Question and Answer Sessions

The question-and-answer (often called “Q-and-A”) is a special type of impromptu speaking that is directed by questions from members of the audience. They can be planned or spur of the moment.

The key to making a question-and-answer session successful is to….

• **Be well prepared**
  • Try to predict which issues will be most important to your audience, the questions they might ask about those issues, and the answers to those questions.

• **Answer the question**
  • Be direct, specific, and brief. Your answer should not be longer than 3 sentences, unless the question is very technical.

• **Respect your questioners**
  • Most questioners are good people seeking answers to honest questions. However, some questioners are very opinionated, incomprehensible, or even hostile. Nevertheless, you should treat all your questioners with respect.

Protocol during the Session

As a matter of courtesy, call on audience members in the order in which they raise their hands. Consider these guidelines:

• Repeat or paraphrase the question.
• Initially make eye contact with the questioner then move your gaze to other audience members.
• Remember your listening skills.
• Don’t be afraid to pause while formulating an answer.
• Keep answers concise.


O’Hair, Dan; Rubenstein, Hannah & Stewart Rob (2004) A Pocket Guide to Public Speaking


UNCG University Speaking Center, (336) 256-1346 For more resources check out our Website http://speakingcenter.uncg.edu

O’Hair, Dan; Rubenstein, Hannah & Stewart Rob (2004) *A Pocket Guide to Public Speaking*


UNCG University Speaking Center, (336) 256-1346 For more resources check out our Website http://speakingcenter.uncg.edu