Tips for Public Speaking

Matter - What you say

• Decide the purpose of your speech. Is it to: inform, persuade, arouse sympathy, increase understanding, heighten awareness, change an opinion or simply to present a point of view?
• Your speech should have a beginning, middle and an end
• Don’t overdo the good mornings
• Start strong
• Use emotive or visual language to engage the audience
• Talk about ideas or topics that your audience can relate to
• Be aware of the time limits
• Avoid listing a series of examples
• Humour can be wonderful in a speech but don’t put it in just for the sake of it
• End strong - never end with “Thank you for listening to my speech...” or “That is the end of my speech...”

Manner - How you say it

• Make eye contact with your audience - don’t read your speech
• Use small palm cards with small prompts
• Speak clearly and slowly with appropriate pauses
• Speak loudly enough for the entire audience to hear
• Stand tall and be confident
• Avoid distracting mannerisms (swaying, touching hair etc)
• Any hand or facial gestures should be natural and appropriate

Practice, Practice, Practice

• Know your speech!
• Present your speech regularly to practice (to your family, your animals even to yourself in the mirror)
• Time yourself as you present your speech
• Ask family and friends for advice
• Record or video tape your speech and watch it back to pick up any areas for improvement