



UNC
GREENSBORO

The University Speaking Center

How to Practice Efficiently

- Use your notes to help you keep your place, but **don't** read directly from them.
- Practice your speech in small amounts; divide your speech into smaller, more time manageable sections, and practice each section by itself before you put it together as a whole speech.
- Practice in front of a mirror, but use other techniques to practice as well. In the mirror, you can see your facial expressions, gestures and other bodily movements which are important aspects of your speech.
- Practice your entire presentation several times over the course of a few days. Generally, practice three, but no more than five, complete run-throughs during one sitting.
- Too much practice can make your speech sound too rehearsed and memorized.
 - Practice from **key word** note cards.

Ways to Practice:

- **Practice in private:** In your room, in your car, in the shower, etc. Practice your speech the same way you will when you present it. If you are using visual aids, be sure to practice with them. You may want to practice in the clothes you will actually wear during the presentation in order to adapt to them. For example, presenting in high heeled shoes is different from presenting in tennis shoes.
- **Practice on tape:** An audiotape shows you how your voice sounds, the

Hogan, J. M. (2011). *Public speaking and civic engagement* (pp. 54-57). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

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composure, rate, and if you use verbal fillers. A videotape will allow all of this, plus the ability to evaluate your appearance as well.

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- **Practice with others:** Another set of ears can tell you what specifically needs work, but they can also add some extra confidence. Presenting in front of even one person gives you the opportunity to present in front of someone before the actual speech.

- How much should I practice?
 - Keep practicing until you feel satisfied
 - Then, practice with the goal of polishing the fine points
 - Then, STOP!

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