THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD PUBLIC SPEAKER

1. Content and Organization

The speaker:

a. captures the interest of the audience with an original, stimulating introduction
b. limits the speech to making a few main points that are thoroughly emphasized
c. organizes the speech so that the main ideas are easily identified, clearly related, and well supported
d. is sensitive to the interests and knowledge of the audience and is neither too simplistic nor goes over the audience's heads
e. is occasionally humorous

2. Pronunciation, Voice Quality, and Rate of Speech

The speaker:

a. pronounces words clearly and accurately
b. speaks loudly enough for everyone to hear and does not mumble
c. speaks neither too slowly (boring) nor too quickly (unreadable)
d. varies intonation and stress
e. uses stress (loudness) appropriately to emphasize key points and words
f. maintains a middle pitch range; speaking with too high a pitch is disturbing to many listeners
g. does not have frequent, long, embarrassing pauses and hesitations and uses few "ums" and "uhhs"

3. Body Language

The speaker:

a. maintains posture that is not too relaxed or too stiff
b. uses some gestures, although not so many as to be distracting
c. maintains eye contact with as many members of the audience as possible