

# Speaking with a purpose in mind

Pointers to help write and deliver speeches that captivate your audience

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**H**AVE you been to one of those presentations where the speaker babbles on for 20 minutes and you haven't a clue what he was meaning to say?

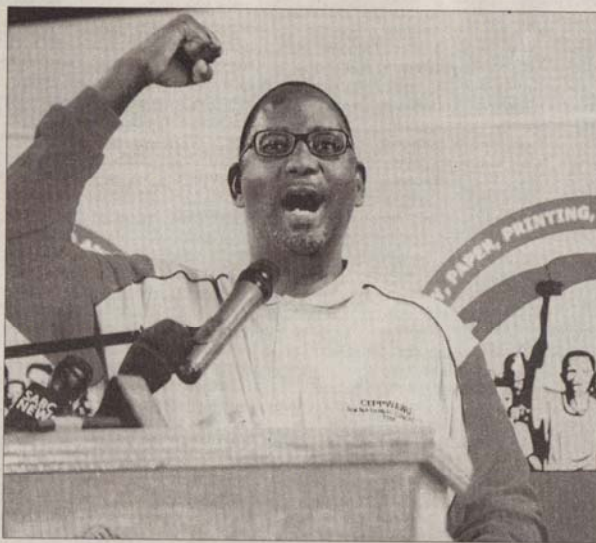
At the end of it we are not educated or motivated; we are in fact just confused as to why we had to listen to the speech while our work piled up in our absence. This is because the speaker did not have a well-structured speech.

Before you begin writing your speech or presentation, you must be very clear on the purpose.

What do you hope to achieve? What audience reaction would you like?

If you do not know the answers to these questions, you will leave your audience as confused as you are.

Once you are clear on your purpose in delivering the speech, you need to research your topic. We cannot speak successfully on a topic we



**SPEAKING PRO:** Cosatu general-secretary, Zwelinzima Vavi, giving a speech to Ceppwawu members at the St George Hotel in Pretoria. Your voice and body language play an important role in getting your message across and seasoned speakers like Vavi use them effectively.

PICTURE: DAMARIS HEIWIG

know very little about.

Now you are ready to start writing the speech and here are some pointers to help.

- Every speech needs an introduction; body and conclusion.
- Your introduction needs to pull your audience in and give them an

idea about what your speech will be about.

- Your speech body consists of your main points. Be creative and use whatever tools you have at hand to help emphasise these points.
- Speak from personal experience because it builds credibility.

- Don't try to put too much in; your audience can only take in so much.
- Keep your speech simple, yet interesting and creative.
- Your conclusion must summarise your message. Reiterating it for impact.

- End on a strong note, this is your lasting impression.

A simple way to remember this formula is the three T's Of Presenting:

- Tell them what you're going to tell them
- Tell them
- Tell them, what you have told them.

This is not a new concept and in fact most of the great orators, leaders and their speech writers of the past followed this formula.

It works, so there is no need to reinvent the wheel.

If you are one of the privileged few to have your own professional speech writer, it is very important to familiarise yourself with the speech before you deliver it, to make it your own.

Of course your voice and body language play a huge role. Use them to help emphasise your message. If you carefully follow these rules you are bound to make more of an impact with your speeches.

● *Delia Thompson from The Communication Academy trains people in public speaking skills and coached a member of the Springbok public speaking team in 2008. She is also a speech writer.*

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