



# CATENIANS

## Catenian Public Speaking Competition

### Some helpful hints by Mrs Marie Dixon for competitors

Public Speaking is for an audience.

The audience really do want to hear you and enjoy your speech.

As you walk on to the platform, first impressions are very important.

Dress formally and walk tall.

Concentrate on your delivery and the projection of your voice.

Decide whether you are going to use the lectern or be freestanding and make it clear to the MC beforehand.

#### ● Clarity

- Do be aware that for the entire audience to hear and understand you, you must speak very clearly and precisely. You must speak much more slowly than you think is necessary, otherwise only the first three rows will hear you. The rest of the audience will think you are talking through a cushion.
- Pronounce the endings of words more emphatically and above all - PAUSE - often, to help the audience to take in what you are saying, before you move on to your next important point.

#### ● Delivery and Fluency

- Fluency is the flow of the words built out of your understanding of what you have prepared to say.
- Pace is of the utmost importance. Watch for punctuation. Find your commas and full stops and wait for a count of two, to allow your voice and message to travel over the audience. Your rate of speech must be comfortable for the audience.
- Keep making eye contact with the audience. Practise your delivery so that you can look up often with confidence. This makes you sound more fluent, genuine and natural.
- Think about recording your voice and listening to it yourself. Talk to a mirror and count how many times you look up.
- Practise more than you think is necessary and you will be fine.

#### ● Posture and Breathing

- Be very well prepared and then breathe calmly and believe in your ability. Keep yourself tall and straight. If your mouth goes dry, bite the end of your tongue to release saliva, or think of biting into a lemon!

## ● On the Day

- Greet your audience and have a clear introduction.
- Use a card system and have it highlighted often to guide you through your thoughts and delivery.
- Handle one card at a time and number them. If you use a quotation, memorise it, so that you can look at the audience as you say it.
- Try to add some humour.
- Any gesture should be minimal. Let it add to your delivery, not replace it.
- Have a beginning, middle and an end.
- Watch your timing.

## ● Review

- Practise regularly.
- Pronounce all the sounds in your words, remembering the ends of words in particular.
- Be sure that you will be heard. Project your voice with calm energy.
- Watch your breathing and posture.
- Keep calm and relaxed.
- Use cards and the punctuation and highlighting to help you pause.

- **Above all enjoy the experience.**