

Table Topics Suggestions: Persuasive speaking

Kim Chamberlain

Professional Speaker, Communications Trainer
Successful Speaking

P O Box 51209 Wellington, New Zealand

Email kim@successfulspeaking.co.nz

Web www.successfulspeaking.co.nz

Table Topics Suggestions: Persuasive speaking

Persuasive speakers talk about what people want, and show them how they can get it.

They talk from the WIIFM angle – What's In It For Me – i.e. focus on the other person's needs, not your own. See it from their point of view and what's in it for them.

Explain the benefits to them for doing whatever it is you would like them to do. Emotion rather than logic moves people on. Can you bring in something that will touch on their emotions, eg a story or example of someone or something they can identify with?

1. 'Lifejacket'

The Table Topics Master explains to the club that the purpose of Table Topics is to look at the techniques for 'Persuasive Speaking'.

All Table Topics participants are identified at the beginning, and are told that they will speak on the same topic:

They are all on a boat at sea, several miles/kilometers from shore. The boat is sinking, and there is only one life jacket.

Each Table Topics participant gives a short speech on why they should have the life jacket.

After all the speeches, the other club members vote on who gets the jacket.

The Table Topics Master then leads a brief discussion as to why the winner's speech was the most persuasive.

2. Aim to persuade an audience that:

- Your favourite form of exercise, is the best form of exercise for most people
- Your favourite kind of car, is the kind of car they should buy next
- They should take a short break from their computer every 20 minutes
- They should get up 10 minutes earlier in the morning and read a self-development book
- You have to spend time on the basics if you want to become good at anything
- The more you give, the more you get

3. Can you...

- Persuade your teenage daughter to tidy her room?
- Persuade a shop to give you a refund for an expensive item of clothing that you discovered is faulty?
- Tell us why we should all exercise for 30 minutes a day?
- Tell us why we should give up eating red meat?
- Let us know the best way to lose weight?
- Tell us the best way to wake up refreshed?
- Tell us why we should all own a power drill?
- Persuade a friend to buy your prized CD/record collection?
- Persuade a friend to buy your most expensive ornament or picture?