a Toastmasters Club for some time, but felt daunted by the idea of being a complete novice amongst many competent speakers. Speechcraft offers a perfect opportunity to gain some of the basics with a group of people who are just as nervous!"
- "The course has helped me with my everyday communication with work colleagues and phone contact with customers."

- “I have really enjoyed the interaction with the other Speechcrafters, and have been amazed at what I have learnt from their speeches.”

Recent Speechcrafters have gone on to great Toastmaster success:

- participant in the Division Humorous contest 2000
- runner-up in District International contest 2002
- winner of District Table Topics contest 2002
- District Toastmaster of the Year 2002

Can Speechcraft courses be run for companies or other organisations?

Yes, some Clubs or interested Toastmasters may run Speechcraft courses specifically for employees of a company, or members of a community organisation. Contact Onehunga Toastmasters on 630 6376 to discuss the possibilities.

The Course Content:

1. IMPORTANCE OF SPEECH COMMUNICATION IN PERSONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL LIFE
Symbols, self-image, internal and external communications, overcoming speaker's discomfort.
2. TOPIC SELECTING FOR SPEECHES
Speaker's experiences and knowledge, common experiences with audience, role of speaker is to inspire, sell, introduce, inform, entertain, etc.
3. METHODS OF ORGANIZING SPEECHES
Select objective/purpose. Organizational process, use of transitions.
4. TABLE TOPICS
Impromptu speaking, gathering your thoughts, conquering the fear of table topics.
5. TOASTMASTERS EVALUATION PROGRAM
Importance of evaluation process in learning to communicate. How immediate evaluation improves learning, builds self-esteem. The roles of speech evaluators, general evaluator and grammarian.
6. HOW TO INTRODUCE A SPEAKER
Mini-speech. Setting scene, qualifications and background, title.
7. NEED AND VALUE OF AUDIENCE ANALYSIS
8. ROLE OF LANGUAGE IN SPEECH COMMUNICATION
Spoken vs. written. Appropriate, clear, descriptive.
(# 7 and 8 will be incorporated into the general discussion of the group rather than having a speaker for each topic.)
9. USE OF GESTURES INCLUDING FACE IN SPEECH COMMUNICATION
Developing skills, rehearsing, purposeful, "spontaneous" looking, used to control nervousness.
10. USE OF VISUAL AIDS INCLUDING ALL OTHER SENSES BESIDES HEARING
11. USE OF OVERHEADS, CHART PACKS, AND POSTERS