

The Power of Powerful Speaking

Learning how to speak powerfully about our issues is one the most important tools in our advocacy model. The RESULTS approach to powerful speaking are learning key Talking Points; condensed points made in a 1-2 minute talk about a particular RESULTS issue.

We've created a simple acronym, **EPIC**, to help you remember the basics of creating your talk. The letters in EPIC stand for **E**ngage, stating the **P**roblem, **I**nforn about the solution and give the **C**all to action.

E for Engage Your Audience

Here, you want to get your listener's attention with a dramatic fact or short statement. Keep this opening statement to one sentence if possible. For instance, you could say:

"As a TB Nurse, I see the impact of tuberculosis on individuals and their families."

P for State the Problem

Here you present causes of the problem you introduced in the first section. How widespread or serious is the problem?

"Knowing this disease kills 1.7 million people annually means that the impact is almost beyond comprehension. TB knows no borders. It is highly communicable so that TB Anywhere is TB Everywhere."

I for Informing about Solutions

Here you inform the listener about a solution to the problem you just presented. Develop your solution by examples of how and where it has worked, how it is proven and cost-effective and how it has benefited the poorest. You could site a recent study or report or tell a first-person account of how the solution has impacted you or others you know.

"The cure for TB is known and available. It is a treatment of antibiotics that must be closely monitored to ensure it is properly taken. In the developing world it costs as little as \$20/person to cure them of TB. The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria is an amazing vehicle through which programs that target TB can get properly funded and results monitored. The fund needs replenishment for continued results to be achieved."

C for the Call to Action

Now that you've engaged your listener, presented the problem and informed them of a solution, what do you want them to do? Make the action something specific so that you will be able to follow up with them and find out whether or not they have taken it. Present the action in the form of a yes or no question.

"Will you write to Finance Minister Jim Flaherty reinforcing the great leadership Canada has exerted in the past and explaining the need for fund replenishment?"

You want to state the call to action in one sentence.

Delivering Your Talking Points

Any good musician or actor knows you would never go on stage without rehearsing first, and it's no different with public speaking. Taking the time to educate ourselves about the issues, writing out talking points and then practicing our speaking skills is the most powerful tool in our Advocacy Model. Being an active member of RESULTS requires that we get out of our comfort zones and commit ourselves to practicing speaking the issues in front of others.

It's important to speak to the other person instead of reading the information word for word. You can, however, refer to notes at first. And you'll want to strive to keep the talks short — no more than two minutes. As you speak the information, you'll discover where you need more practice or where you may want to change a part of it. These talks will develop and change as you learn new information over time, so be flexible and always keep on the lookout for interesting facts to update your talks.

Tips for Delivering your EPIC Talking Points:

1. Practice your talking points several times before practicing in front of another person.
2. Memorize as much of the details as possible.
3. Choose a member in your group that you feel safe practicing with.
4. Identify your audience — for example a member of parliament or a potential new RESULTS volunteer.
5. Deliver your talk without stopping, even if you have a few stumbles along the way. The more you practice the better you will get.
6. Once finished, critique yourself. Pick two things that you liked about the talk and one thing you would like to improve upon.
7. Listen with an open mind and ear for learning how to make your talk better when your partner gives you feedback on your delivery.

Tips for Listening to an EPIC Talking Points:

1. Ask your partner who they are targeting this talk to.
2. Listen intently to the talk trying to pick out different sections of the EPIC format.
3. Did they engage you up front?
4. Did they describe the problem and its solutions?
5. Were you inspired by a clear call to action?
6. Ask your partner to critique their talk if they forget.
7. Tell your partner two things that you really liked about the talk and one thing that you think they could improve upon.