

Section  
**11** **Communications**

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Methods of Communication

Newsletters

Yearbooks

Introducing a Speaker

Using a Microphone

Tips for Great Presentations

Turning a Phrase

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*“Leaders must communicate  
the vision in a way  
that attracts and excites  
members of the organization.”*

— David E. Berlew, President, Rath and Strong—

## METHODS OF COMMUNICATION

Communications, as it relates to leadership, was discussed in Section 2. It is important, as president, for you to understand, use, and promote all types of communication in your club. The “electronic age” has revolutionized communications, including within Altrusa. The leadership of any organization has no excuse for not keeping up with the necessary communication through electronics. The latest technology not only makes communication easier, but less expensive for clubs. Consider all these communications methods:

- Old fashioned mail system—snail mail
- The telephone
- FAX
- Email
- Newsletters
- Yearbooks
- Web pages
- Altrusa email community

Whatever your preferred method, the important thing is to **communicate, communicate, communicate!** It is often irritating for members in leadership positions to be forced to share information more than once; however necessary in our busy world where members may not read newsletters, but browse email on a regular basis.

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### Communication tips

- **Over communicate**—As a leader you can never communicate too much. Use all methods of communication. You never know which method will be read by one of your members.
- **Be prompt**—It is irritating for members to get necessary information after the fact.
- **Share information**—Several times a year, presidents receive packets of information from the International office. Much of the information is meant to be shared with specific committee chairs. **It is your responsibility to get that information to the appropriate member.**
- **Newsletter and yearbook editors**—Select members for these roles that are not only computer literate, but also responsible. Much of the information that is pertinent to the club operation is passed on through these tools.
- **Thank you**—Say thank you in as many different ways as possible. Members need to be recognized for their hard work.
- **Be brief, be friendly, and be concise**—Saying too much is as bad as not saying enough. Try to be concise, but get the point across. Altrusans are busy and don't have time to read long dissertations.

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**Altrusa web page**

Access the Altrusa International, Inc., web page at [www.altrusa.com](http://www.altrusa.com). The web page is an important tool for both the president and members. Membership forms, club lists, and leadership information are available to download. You may also keep abreast of information concerning Club 21, ASTRA, and the Altrusa Foundation, as well as the upcoming International Convention, history, and general background information.

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## NEWSLETTERS

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The club newsletter is the primary source of sharing information with club members. It is not only the responsibility of the editor, but the president is responsible for seeing that the necessary information gets to the editor for publication. **Share the material below with your newsletter editor.**

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### Purpose

- Inform
- Inspire
- Entertain
- Acknowledge
- Advertise
- Provide historical record

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### Content

- President's message
- Minutes of business meetings
- Treasurer's report(s)
- Calendars
- Member news
- Committee reports
- Board reports
- Results of elections
- Committee lists
- District and International news
- Other
- *Include the names of members wherever and whenever possible!*

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### Usual Elements

- Nameplate: The newsletter's title, usually on page one
- Logo: Graphic symbol for an organization
- Subtitle: Short phrase to describe the purpose or audience for the newsletter
- Folio: Publication information such as volume, issue number, current date
- Headlines: Titles that draw attention to articles, usually set in a large, sans serif font
- Subheads: Secondary headings that provide transition from headline to body copy
- Byline: Author of the article
- Body copy: Main part of the newsletter. Columns (2 or 3) are nice because they increase the readability of the text. Also use a font that is easy to read—a serif typeface in 10 – 12 point is standard. An entire newsletter set in Paisley (or similar fancy font) would be hard to read.
- Graphic images: Use with discretion. Graphic images can enhance a newsletter and are great tools for copy fitting. Photos may require screening.

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## Enhancements

- Table of contents: A nice feature for a multi-page newsletter
- Sidebar: Related article set off from the main body copy using a box or rule
- Masthead: Contains the organization's address, editor, publisher, etc.
- Headers and footers: Repeating elements at the top and/or bottom of the page that enhance the document's consistency.
- Pull quotes: A quotation drawn from the article; useful for copy fitting and breaking up long blocks of text
- Kicker: A "grabber" at the beginning of an article. It is usually placed above the headline of the article.
- End signs: Indicate the end of an article
- Jump lines: Indicate the continuation of an article
- Rules (lines): Horizontal or vertical lines that help guide the reader's eye.
- Paragraph enhancements: Drop caps, bold and/or italicized text, bullets, dingbats, tabs and indents that call attention to key paragraphs.
- White space: Space without text or illustration. Plan your white space. Don't try to put too much print on the page; it will overwhelm the reader

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## Putting it all together

- Planning: Refer to the club calendar and plan the special articles that are needed for each newsletter. Planning for several months to a year in advance is wise.
- Make specific requests: Club members are busy people and, while they may have good intentions to write articles, they are more likely to follow through if they are asked for specific articles.
- Set deadlines: Publish the deadline for the next newsletter in the current newsletter. Let your regular and featured contributors know your deadlines well in advance. Send reminders.
- Use email to collect articles. You won't have to retype the text.
- Get help: Put together a team of people to help you with proofreading, reproduction, and distribution.

## YEARBOOKS

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The club yearbook is the member's guide to the new year and another important communication tool. **Share this section with your yearbook editor.**

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### Purpose

- Member's guide to the club year
- Quick reference file
- Historical record
- Orientation tool

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### Content

- Membership roster
- Committee lists
- Officers and board of directors
- Meeting dates, times, places
- Club mission statement and strategic plan
- Club goals
- Club bylaws, policies, traditions
- List club projects with brief explanations
- Historical information such as date of club's organization and charter, charter members, past presidents and dates served
- List of classifications represented in club
- Space for new member information
- District information including District officers and addresses, committee chairs and addresses, upcoming workshop and conference information
- International information including theme, International projects, International officers, committee chairs, upcoming conventions, address, phone, and web address of International office
- Club budget(s)

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### Extras

- Historic highlights and Altrusa milestones
- Altrusa, ASTRA, and Foundation logos
- Altrusa Collect and Altrusa Grace
- Altrusa Motto and Altrusa Colors
- Altrusa Benediction
- National anthem and/or other songs used at club meetings
- Vision and mission statements of District and International
- Obligations of membership
- Principles of Altrusa
- Procedures to sponsor a member
- Dues schedule
- Calendar(s)
- Individual goals page
- Blank pages for notes

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## Format

- Cover includes official name of the club
- Table of contents or index
- Convenient size to handle and carry
- Logical arrangement of materials
- Different colored paper for different sections or tabs between sections
- Accurate and up-to-date
- Readable, clear type with prominent headings

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## Putting it all together

- Planning: Always keep in mind that the yearbook is a tool to make it easier to be an Altrusan. Ask yourself as editor how you can organize the material so the members can make the most of it.
- Leave white space: If the yearbook is to be used as a tool, members need space to write notes and additional information throughout the year. **White space is not wasted space!**
- Establish a budget: Costs can vary widely depending on the format chosen, but spending a little extra may make the tool more useable which may translate into happier members.
- Establish a schedule: Examine the time line for information becoming available and produce the yearbook as early as possible. (Mid-August is excellent.)
- Divide and conquer: Under the leadership of the yearbook editor, assign different members to different sections of the yearbook: general information, membership roster, calendar, District, and International information.
- Involve the members: Ask committees to contribute information about their goals and projects. Ask members to proofread their own roster information.
- Get help: Put together a team of people to help proofread, collate, bind, and distribute the yearbooks.
- Make extras: Print sufficient quantities for distribution to new members as they are initiated, for distribution to District, also send one to the International Office for archives purposes, and a copy to the International President and International President-Elect for reference information.

## INTRODUCING A SPEAKER

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As an Altrusa leader, you will find yourself in a position where basic information on public speaking will be important. Even as you facilitate a meeting, you will want to make your point clear and be heard. The next pages are designed to help you with the basics of public speaking. Every president finds her/himself in the position of introducing a speaker.

The **presentation** of an introduction serves the same purpose as a social introduction. It creates a bond of interest between the speaker and the audience and establishes a friendly atmosphere. It should give the audience information about the speaker that demonstrates her/his qualifications for discussing this particular topic. Follow these guidelines:

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### Do...

**Be correct**—Be sure to have the speaker's name, her/his title, and the subject of her/his presentation correct. Have this information on a card or small piece of paper. Practice the pronunciation of the name until you have it correct.

**Do your research**—Ask for the above information from the speaker; however, if that is not possible, get it from another source. Possible sources include *Who's Who*, the personnel office where the speaker works, or a mutual friend. Verify your facts with the speaker prior to the presentation.

**Be short!**—A good introduction is brief and to the point (no more than a minute or two). Don't give the speaker's presentation.

**Establish a common bond**—The audience will want to know what the speaker will talk about, why the subject is important to them, and what the speaker's connection, position, or authority is. Determine what will be of interest to your audience.

**Be sincere**—Be friendly and genuine in your introduction. A good introduction should come from the heart with grace and dignity.

**Emphasize the speaker's name**—Build to a climax! A good introduction ends with the speaker's name. Pause, look directly at your audience and pronounce the speaker's name. After the name has been spoken look at the speaker—not before! Remain standing until the speaker acknowledges the introduction; then, sit down or retire quickly and inconspicuously.

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**Don't...**

**Do not make a speech yourself**—the audience came to hear the speaker, not you!

**Do not talk about yourself.**

**Do not use trite or worn out expressions.** Avoid such phrases as, “We are gathered here tonight...” or “A person who needs no introduction...” Create a new approach.

**Do not predict what the speaker will say.**

**Do not embarrass the speaker with extravagant praise.**

**Do not relate the speaker's life history.**

## USING A MICROPHONE

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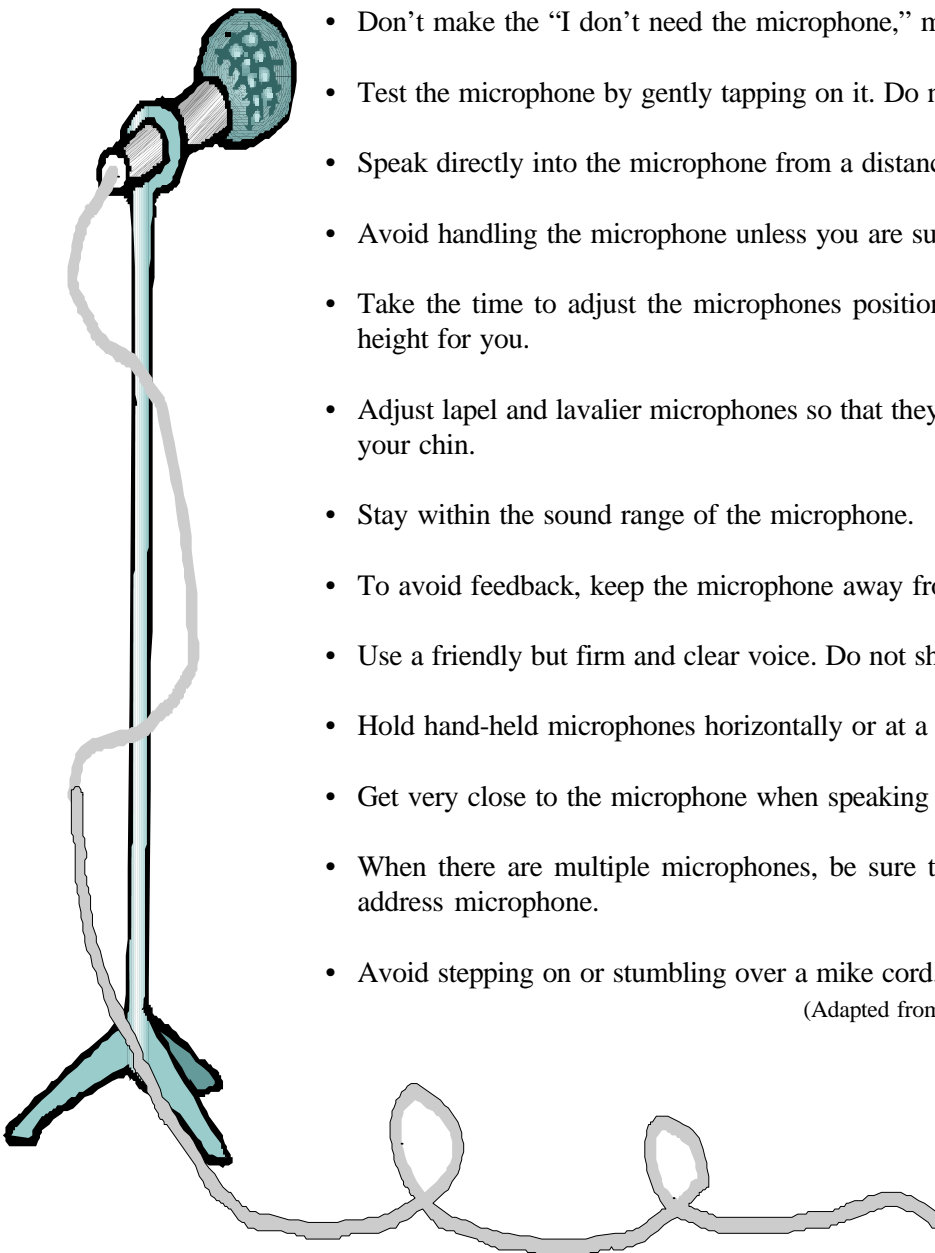
Speaking before an audience terrifies many individuals. Often added to the stress is the common ailment called “mike fright.” Few pieces of equipment in common daily use are as misunderstood and abused as the microphone. It is a device that only wants to be your friend and help you in your presentation. Follow these simple rules for using a microphone and your worries will be forgotten.

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### A menu of microphone manners

- Arrive at the site early enough to become familiar with the public address system.
- Observe those who use the microphone before you and benefit from their experience.
- Don't make the “I don't need the microphone,” mistake.
- Test the microphone by gently tapping on it. Do not blow on it.
- Speak directly into the microphone from a distance of about four to six inches.
- Avoid handling the microphone unless you are sure it is designed to be hand-held.
- Take the time to adjust the microphones position so that it will be at the proper height for you.
- Adjust lapel and lavalier microphones so that they are centered a few inches below your chin.
- Stay within the sound range of the microphone.
- To avoid feedback, keep the microphone away from the front of loudspeakers
- Use a friendly but firm and clear voice. Do not shout.
- Hold hand-held microphones horizontally or at a 45 degree angle, not vertically.
- Get very close to the microphone when speaking in a noisy environment.
- When there are multiple microphones, be sure to know which one is the public address microphone.
- Avoid stepping on or stumbling over a mike cord.

(Adapted from “Make Mike User Friendly,” page 15 )



## TIPS FOR GREAT PRESENTATIONS

- ⌞ **Be prepared.** Know your purpose. Know your audience. Know your presentation arrangements: time allotment, expected audience size, room arrangement.
- ⌞ **Timing is everything!** A good strategy for a regular presentation is to be ready to utilize 75% of the allotted time. Ending early will bring no complaints, but ending late will cause uneasiness and you could be stopped.
- ⌞ **Evaluate what the audience needs to know.** When preparing your presentation, consider the *must* know, *should* know, and *could* know. Limit material based on time and audience interest.
- ⌞ **Stand, don't sit.** When you really want to make a point, you do it best standing. You appear more forceful when you stand. Use a lectern or table. Face the group. Don't shift your weight from one leg to the other or pace back and forth.
- ⌞ **Emotional buttons** will create impact and bring more action than pure data. Include stories, analogies, and metaphors to reinforce key points.
- ⌞ **Passion is important.** It's amazing how catchy enthusiasm is. If your voice is expressive and your gestures animated, you will be more convincing. Every verb is an excellent source for a supportive gesture.
- ⌞ **Find a place to practice out loud.** Say the presentation differently each time you repeat it. "Spontaneity is an infinite number of rehearsed possibilities," according to Peter Drucker, management consultant and professor.
- ⌞ **Embrace technology.** If a microphone is available, use it. If you are using other equipment (overhead projector, slides, or a computer), test it. Fumbling with visual aids will distract the audience from your message.
- ⌞ **Use cue cards.** Under the pressure of a large group, it can be tough to remember the sequence of the major points of the presentation. Use 5" x 8" cards and a couple of words to cue yourself.
- ⌞ **Be confident!** Control physical stage-fright symptoms by breathing from the diaphragm. Use positive visualization and self talk. Have a hot liquid available. Preparation and practice are crucial, too.
- ⌞ **Respect all questions.** The question-and-answer part of the presentation may be the most important part. Think ahead to all possible questions that might be asked—particularly ones that might throw you. Always repeat a question; someone may not have heard it. Avoid complimenting some questions and not others.
- ⌞ **Focus on the audience.** To be a successful presenter, make the audience your primary focus in both preparation and delivery.

(Adapted from *The Toastmaster Magazine*, 1999, page 23)

## **TURNING A PHRASE**

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Whether it be the written word or one-on-one communication there are certain words and phrases that support and encourage members. There are also words that turn members off. Study these two lists:

### **Igniter phrases**

I agree!  
I appreciate what you have done.  
That's good!  
See, we can do it!  
Good job!  
Great!  
I made a mistake, I'm sorry!  
Let's get right on it.  
Let's go!  
Let's start a new trend.  
Good for you!  
That would be interesting to try.  
Things are beginning to pop.  
I know it will work.  
I couldn't do that well myself!  
I never thought of that.  
That's a great idea!  
Keep going!  
I'm glad you brought that up.  
Very good!  
That's an interesting idea!  
Do that again.  
Good work!  
We can always depend on you.  
Your're on the right track.  
Fantastic!  
That's fine.  
Keep up the good work!  
That's a winner.  
We can do a lot with that idea.  
I have faith in you.  
You can do it!  
I looked at this last night and I'm pleased with what you have done.  
Great meeting.  
Super program.  
You really made a difference.  
I like that!

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**Killer phrases****...to destroy ideas and chloroform creative thinking.**

A swell idea, but...  
Let's not step on their toes.  
Good idea, but our club is different.  
Somebody would have suggested it before if it were any good.  
It won't work...  
Too modern...  
We haven't the time.  
Too old-fashioned...  
It's not in the budget.  
Let's discuss it at some other time.  
It's too expensive.  
You don't understand our problem.  
We've tried it before.  
Why start anything now?  
We're not ready for it yet.  
We're too big for that.  
We've never done it that way.  
The new members won't understand.  
All right in theory, but can you put it into practice?  
It has been the same for twenty years, so it must be good.  
Too academic...  
The experienced members won't use it.  
Too hard to administer.  
We have too many projects now.  
Too much paperwork.  
What you are really saying is...  
Too early.  
Has anyone else tried it?  
It's not good enough.  
Let me add to that...  
There are better ways than that...  
I just know it won't work.  
It's against our policy.  
Let's be practical.  
Who do you think you are?  
Let's form a committee.  
You haven't considered...  
Let's shelve it for the time being.  
It needs more study.  
It doesn't fit our program.  
Don't be ridiculous...  
Let's get back to reality.