



Speech of Introduction

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

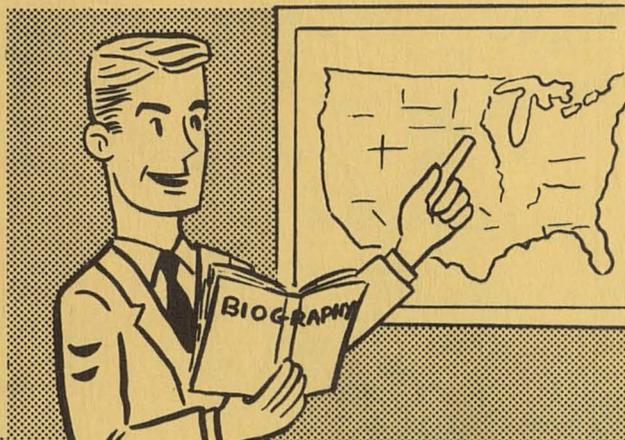
AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE

No speech duty is more important, or more abused, than that of introducing a speaker. The introduction may in many cases, determine whether or not the speaker's ideas are accepted by the audience.

When preparing your speech of introduction ask yourself these questions that are usually asked about speakers:

1. WHO IS HE? Naturally the audience wants to know his name. Some of the audience may know him, many will not.

Introduce speaker as someone audience would like to know.



2. WHERE IS HE FROM? People want to know both where he came from originally, and where he comes from at present. This may seem insignificant, but listeners usually like it.

3. HOW IS HE QUALIFIED on this subject? Choose from the speaker's experience, abilities, and qualifications, those things that relate to this subject. This ethical proof is necessary for right reception of speech.

4. WHY SHOULD I LISTEN? Show a need for information on this subject and tie it into interests of the audience. Create interest in the speech subject, even create suspense.

WHEN YOU INTRODUCE A SPEAKER, YOU SHOULD:

1. Usually cover all four questions listed above.

2. Be brief...brief...brief!

3. Speak loudly and clearly (this is a common shortcoming of all speakers!)

4. Plan, prepare, and practice your speech (another common fault!)

5. Check the introduction you plan to make with the speaker.

6. Ask the speaker if he minds a joke about himself.



7. Adjust the nature of the introduction to the tone of the speech.

8. Sound enthusiastic about having him as a speaker.

9. Announce the title and/or subject of the speech.

10. Remain standing until the speaker has taken his place.

**WHEN YOU INTRODUCE A SPEAKER,
YOU SHOULD NOT:**

1. Use such trite remarks as: "We are fortunate tonight to have...", "We are greatly honored by...", "Our speaker tonight needs no introduction..."

2. Build up the speaker too much. You can, if not careful, make it impossible for him to live up to your publicity.

3. Mix the introduction with announcements, committee reports, etc.

4. Embarrass the speaker by: apologizing for the fact that he is a sub-

stitute, apologizing for the fact that he is not well known, or telling embarrassing stories about him.

5. Steal his speech material.

6. Look at the speaker when introducing him. Aim your remarks at the audience.

7. Rehash the speech after the speaker has finished.

8. Mispronounce the speaker's name.

These are not all hard and fast rules for making a Speech of Introduction. They are merely suggestions to help you prepare your speech. Using them will help, but you must supply the rest.

This material was prepared by A. Conrad Posz, Assistant Professor, Communications Skills, Michigan State College, for the National Project in Agricultural Communications.