

Evaluating Public Speakers: Questions to Consider



When evaluating public speakers, consider asking yourself the following questions:

#1: What did I see?

- Consider stage presence. Did the speaker appear to be comfortable in the space?
- Did the speaker smile? Make eye contact? Acknowledge the audience in their gestures?
- How was the speaker's use of notes and visual aids/media?
- Effective use of gestures and body language?
- How did the speaker's choice of platform (podium, no podium) help or hinder the speech?

#2: What did I hear?

- Did the introduction grab your attention? Did it make you want to hear more?
- Were you introduced to the purpose and objective of the speech?
- Clarity: Did the speaker enunciate their words?
- Volume: Was the volume appropriate for the speaking conditions (size of space, size of audience, microphone, etc.).
- Vocal variety: Did the speaker vary the rate and pitch of the speech to avoid a monotone presentation?
- Pace: Did the speaker rush through the speech? Did they pause too many times and for too long?
- Fillers: Did the speaker "fill" in pauses with filler sounds like "um", "so", and "uhhh."
- Was the body of the speech clearly organized; did it build up to a point?
- Conclusion: Were you alerted or made aware that the speech was coming to a close? Did the speaker make it clear if there was going to be time for Q&A at the end of the speech?

#3: What did I feel?

- How did you feel during the speech or presentation? Did you feel connected to the speaker?
- Were you interested and engaged throughout the entire speech? Were there any times when you felt disengaged?
- Do you feel the speech accomplished its purpose?