

# Chapter Ten

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Using Language:  
Styling The Speech



# Chapter Ten



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# Writing for the Ear

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- ⌘ Written language and oral language are different
- ⌘ Readers have the opportunity to re-read text, listeners have only one chance to get the message\*



# Using Language To Share Meaning



- ⌘ Your choice of language should create shared meaning between the speaker and the audience members
- ⌘ Speech language should be culturally sensitive, unbiased, simple, concise, concrete, and vivid\*

# Using Language To Share Meaning: Culturally Sensitive Language

## ⌘ Cultural Sensitivity

- ☑ A conscious attempt to be considerate of cultural beliefs, norms, or traditions that are different from one's own\*



# Using Language To Share Meaning: Unbiased Language


## ⌘ Biased language

- ☑ Language that relies on unfounded assumptions, negative descriptions, or stereotypes of a given group's age, class, gender, or geographic, ethnic, racial, or religious characteristics; also includes language that is sexist, ageist, or homophobic

## ⌘ Sexist Pronouns

- ☑ The exclusive use of *he*, *she*, *him*, *her*, when talking about both men and women\*

# Using Language To Share Meaning: Simplicity



- ⌘ Successful speakers say what they mean in short, clear sentences
- ⌘ Jargon
  - ☑ The specialized language of a given profession
- ⌘ Avoid using jargon, unless the audience consists of specialized professionals\*

# Using Language To Share Meaning: Conciseness



- ⌘ Strive to use as few words as possible to express your thoughts
- ⌘ Eliminate the unnecessary use of conjunctions such as, *and, but, for, although, because, since, and as soon as*
- ⌘ Vocal fillers such as “um,” and “ahh,” alienate listeners because they distract from the point\*

# Using Language To Share Meaning: Concreteness



## ⌘ Concrete Language

☑ Words that are specific, tangible, and definite

## ⌘ Abstract Language

☑ Words that are general and nonspecific\*

# Using Language To Share Meaning: Vivid Imagery

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- ⌘ Select adverbs and adjectives that are colorful and concrete
- ⌘ Appeal to the listeners' senses of smell, taste, sight, hearing, and touch\*



# Using Language To Share Meaning: Vivid Imagery



## ⌘ Try to use Figures of Speech


- ☑ A simile is an explicit comparison of one thing to another, using *like* or *as*
- ☑ A metaphor is a direct comparison of two things in which one thing is describes as actually being the other
- ☑ An analogy is an extended metaphor or simile that compares an unfamiliar concept or process to a more familiar one to help the listener understand the unfamiliar one\*

# Using Language to Build Credibility



- ⌘ Proper language usage builds trust and credibility
- ⌘ By being appropriate, accurate, and showing conviction for your topic, you demonstrate trustworthiness\*


# Using Language to Build Credibility: Appropriateness



- ⌘ Language that is appropriate in one context or for one audience, may be inappropriate in another
  - ☑ Avoid inflammatory language that may incite anger in the audience
  - ☑ Avoid slanderous or libelous language that may defame the reputation of others\*

# Using Language to Build Credibility:

## Accuracy



### ⌘ Denotative meanings

☑ The literal, or dictionary definition of a word

### ⌘ Connotative meanings

☑ The special associations that different people bring to bear upon a word

⌘ Report the information in your speech accurately, and without distorting the facts\*

# Using Language to Build Credibility: Confidence and Conviction



- ⌘ Speaking in the active rather than the passive voice will make your statements clear and assertive instead of indirect and weak
- ⌘ Personal pronouns such as *I*, *me*, and *my* create an impression of conviction\*

# Using Language To Create A Lasting Impression

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⌘ The way in which statements in a speech are arranged helps the audience remember the speech better \*



# Using Language To Create A Lasting Impression: Repetition




- ⌘ Repetition involves repeating key words or phrases at various intervals to create a distinctive rhythm
  - ☑ Keywords or phrases normally appear first in the introduction, then are repeated in the body and the conclusion of the speech\*

# Using Language To Create A Lasting Impression: Alliteration



- ⌘ Alliteration is the repetition of the same sounds, usually initial consonants, in two or more neighboring words or syllables
  - ☑ Alliteration lends speech a poetic, musical rhythm which drives home a point and leaves a lasting impression\*

# Using Language To Create A Lasting Impression: Parallelism



⌘ Parallelism is the arrangement of words, phrases, or sentences in a similar form

⌘ Example:

“Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country”\*