

Janelle Knick

Dr. Herrman

Business and Professional Speaking

Presentation Critique: A Speech Presented by Dr. **BC**

On **DATE**, I attended Dr. **BC**'s speech on feminism. While there, I enjoyed the interesting topic that they covered; however, I also observed their presence while giving said speech. As interesting as it was to learn about feminism and the different ways feminism can be applied to help better the world, the presentation itself was not very impactful or memorable. Dr. **BC** knew information about their topic, but their delivery was not up to the standards learned throughout our course.

Firstly, I will address the fact that Dr. **BC**'s speech was not all negative. They knew the material they were talking about, and not once was I concerned that I was being misinformed because they had credible sources that were cited consistently. They maintained an even tone and constant speed that was easy to understand and follow. They enunciated their words and had a clear transition into their conclusion. They had a strong final point. Dr. **BC** also utilized an effective PowerPoint. Most of the slides were filled with pictures, and if there were words on the slide, Dr. **BC** would not read directly off of the slide. These were the positive elements of their speech, and these elements helped make their presentation a good speech. However, most of these positive elements were undermined through the fact that there were far more negative elements present that created issues.

As aforementioned, there were several elements within their speech that were lacking to a critical eye. Firstly, Dr. **BC** stood behind their podium the entire time and read from (what I presume was) a script. Standing behind a podium is problematic because it restricts their ability to move around and engage with the audience. Reading from a script has a similar outcome, but it also creates an environment in which it becomes more difficult for the audience to remain engaged and focused since the presenter is looking at the script more than the audience. On occasion they glanced up to look at the audience, but this tended to cause them to stumble. When they looked up or added some kind of improv to their script, they would speed up the speed of their dialogue. This again hinted at the fact they were reading from a script and made the little add-ons more difficult to follow. In addition to the occasional add-ons, Dr. **BC** did not have clear transitions throughout their speech, nor did they follow the typical introduction format. This made following their speech and the points they were making extremely difficult to do since both the speech “road map” and clear indicators of what was being addressed were missing. While all of these areas may seem like small issues, this class has helped reveal that even the smallest of details (like standing behind a podium or a reading from a script) can make or break a presentation; however, there are easy ways to fix these issues.

There are several recommendations I have for Dr. **BC**’s speech, and most of them relate to the areas in which they had issues. While their topic was extremely interesting, their delivery was not very engaging. Firstly, they should try to restrict their time spent behind the podium. It is understandable if they were nervous giving a speech in an unfamiliar location to unfamiliar people. Moving away from the podium will help loosen movement, and it will most likely result in less anxiety while speaking since it will allow them to act more naturally. In addition to not

using the podium, Dr. **BC** should refrain from using a script. Speeches, especially the professional sort, are much more effective when the presenter uses an outline. Outlines are meant to help keep the presenter on track while also allowing them to stay engaged with their audience. Audience engagement is extremely important because it allows the speaker's message to be more effectively understood. In connection with having an outline, it would also be helpful if Dr. **BC** utilized transitions. Along with making sure they noted all the main points they were touching on in their speech in the introduction, they should have also used transitions to note where they were in the speech and where they were going. Introductions and conclusions help solidify a person's competency in regard to their topic and comfortability discussing a topic, and transitions do this as well. Transitions are important for making sure those listening to the speech can follow the argument. And, if nothing else, transitions help make the presenter's argument seem more like an argument since the evidence is all laid out and followed. This is perhaps the biggest piece of advice Dr. **BC** can receive. If Dr. **BC** were to follow these recommendations and what this class discussed, their audience engagement and presentation abilities would improve greatly.

In conclusion, Dr. **BC** had an interesting speech. While they were a decent speaker, there were elements of their presentation that needed work. It was clear that they were a competent speaker, and it is plausible that presenting in an unfamiliar place with unfamiliar people caused their presentation to be a bit off. There were several areas in their speech that proved they knew what they were doing and what they were talking about, but there were also multiple areas of concern. If Dr. **BC** were to follow the listed recommendations, the next time they spoke would be informative and engaging.