

The Power of an Effective Introduction
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Your introduction sets the tone for your event. Your introduction is your opportunity to announce yourself as a force to be reckoned with before you even open your mouth. A well-written introduction is the hallmark of an experienced speaker. Think polished, think **professional**.

Write your own introduction. Control the message.
Keep your introduction to one page. No exceptions.
Never forget: most people reading your intro are not Toastmasters.

A powerful introduction is composed of two parts.
Part 1: demonstrate why you are qualified to speak. The first thing to do is establish your *bona fides*: educational background, special training, significant accomplishments, recent awards, etc.
Part 2: offer personal information about yourself: a (brief) story, an unusual activity or hobby. Use humor whenever appropriate.

Use a larger font (minimum 16-point) for the introduction—think READING GLASSES in DARKENED ROOMS! Phonetically spell ALL WORDS if there is the **least likelihood** of misunderstanding and use “bold” for accented syllables.

Be sure the introduction is **easily readable**. Make sure places for pauses are properly punctuated. Work your speech’s TITLE into the conclusion; keep the title short and compelling.

Always email your presenter your introduction BEFORE your speech—a week (or more!)—is ideal. ENCOURAGE your presenter to review your information—but call him/her a day or two before the event to go over it, because nobody ever does....

Tell your introducer to wait at the lectern until you get there and that you’ll shake his/her hand. Practice a time or two if possible.

The first thing you are going to do is to thank the introducer, your host, and other dignitaries. Practice all names and MAKE SURE you know how to pronounce them.

ALWAYS bring a paper copy of your introduction to the event: no exceptions! (What if the introducer “didn’t get” your email? What if the introducer is late or doesn’t show up? What if that person’s printer breaks?) Be prepared.