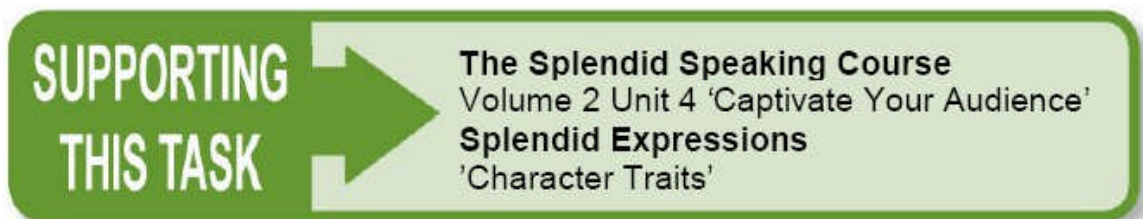

Splendid Speaking Podcasts

Topic: Captivate Your Audience with Memorable Introductions

(Interview 9: January Archives)

This show can be listened to at the following address:

<http://splendid-speaking.com/blog/?p=24>



Comprehension Questions

As you listen, try answering these questions.

- 1) What were Werner and his friends celebrating?
- 2) Why did they have to drink the beer they had bought quickly?
- 3) Which subject did the man they met teach them on that first day?
- 4) Why did the teacher suggest that Werner change college?
- 5) Did Werner or the teacher discover an alternative college?

Transcript

Introduction

Do you need to practise giving short presentations either for an English examination or at work or University? Are you confident that you could grab your audience's attention right from the start with a memorable introduction?

Hi and welcome to this week's podcast from Splendid Speaking. My name's Pete Travis and this week I talk with Werner from Germany who is currently living in Poland.

A reminder that you can get a transcript - the words - to current and future podcasts by joining the Splendid Speaking Mailing List a sign up form for which you'll find on our home page at www.splendid-speaking.com.

In this task Werner was asked to speak for about 2 minutes on the following subject taken from the IELTS handbook:

"Talk about a teacher in your life who has been a great influence."

Werner was asked to include information about:

Where he met the teacher
What subject the teacher taught
What was special about the teacher

As with any presentation it's vital that the speaker grabs the attention of the audience straightaway, whether it be an individual examiner in an English exam or a presentation to an audience at work or university.

Werner was sent this task an hour before the interview and asked to think about how he could start his talk with a memorable introduction. We used some suggestions from Unit 4 of Splendid Speaking, which looks at how to captivate your audience with an attention grabbing introduction. Ways of doing this include for example, starting with a question to the audience, using relevant statistics or describing a short, personal anecdote.

Before listening, decide how you would approach a talk like this. Who would you describe, and how could you make your introduction memorable? Then, as you listen to Werner's talk, decide which approach he used to introduce his presentation. Finally, make a note of Werner's use of English, which we'll look at in the feedback section. Let's listen to Werner.

OK, then I'm going to start to tell about my sports teacher Mr *****. Was like, was the first day in College in I think 1999, yes 1999 and after first lecture during the break a few guys and I went to a near shop to celebrate this special day with some beer. And we had about 20 minutes until the next lecture started so we had to do it quick and drink the beer on the way back from the shop. And as we already reached the college an old man asked us, he was like standing by the road, he asked us if we going to drink beer on college territory and we answered of course not we're not stupid and we'd empty those bottles right now and so that no teacher would see us. He just laughed and moved on. And then the following

lectures were quite boring but the last thing I ***** was sports. And guess who this teacher was? It was like the old guy who saw us with the beer. So we'd had quite a funny start with this little fella. And during the next few months he became our favourite teacher. Not only because we were playing soccer almost all the time and got good marks from him but also because he was like a nice guy. He liked to talk and listen to us and he was basically the one who suggested me to change college, because he knew about my further plans. He knew that my language abilities are far better than my abilities in math and I got very bad marks in math back then. And as this was is an economical college you know your marks in economy are quite essential. So I started thinking that he might be right and I started looking for another college ... err where you know my abilities are better placed than in this college, because I'm really better in languages than in maths or physics. And when I finally found one I told him about that and (she) said well yep that's the right place for you boy, go there. And thanks to this decision I got a very good diploma afterwards. And that's why I could say this teacher has probably influenced my life the most when I talk about teachers.

Feedback

First of all a big 'Thank you' to Werner for agreeing to be recorded. You can comment on his talk at the splendidspeaking.podomatic.com website. Time for some feedback.

This was a lovely talk from Werner who used a personal anecdote to begin his presentation. Your choice of how to start a talk will be determined by the subject matter and in this context an anecdote was a great choice to make.

Werner included all the information that was asked for, namely where he met the teacher, the subject the teacher taught and what was special about him so we can safely say he answered the question.

Werner has been studying English for some time and has an extremely good level of fluency. He rarely struggled for vocabulary, and made very few mistakes. We'll look at some of those he did make later. As a suggestion, when giving a similar talk in an examination or presentation, Werner could try to slow down a little and use more pauses during his talk in order for the listener to follow the talk as easily as possible. This will also allow Werner to highlight key words or points in his presentation. It would also help him avoid the odd occasion where he seemed to swallow some of his words, such as 'It' in the second sentence making the words inaudible:

"Was like, was the first day in College ..."

As we've already noted Werner's use of English is very accurate, but can you spot the mistakes in these extracts:

"OK then I'm going to start to tell about my sports teacher"

".... a few guys and I went to a near shop ..."

" ... he asked us if we going to drink beer on college territory ..."

" ... He was basically the one who suggested me to change college."

" ... And as this was is an economical college ..."

Did you spot the mistakes?

"I'm going to start to tell about my sports teacher"

Werner should say 'to tell you about my sports teacher'.

".... a few guys and I went to a near shop ..."

This should be 'I went to a shop nearby', or 'a nearby shop'.

" ... he asked us if we going to drink beer on college territory ..."

'Territory' is the wrong word here. A better word would be 'premises'.

"He was basically the one who suggested me to change college."

OK, not 'suggested me' but 'suggested that I change' or 'suggested changing'.

"And as this was is an economical college ..."

The wrong form of the word was used here. It should be 'economics'.

OK, That's the end of this podcast. Come back soon for another splendid speaking episode. If you're preparing for an advanced examination, or you're are a native speaker working in an English speaking environment and need to practice a particular skill find out more about the exciting new product from Flo-Joe called 'Splendid Speaking'. Find out more about this exciting new product at www.splendid-speaking.com.

Answers to Comprehension Questions

1) What were Werner and his friends celebrating?

Ans: Their first day at college.

2) Why did they have to drink the beer they had bought quickly?

Ans: Because they had about 20 minutes before their next lesson.

3) Which subject did the man they met teach them on that first day?

Ans: Sports.

4) Why did the teacher suggest that Werner change college?

Ans: Because he new Werner's plans for the future and that Werner would have more opportunity to develop his language abilities at another college.

5) Did Werner or the teacher discover an alternative college?

Ans: Werner.

The Splendid Speaking Self Study Course

The skills involved in delivering memorable presentations are practised in Volume 2 of the 'Splendid Speaking Self-Study Course'.

Volume 1: Introductions and Small Talk

In this volume you'll learn how to:

- Make an impact with a 15-second introduction (Unit 1) - a useful skill in a job interview or networking situations.
- Make small talk using the S.O.F.A. strategy (Unit 2)- a surefire way to make social situations much easier.
- Listen effectively and show interest in what other have to say (Unit 2), so you can build an immediate rapport with other people.
- Relate an S.T.A.R. story (Unit 3) that illustrates a personal achievement - ideal in an interview for a job or training course.

Plus 2 other key speaking strategies on body language and giving examples.

Volume 2: Powerful Presentations

In this volume you'll learn how to:

- Captivate your audience by choosing one of five memorable ways to start a presentation, and then signpost it clearly so your audience don't get lost (Unit 4).
- Introduce photographs and information graphics (graphs, charts, tables, etc) to illustrate your talk (Unit 5).
- Avoid worrying when you're asked to "say a few words". You'll soon be giving a T.O.P. spontaneous talk, and using pauses for effect (Unit 6).

In addition to these 12 key strategies you can test yourself with our interactive quizzes on useful collocational phrases to do with work, business, education and relationships, for example.

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