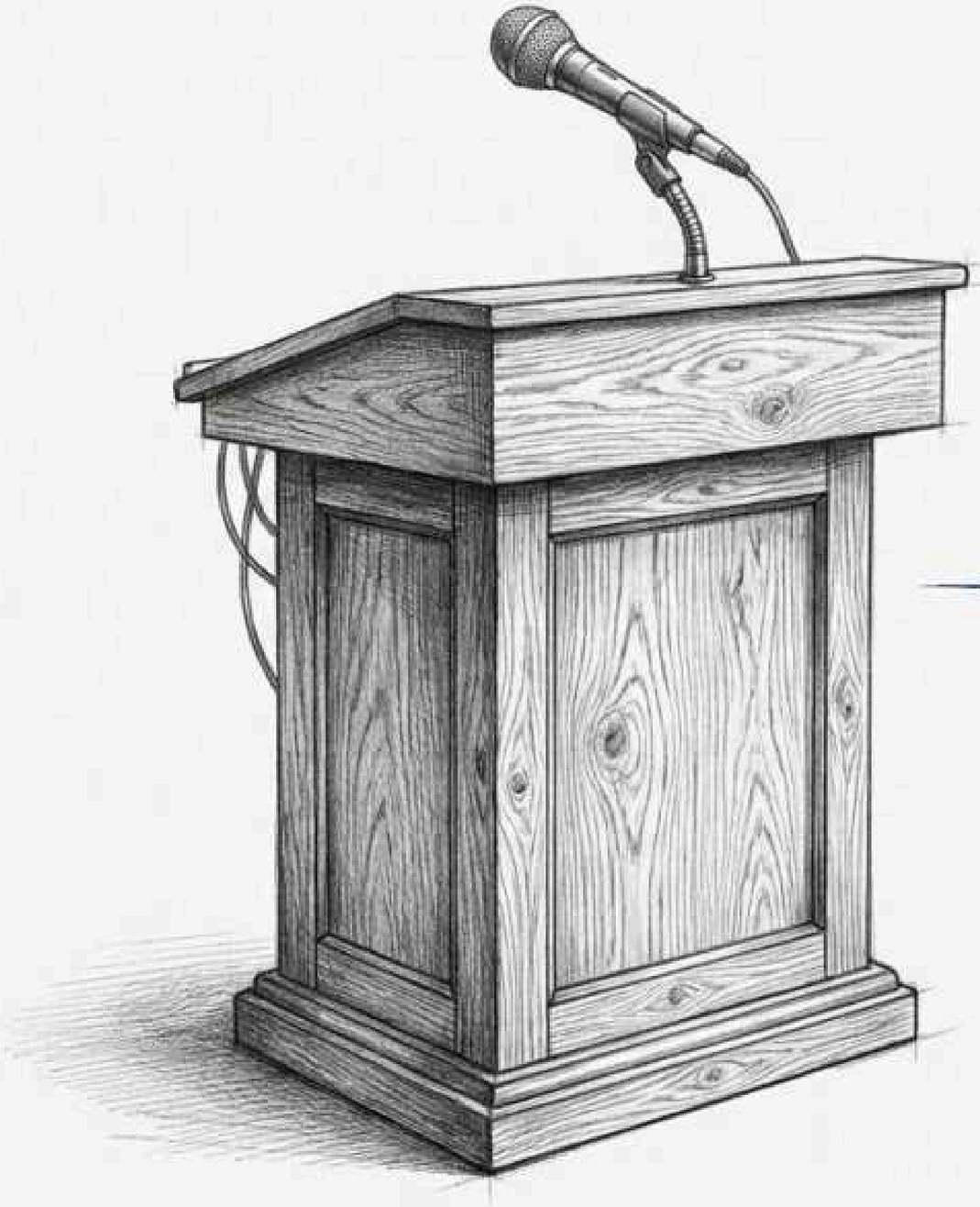
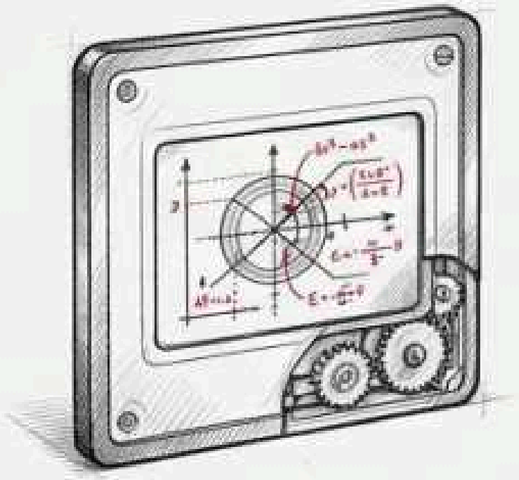


COMM 101 B - Lecture 6

Visual Aids, Questions, and Everyday Occasions

A masterclass in presentation mechanics, Q&A survival, and situational speaking

Lecture 6 Curriculum



Visual Aids

Slide design, charts, and preparing for failure.

↳ *Plan B: analog backups (e.g., handouts, chalk).*



The Question Period

Navigating the Q&A and hostile questions.

{ Listen actively } → [Repeat & Reframe] → concisely → [Verify understanding]

Address the audience, not just the asker.

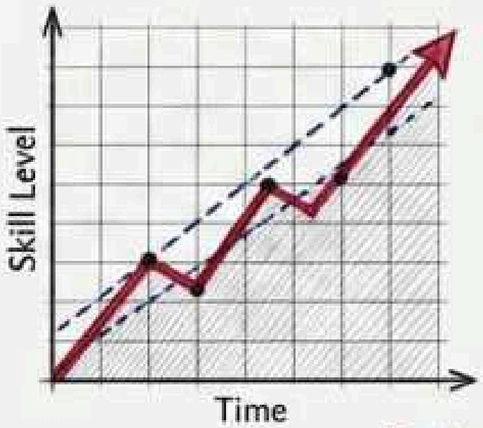


Everyday Occasions

Introductions, toasts, eulogies, meetings, interviews, and video.

Matrix: [Context] × [Purpose] → { Tone & Structure }

Tailor delivery to the specific context.



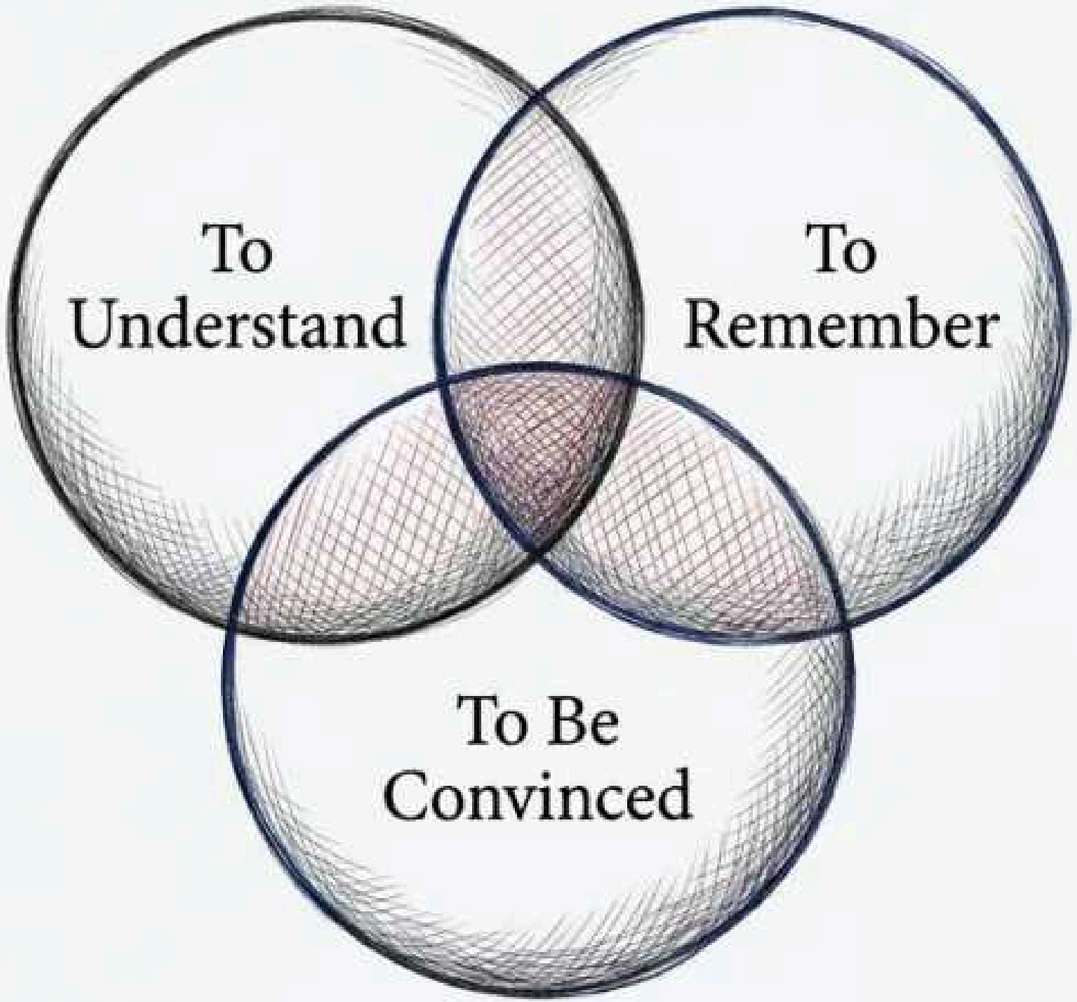
Continuous Improvement

How to keep improving after the course.

[Record & Review] → { Seek Feedback } → → [Set Specific Goals] → { Practice Deliberately }

Treat every speaking opportunity as a data point.

A Speech Alone > A Speech + Poor Visuals



The Litmus Test

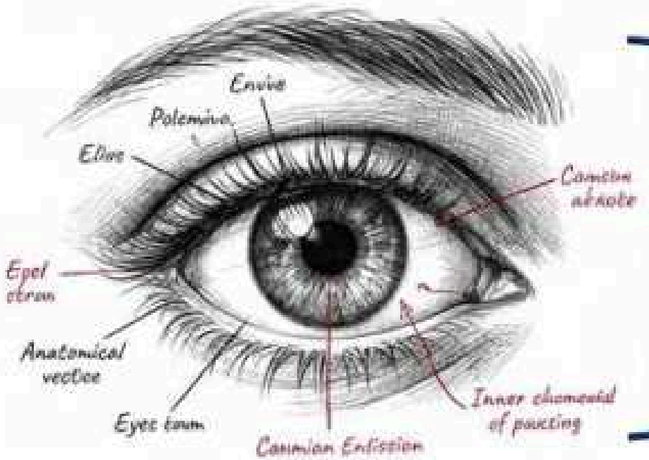
Does this make the point clearer than words alone?

Yes → Include it. Ensure it remains barely noticed.

No → Leave it out. Never let it replace the speaker.

Designing for the Eye and the Ear

[¶ 6.4]





Cognitive Load: 1 Idea per slide.

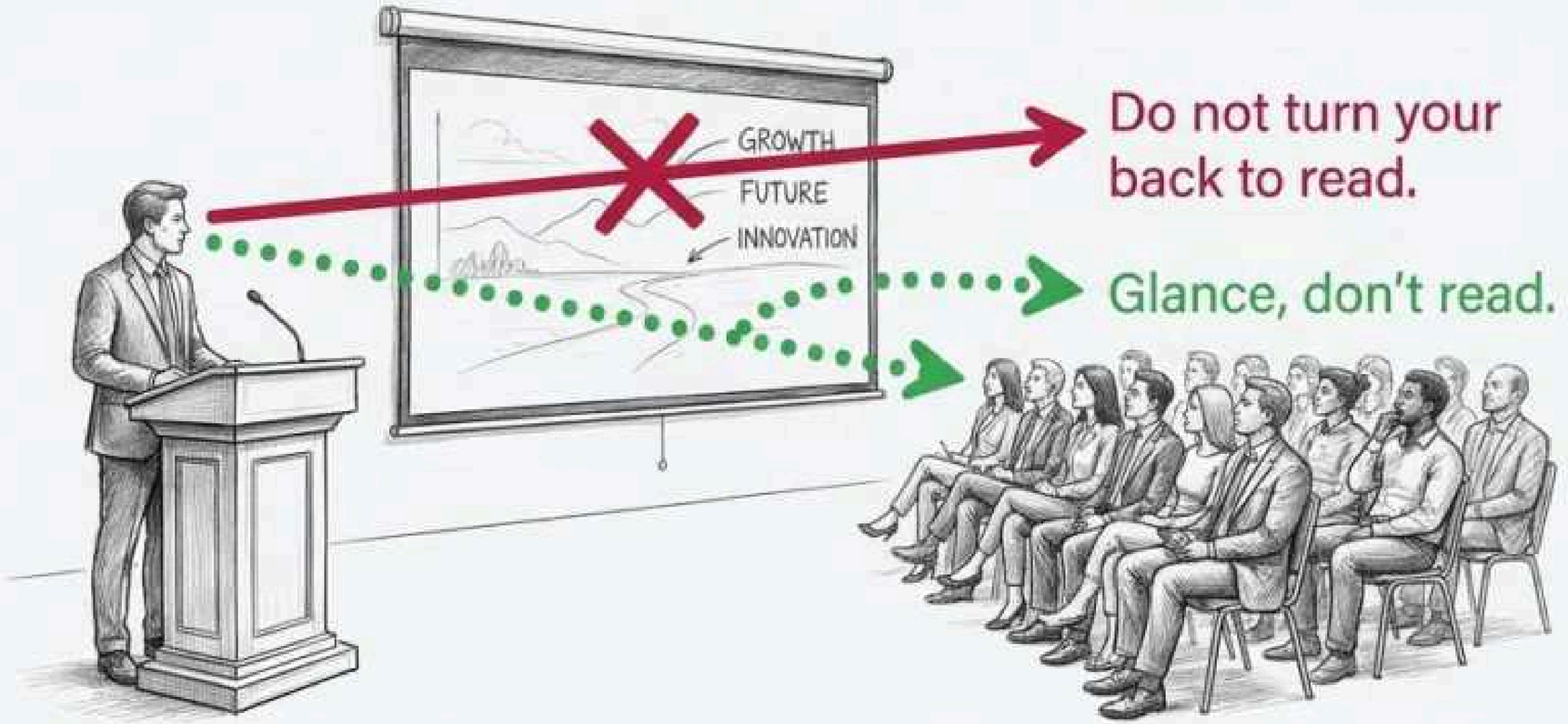
Typography: Minimum 28-point font. Few words.

Contrast: Dark text on light background, or light on dark.

Imagery: Good photograph or simple chart > Block of text.

The Tufte Warning: Beware of chopping thoughts into fragments. (Edward Tufte)

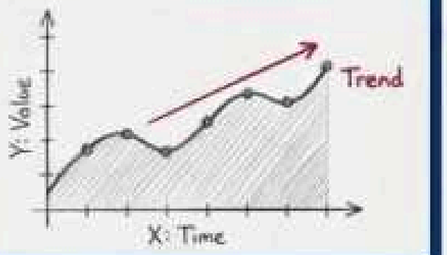
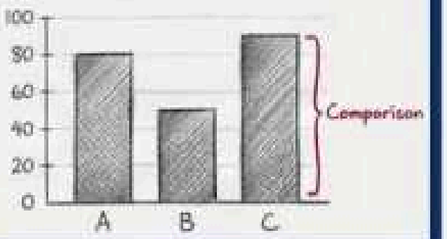
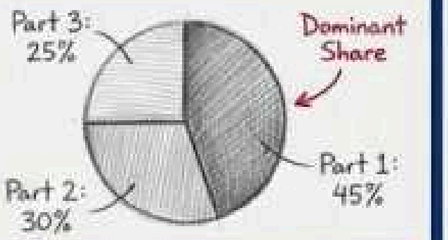
Total Message = Voice (Argument) + Screen (Images & Keywords)



The audience reads faster than you speak. Putting the speech on the slides bores the room and makes you redundant.

The Chart Selection Diagnostic

[¶ 6.6]

Use Case: Change over time	Form: Line Chart	
Use Case: Comparing amounts	Form: Bar Chart	
Use Case: Simple parts of a whole	Form: Pie Chart	

Design Rules:
- Label axes.
- Title must state the message.
- Remove clutter.
- Say aloud what they should see.

Complexity Limit =
< 2 Minutes to
explain.





Physical Object Protocol:

Show → Hide

(While discussing) (To prevent distraction)

Handout Protocol:

Distribute at the end
(unless actively needed during the talk).

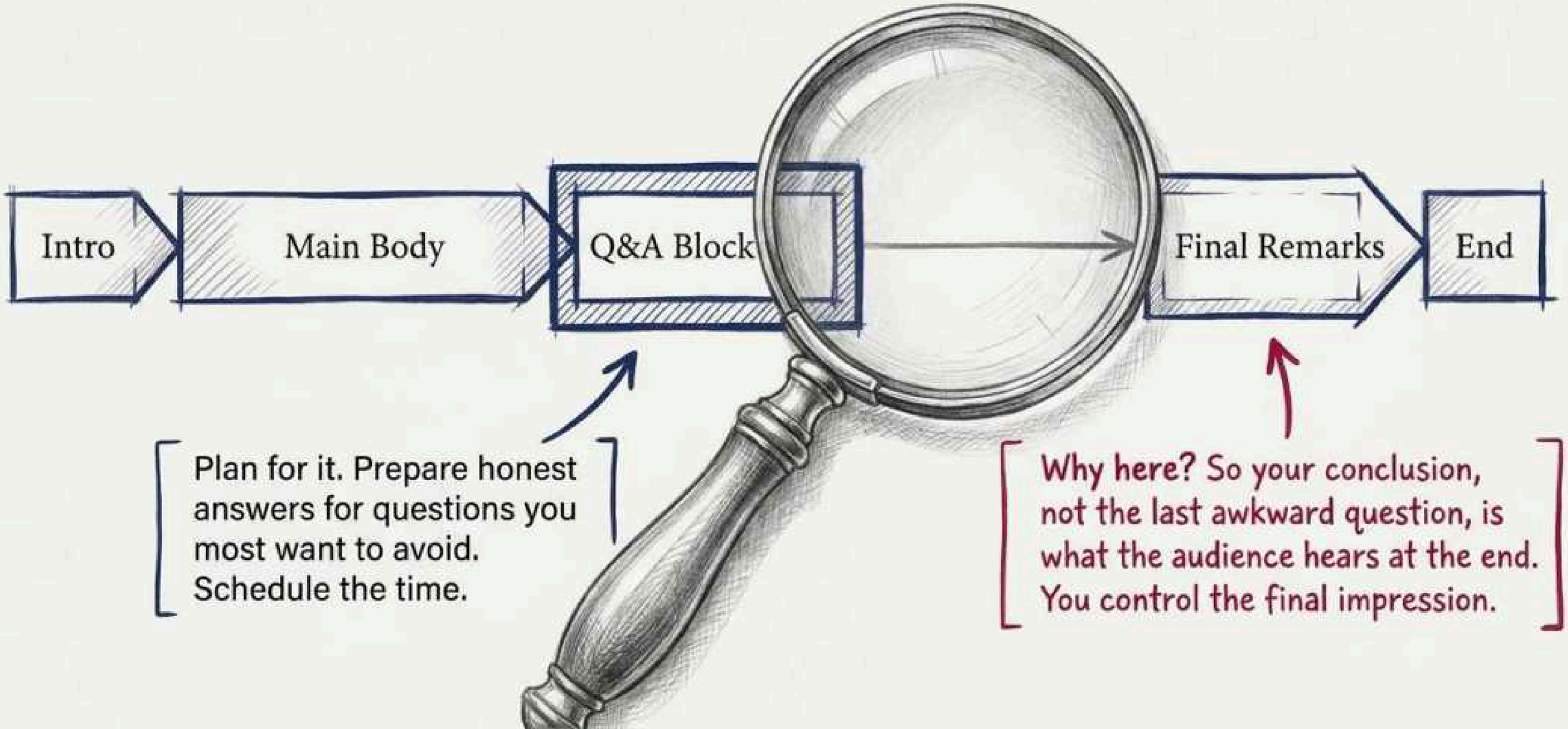
The Failure Prep Equation

Survival = Arrive Early + Test Tech + Backup Drive + No-Tech Readiness

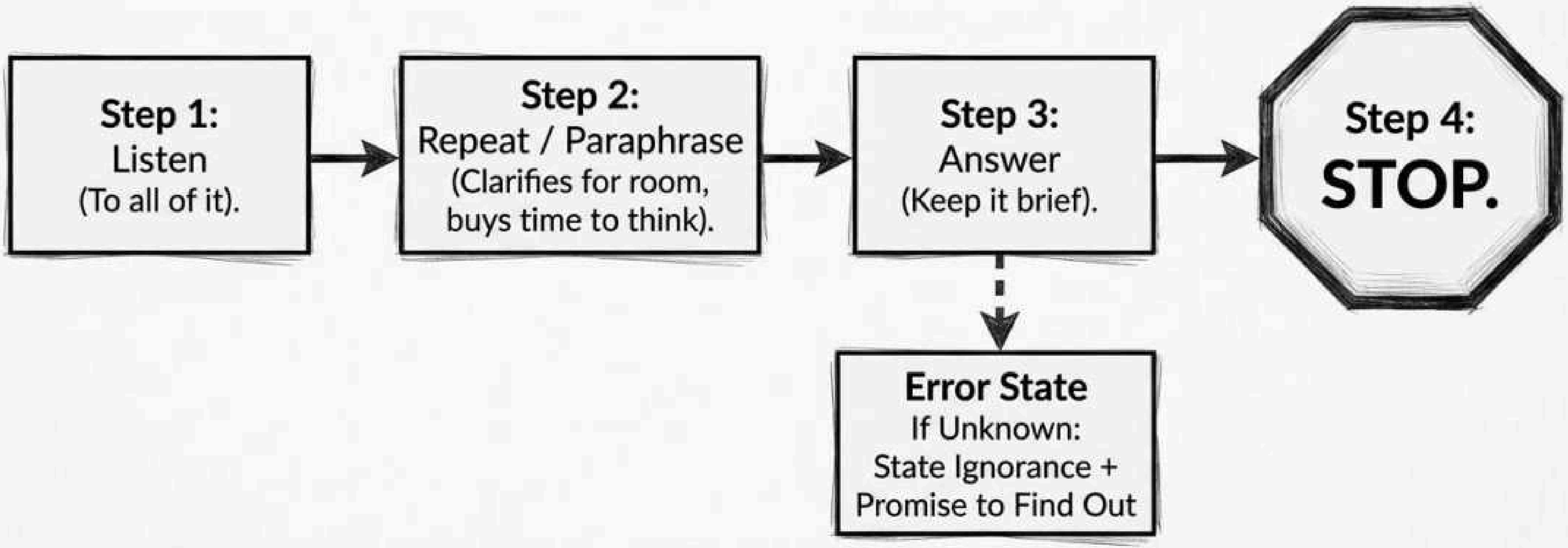
Whatever you use, prepare for failure. Be ready to speak without any of it.

Q&A Chronology and Control

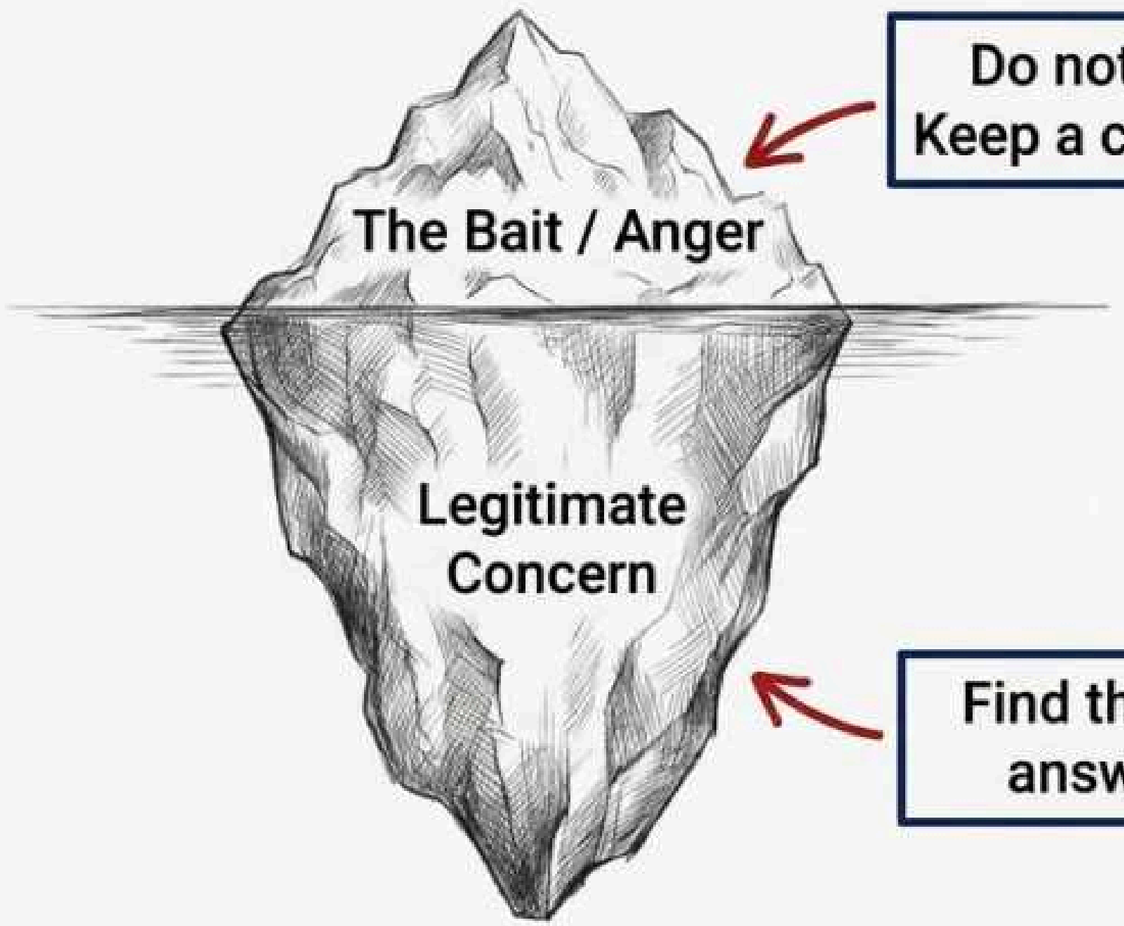
[¶ 6.8]



The Answer Algorithm



Guessing puts credibility at risk. Honest ignorance rarely does.



- De-escalation Steps:
  - Thank them if fitting.
  - Keep tone even.
  - Offer to talk afterward if it drags on.

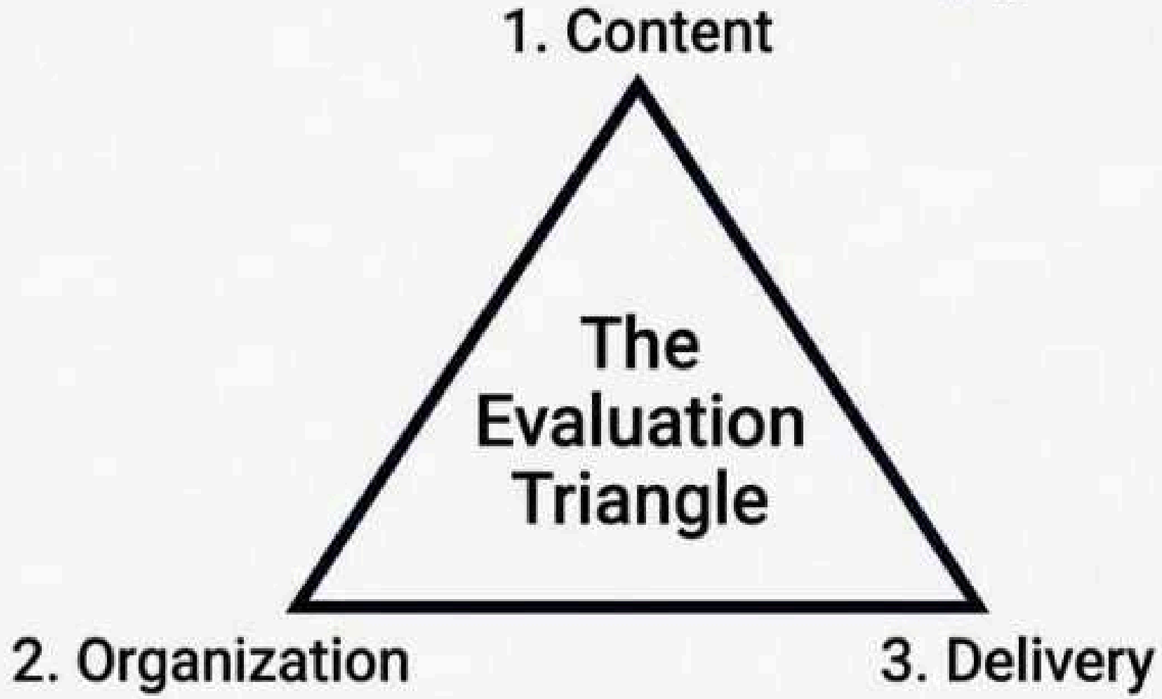
Your Reputation = Audience judgment of your composure > Your victory in the argument

[¶ 6.11]

The Listener's Duty

– Active listening.
– Give full attention.
– Hold judgment until the end.





The Graceful Feedback Formula:

Feedback = What Worked + Specific Proof + 1 Area to Improve

Giving and receiving feedback with grace is the quickest way to get better.

The Introduction Formula

[¶ 6.12]



Audience Relevance + **Speaker Qualifications** + **SPEAKER NAME** (End)

[0:00] — [< 1:00]

Execution Checklist:

- ☑ Check pronunciation beforehand.
- ☑ Save the name for the very last word (for the lift it gives).
- ☑ Sit down. The audience came to hear the speaker, not you.

Occasions of Emotion

[¶ 6.13]

Shared Traits:

Short (< 2 mins) | Sincere | Personal | One Specific Story



The Toast

- No private jokes few will understand.
- Never embarrass the honoree.
- End by inviting others to raise their glasses.



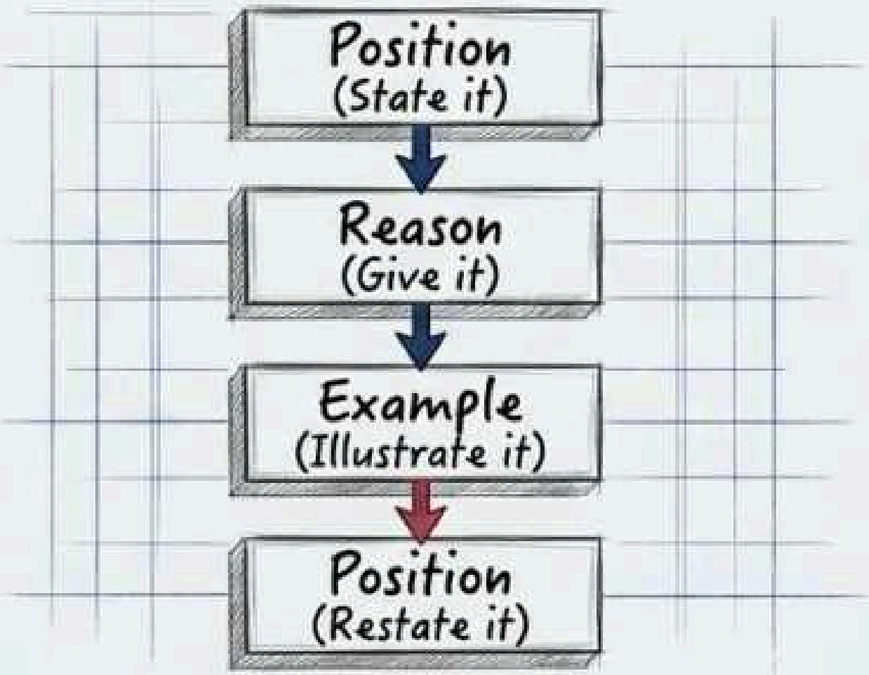
The Eulogy

- Spoken in grief; speak from the heart.
- Show who the person was.
- It is fine to pause, or to need a moment.

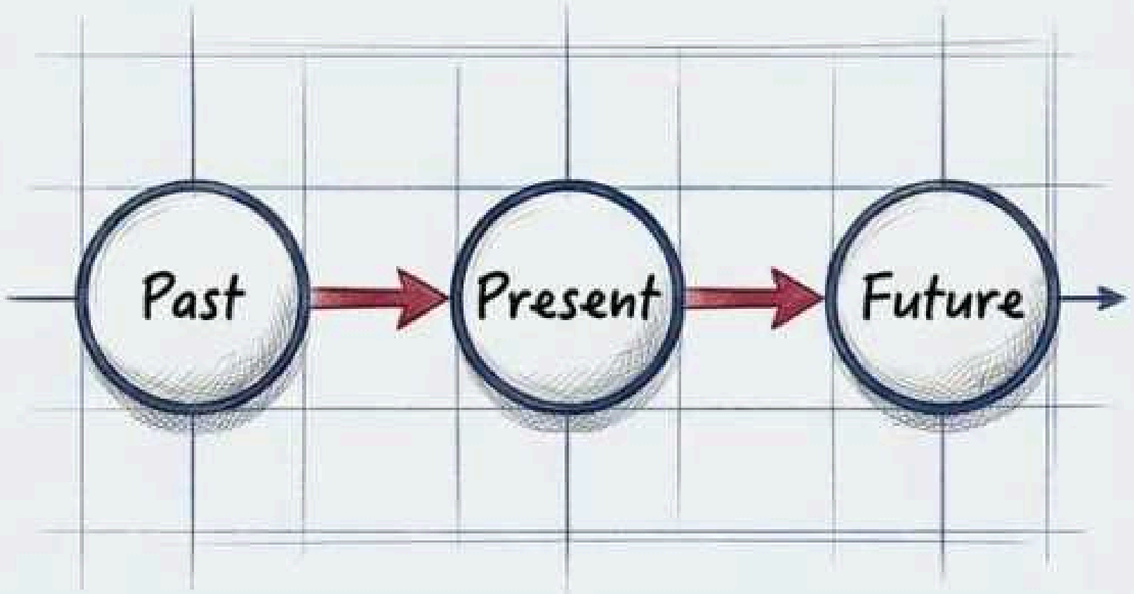
Impromptu Architectures (Speaking with zero warning)

First Action: Take a breath, and begin with the one thing you most want to say.

The P.R.E.P. Formula



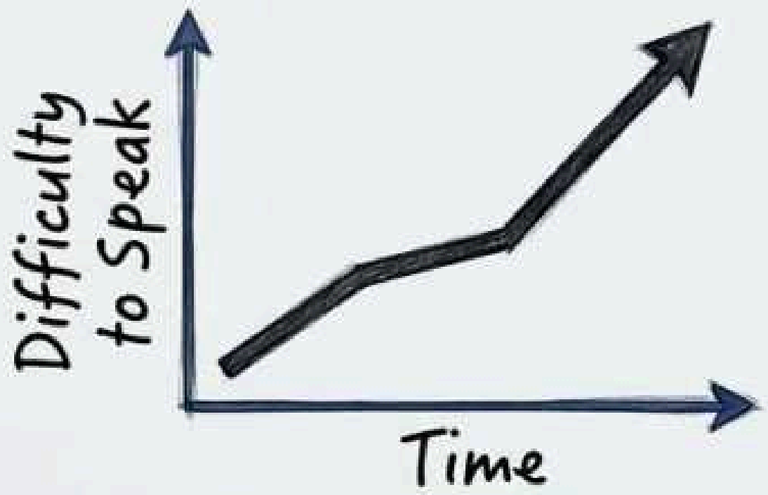
The Timeline Method



Rule: A short, clear impromptu answer beats a long, rambling one.

[¶ 6.15]

The Meeting



The Meeting Principle:
Speak early. Be concise. Lead with main point.

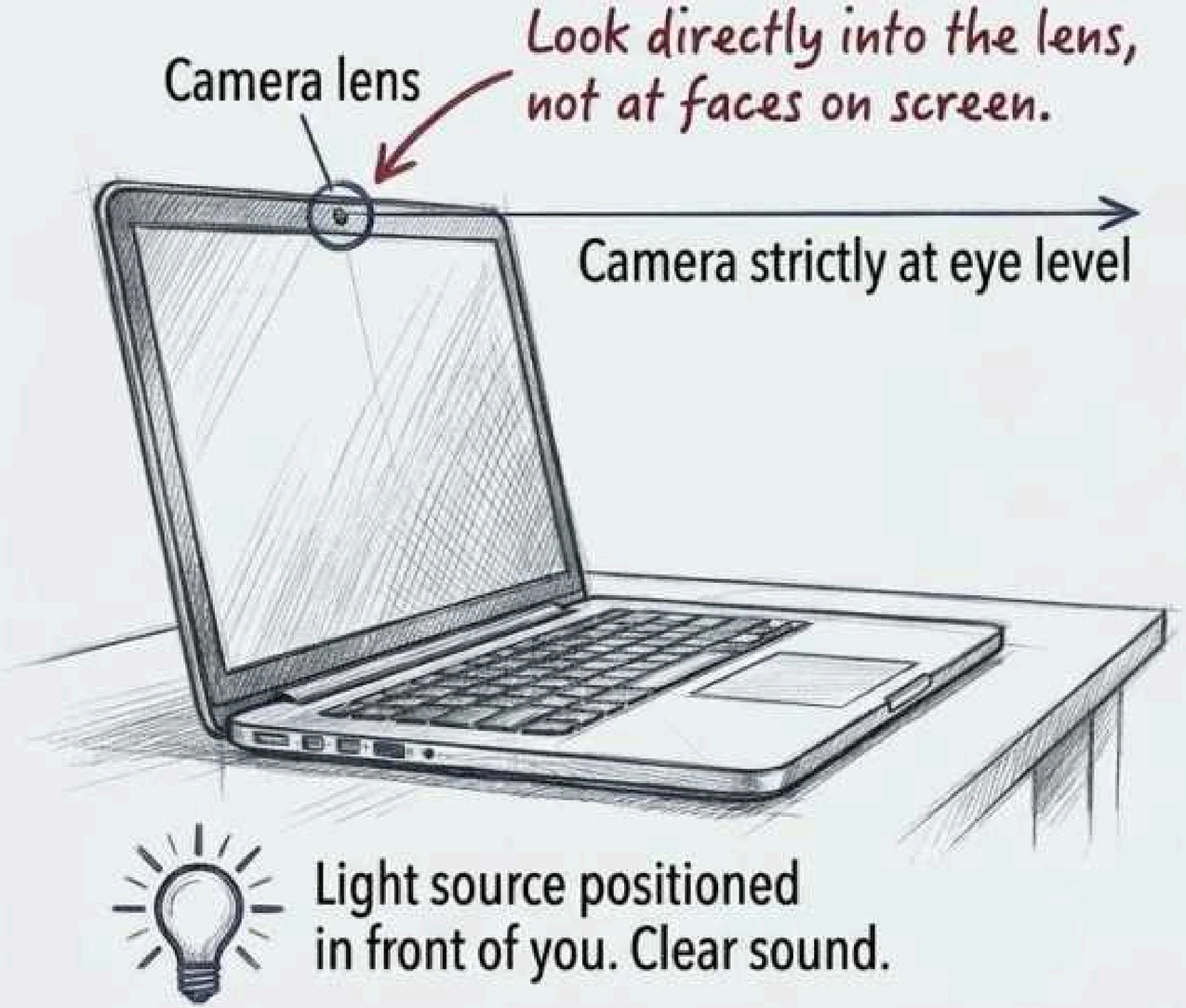
The Interview & Pitch

The Interview Formula (Tell me about yourself): 60-second limit



The Elevator Pitch: The exact same skill as the interview formula, compressed into a 30-second space.

Camera Dynamics



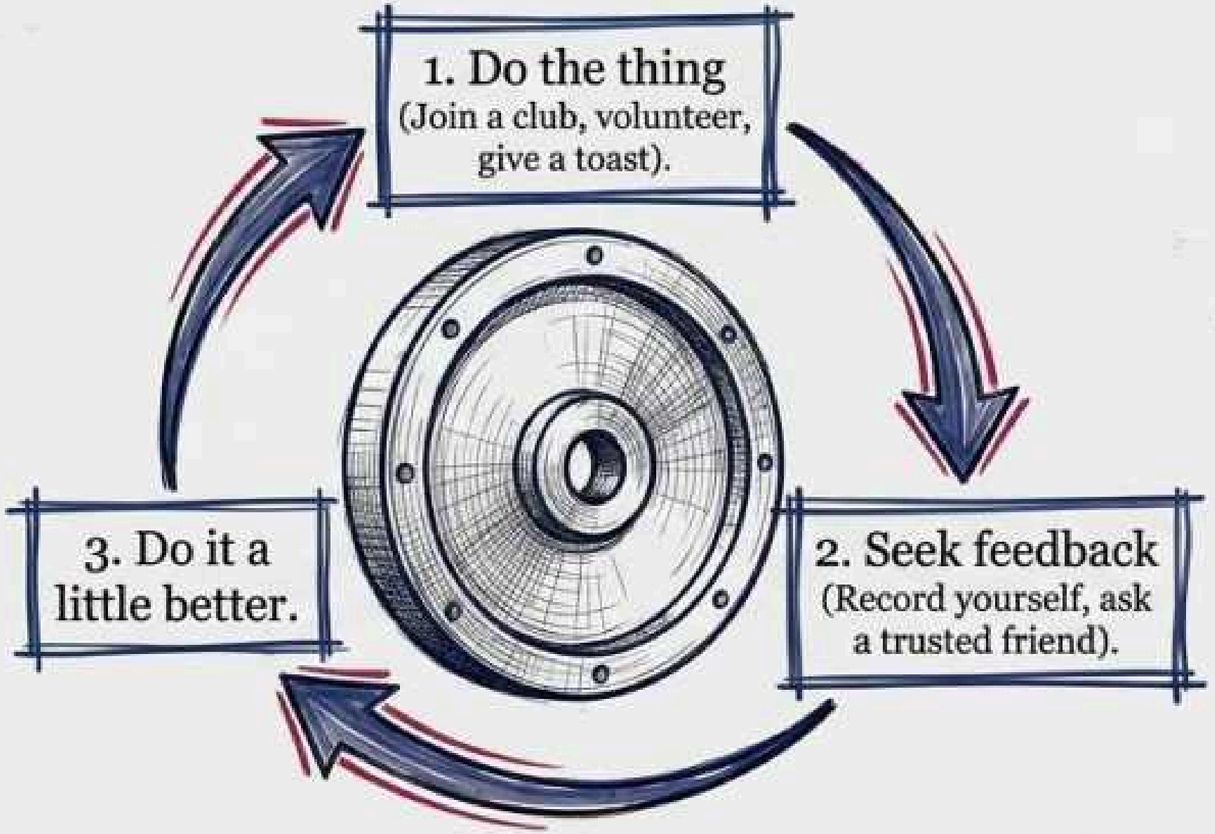
Delivery Adjustments:

Duration = Shorter than in-person

Energy = Vocal energy + 10%
(The screen flattens it)

Engagement = Increased frequency of questions/interaction
(To compensate for inability to read the room)

The Mechanics of Mastery



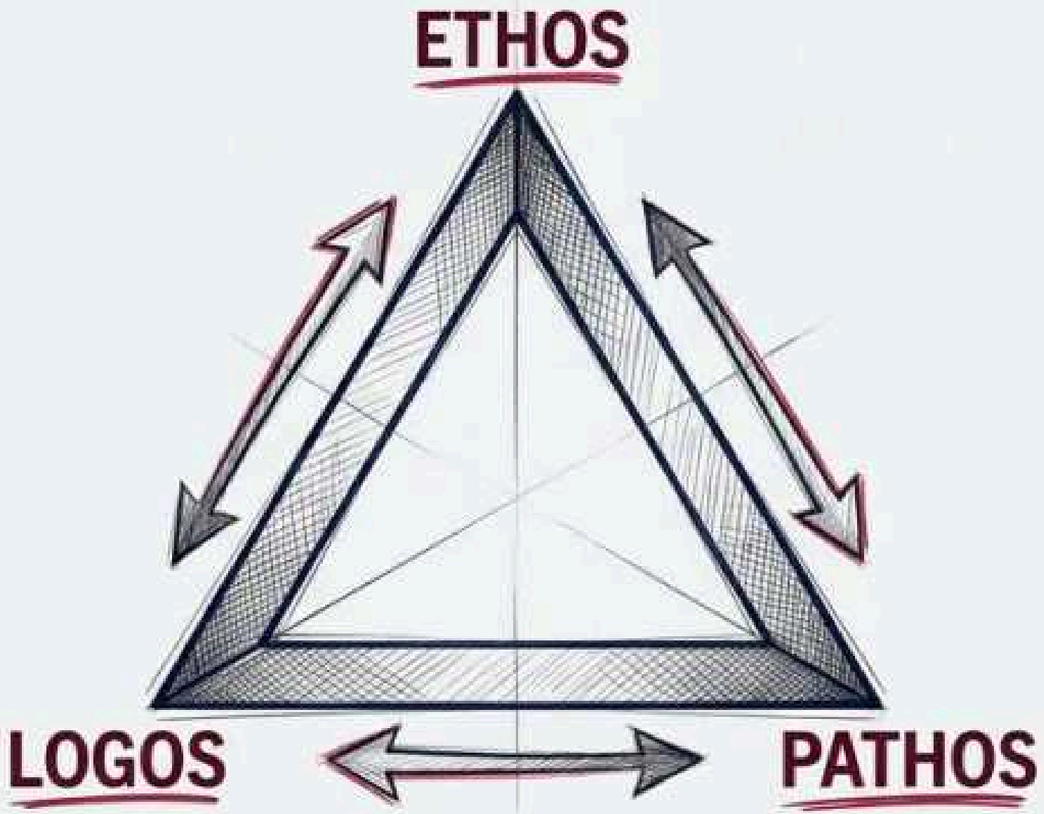
The Deliberate Practice Engine

Study the Classics

Notice what great speakers do. Read the classics: The Gettysburg Address, Dr. King's speech at the March on Washington.

Gathering Up The Course

[¶ 6.18]



The Master Checklist:

- **Reframe fear** & know your **audience**. (Focus outward)
- Build clear **structure** (strong opens/closes). (Bookends matter)
- Support with **honest evidence**. (Ethical facts)
- Persuade with **Ethos**, **Logos**, **Pathos**. (Balanced triad)
- Deliver with **varied voice**, **open body**, and **helpful visuals**. (Dynamic presence)

When is your next speech? Write down the date. What will you do today to prepare?

Questions or Feedback? Email: garyanderson@mail.grokbot.com | **X:** @garyanderson