The Power of Professional Speech

By: Maria Navarro, Hixson-Lied Success Scholar

Being able to speak in front of people, whether it is in every day conversation, a business meeting, or a presentation, is an important skill that everyone should possess. The power of professional speech is a great benefit to have, particularly for college students. In virtually every aspect of your college experience, you will need to make a professional presentation and if you are taking a communications course, various speeches. The ability to speak eloquently and intelligently also allows us to exert great influence. The way we speak along with appropriate grammar and diction can contribute to a positive, dynamic professional image and build respect for our work as pre-professionals.

Professional speech allows us to express ourselves creatively, communicate effectively with others, and most importantly, allows us to grow and gain knowledge as students. With preparation and practice, anyone can deliver a powerful professional speech. A powerful speech is able to influence, persuade, and inform your audience of what you want to say. Challenge yourself to engage in conversations with others, share your opinions and ideas, and learn new words and phrases. Being able to speak effectively can become a conscious skill and second nature.

Language and the power of speech challenge our values and sensibilities. Also consider the fact that after you or another person

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delivers a speech, engage in discussion. Many of our college classes require a discussion class after lecture to encourage students to convey their own opinions and ask for help concerning the content and significance of the subject matter. The power of professional speech promotes a philosophical understanding of what it means to be a well-informed, cultured student.

Here at UNLV, diversity and professionalism surrounds our campus. Professional speech, whether it is the classroom or networking with potential employers, can be significant and provocative enough to earn good grades or land a great career. Professional speech allows the speaker to express his or her personality and exert influence through ideas or advice. Our speech can be enough to influence politics and benefit society as a whole.

Passionate, professional speech will be able to make clear to the audience what the speaker wants. Speech is about leadership and power, which always looks to persuade others to support what you are saying. The largest benefit of professional speech is the ability to change the world and all it takes is knowledge, integrity, enthusiasm, and creativity.

Building Connections for Your Career

By: Garrett Wilson, Hixson-Lied Success Scholar

It is quite daunting to ponder about the future in your career of choice. There are enough stress factors as it is, but those can be easily quelled with meaningful connections on your professional path to success. With that, another question is raised. How does a bright young individual on the road to opportunity go about making connections that will enhance their career opportunity? Being one such bright young individual, I have a good amount of experience in this area.

As of now, I am a junior student in the UNLV Department of Film. Needless to say, the film industry is one built on connections. While there is much value in skill and accomplishments, professional connections are a key factor in securing a job in the volatile film industry. However, my experience does not just pertain to my industry of choice, but many more.

Being in college is in itself a networking opportunity. Get to know your peers within your major. You never know who may become your professional colleagues in the future. Now, there is no need to be formal. It can be as easy as saying hello to someone in a class and establishing yourself as someone eager to meet new people. Of course, there are many chances to formally meet people in a more professional setting, such as special department events. In my case, there was a mandatory assembly for all film majors. It was treated like a meet and greet. The point was to get to know one another.

Once you are comfortable with meeting new people, start attending seminars and professional workshops with your peers. This will help develop your skills and form cohesion between your colleagues and yourself. The film program has events such as screenings, two film festivals, a club on campus, and several Q&As. Attend all the events you can in your selected career field of interest. Not only will you build connections with your contemporaries, but the skills needed to succeed in the future.

With new colleagues and a skill set established, the next logical step would be to start delving into the professional world. Start taking internships, listen to guest lecturers, and attend all the events with guests currently in the industry of your choice.
Building Connections for Your Career Continued

Not only will you gain even more knowledge and work-related experience, but also colleagues that are already established in the industry you are trying to break into. Learn as much as you possibly can from them; they are a wealth of information.

Start building connections now. It is never too late to start meeting new people! In just a semester, you could already be on your way to building up a reputation in your career of choice. While it does seem frightening to start talking to people you have not met, you must remember that all your peers and colleagues have something in common with you. They all share the same passion that you do and want to be successful. Get those connections started and you will find yourself with people who will push you to be the best you can be in your career.

The Last Lecture: ASC Common Reader Program

By: Robert Vargas, Hixson-Lied Success Scholar

The Academic Success Center (ASC) Common Reader Program is underway with this year’s common reader, The Last Lecture by Randy Pausch. What is a common reader program you may ask? Basically, a center-wide common reader program is when faculty, staff, and students read a chosen book (often novels) and engage in discussions regarding what they felt and read. Studies have even shown that these programs can increase critical thinking (Laufgraben, 2006). With that being said, our COLA 100E First Year Seminar students have read this book, as well as staff members from our ASC.

The Last Lecture is a book that arose from a talk given by Randy Pausch, professor of computer science at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh. The lecture was given in 2007. These lectures are given by professors in the hopes of sharing wisdom and leaving an inspiring legacy to those who listen. The amazing part of this is that Pausch had received a prognosis of terminal cancer and was only given one month to live. However, instead of canceling he decided to persevere and tell those attending the lecture about his goals and achieving your personal childhood dreams. This lecture became an internet sensation and has been viewed over a million times. Personally, I read both the book and saw the lecture and they both are inspiring and can give you that extra boost of motivation we can all use.

After reading such an inspiring novel, one doesn’t want to keep it to just themselves. Well, our ASC definitely realized that. In November, they held a book discussion led by two of our ASC staff as well as a performance of The Last Lecture led by Dr. Curtis Love, Professor at the College of Hotel Administration. On December 6th, our ASC will have a viewing of “The Last Lecture” talk Pausch gives at 1:00pm in the ASC Resource Room. And if you are interested, but don’t have the book, our ASC has copies for ASC constituents to check out.

The Last Lecture is definitely an amazing novel. It inspires you to pursue your goals, just like Pausch was able to. If reading is not your favorite, the lecture is always online as well. Our ASC will have another book for our common reader program next academic year, so be on the lookout!

Randy Pausch, photo credit: http://faculty.unlv.edu/LCE/Pages/006.htm
The Academic Success Coach I chose to interview was Alexandra “Alex” Lourdes. Along with being an Academic Success Coach, Alex is a full-time UNLV student pursuing her Ph.D. in Higher Education. She chose to come to UNLV because her family lives here and she felt that staying close to them was important. In the future, Alex wants to graduate with a Ph.D. and become a professor. When asked why, she said it has been her dream since she was a kid to use her knowledge to help teach other people what they need to know.

Alex provided some great tips for a student to prepare for his/her final exam. The first tip is to make sure to set apart extra time to study. Students should not wait until the last minute to study because it can cause you to stress out and get you confused on what you are studying. If you don’t understand something, email the professor or go to the Tutoring Center for help. Next, make sure you understand the material before you go into a final exam or a test. Take notes in each of your classes. Teach your notes to someone; it could be your friend or family member and you will really understand the material. Make outlines for the chapters and make goals for how much you want to study each session. On a side note, be sure to reward yourself once you accomplish your study goals.

Toward the end of our interview, I asked her what some good ways to pick your classes for next semester her response was this question is an advising question. If you need help picking good classes for the next semester, you should make an appointment with your advisor so they can show you what classes you need for your major.

Interviewing Alex was a great experience. She gave me some great and useful tips on how to study for a final. In my opinion, Alex is one of the best Academic Success Coaches and meeting with her is a great option for students looking for help.

Tips to Get Ready for Spring Semester!

As we go into the holiday season classes are wrapping up, trips are being planned, and students are looking forward to spending time with their loved ones. However, it is important to remember to be prepared for school to start again in spring. Below is some advice to help make sure Spring 2014 does not catch you by surprise.

- Meet with an academic advisor. It is important to meet with an advisor so that you know which classes to sign up for, to identify important dates, and discuss your degree plan.
- Talk to your Academic Success Coach. They can help make sure that you are not over-loading yourself for the next semester. Academic Success Coaches can also help formulate a plan of attack for the weeks leading up to the semester.
- Shop around for the best price on textbooks. Once you have purchased your books, it is helpful to read the first chapter of each book in order to be prepared for the first day of class.
- Find a university sport to become a fan of. This will allow you to develop and show school spirit, socialize with your friends, and cheer for your fellow Rebels! The spring sports are basketball, baseball, softball, track and field, swimming and diving, golf, and tennis.

*All photos used are original or can be found at unlv.edu unless otherwise noted.*