Speaking With Impact

A public speaking crash course

Calie Willis | City of Coppell | calie.willis@coppelltx.gov

What you'll leave with

01

A repeatable structure

Know what to say, what to leave out, and how to land the point.

02

A stronger delivery

Use pace, pauses, posture, and nerves to your advantage.

03

A practice rep

Build and deliver a 60-second message relevant to your work.

Spoiler Alert: You’re Already Speaking Publicly

- Unexpected Questions
- Member Interaction
- Staff Meetings
- City Council or Boards

The goal is not to sound impressive

The goal is to make it easy for your audience to...

UNDERSTAND	REMEMBER	DO
What matters?	What should stick?	What happens next?

Start with the audience, not the slides

1

Who are they?

What are their demographics? What formality are they expecting?

2

What do they know?

What do they care about? What information do they have already?

3

What is my goal?

Am I providing information? Am I combating misinformation? Am I introducing a change?

Framework

What

Idea, topic, product, service, argument, situation, etc.

So What

Usefulness, importance, relevance

Now What

Next steps & moving forward

Test: “If they remember only one thing, it should be…”

Memorable Message

1

Use specifics

“40 additional campers” beats “increase in attendance”

2

Reduce fillers

Pause quickly rather than “um” or “like”

3

Practice, Practice, Practice

Avoid reading a script or slides

Delivery

PACE	Speak a little slower than feels natural.
PAUSE	Stop after an important line.
PRESENCE	Plant your feet; face your listeners.
VOICE	Vary emphasis; finish your sentences.

Nerves are Normal

Before	Practice the opening out loud. Breathe low and slowly. Know your first sentence.
During	Pause, exhale, find one friendly face, and return to the main point. Recognize your “settle in” point.
After	Evaluate what worked and choose one thing to improve next time.

Respond Don’t React

1

Listen fully

Let the question finish. Clarify if needed.

2

Answer first

State the answer, then supply the reason or context.

3

Know your limits

If you do not know, say what you will verify and when.

Useful reset: “That’s a fair question. Here’s what we know…”

Debrief: what helped the message land?

Ask your partner:

- What was the main message?
- What detail made the case stronger?
- Was the requested action clear?

Your next speaking opportunity: use this checklist

- [ ] I know my audience and their priorities.
- [ ] I have no more than two key supporting points.
- [ ] My main message fits in one sentence.
- [ ] My close states the takeaway or asks for action.
- [ ] My opening gives people a reason to listen.
- [ ] I rehearsed my first 30 seconds out loud.

Strong public speaking is a skill you build one conversation, briefing, and presentation at a time.

Questions?

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