After-Dinner Speeches

Delivered as the conclusion to a meeting that includes a meal

- Light, entertaining, and often inspirational in tone
- Spoken with sufficient volume and clear enunciation to overcome sounds (courses being served, glasses being filled, plates being cleared, servers moving around the room, etc.)
- Avoid controversy and overly technical explanations while still reinforcing a central theme
- Avoid comments that could be offensive
- Gear humor to the background and interests of the audience
- Reaffirm the occasion and the reason your audience has chosen to get together
- Include a lesson that applies to the specific audience

Remember: For digestible after-dinner speeches…

- Do use narratives and examples
- Do use humor specific to the situation
- Do keep the tone entertaining and light
- Do focus your remarks on a central theme relevant to the occasion
- Don’t have complex or controversial content
- Don’t use overworked jokes, especially “A funny thing happened on the way to this speech…”
- Don’t force humor; present only what you can deliver comfortably and skillfully
- Don’t ever use humor that can be considered racist, sexist, or otherwise offensive