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Tips for Public Speaking

**Audience Analysis**

**Why is it important to analyze your audience?**

*It is important to determine who is in your audience, what they may expect, and their identities and values in order to communicate your ideas effectively.*

**Some Modes for Analyzing your Audience**

1. Audience Expectations

* Outline what your audience will expect in terms of the occasion, the topic of the speech, and the speaker.
* Violating the expectations of the audience can diminish your credibility, so it’s important not to skip over this consideration.
* Make sure to consider the setting of the speech, and how this may impact your audience’s expectations

2. Knowledge of Topic

* Consider to what degree your audience may be familiar with your topic, and be sure not to overestimate this knowledge.
* After considering this, consider a starting point for your topic, from which you can delve into more detail and depth.
* Ask yourself if there are any key terms and concepts that may need review before you begin.

3. Audience Size

* Consider how large your audience is, and adjust your executive presence.
* If your audience is larger, typically expectations become more formal and vice versa
* Think about your volume, as well as your orientation to the audience. Will you be sitting? Standing?

4. Demographics

* Consider the many factors that will make up your audience, including age, gender, religion, ethnicity, education, sexual orientation, occupation.
* All of these can impact an audience’s beliefs and identities, and attending to this can allow your topic to be relayed effectively, though be cautious not to pander or stereotype.

5. Voluntariness

* Is your audience voluntarily listening to what you have to say, or are they there involuntarily? This is important to note in order to maintain audience interest.
* If your audience is involuntary, consider how you can grab and maintain their attention(see attention-getting devices)

**Tip:**

Analyzing your audience during and while preparing your presentation through multiple categories allows for this. Define your target audience, and if you require detailed information survey or even interview them. Adjust to this audience, but avoid pandering, or simply telling them what they want to hear.

“Tips for Analyzing an Audience.” *University of Pittsburgh Department of Communication*, www.comm.pitt.edu/tips-analyzing-audience. Accessed 21 Mar. 2024.