

SAMPLE: MINISTRY MINUTE SPEAKER TIPS FOR SUCCESS

RESOURCE 2.42

Dear Ministry-Minute Speaker:

Here are some tips for you as you plan your Sunday of ____ (#) services:

1. Set the layout of your pages at 20-point type and number your pages on the top right, with wide left and right margins so that you have a column of script in the center of the page. If your eye has less far to go from left to right you will be more peaceful. In the margins you can draw a set of eyes or glasses to remind yourself to look up from your manuscript at key times. You may also want to highlight key phrases in each paragraph so that at a glance you can easily see content summary by paragraph. And lastly, I suggest that pages lay flat on the pulpit lectern (which should be high for ease of manuscript to congregation glances) and be staked on the right and moved, page by page to the left as you finish a page; and that your finger stays with each word you speak as you read so that if you get nervous and miss your place when you look up, your finger points to the next word. Sometimes bending the lower left corner of a page is helpful in removing pages as you speak.
2. The process works this way: The celebrant has people pass the peace. Avoid that and use the time to center yourself and remain calm. Then, as the announcements are said, walk slowly from your chair or end pew seat in front of the pulpit, up the stairs to the left of the left metal railing and position yourself in or near the celebrant's stall or at the end of a pew near the pulpit and sit. When the celebrant ends the announcements, he or she will end them with your introduction at which point you should be smiling and approaching the pulpit desk with your papers ordered with page one on top and place them on the brass pulpit desk. Adjust neither the mic nor the desk. Look out, smile, look down, breathe and then begin. Because we have scripted your presentation at 450 words, you need to speak slowly and clearly with long breaths between sentences without worry about going long.
3. Be natural. Be sure to eat something and drink something so that you do not faint. It can be frightening to speak to a congregation for the first time. Only make gestures and vocal inflections which come naturally, and if you want to break script for an authentic interjection of a word or a repeat for emphasis, fine. But do not interject new phrases or ideas, no matter how compelling, since they will lengthen the presentation and distract you from your manuscript. Look up at people and if you want a fixed point, choose the pew crossing or the back doors. Smile as much as possible and look up as much as possible. One helpful trick when reading in church is to stop for one second after each phrase. It seems like a long pause but it will pace the speech. We often speed up when we are nervous.
4. At the end, look back up at them, smile, then take your pages and slowly make your way back to the pulpit side of the steps and return to your seat, smiling. Keep your manuscript with you at all times all morning so that it does not disappear, and always email me the last and final version so that I can print it out from the church computers if you leave it behind, or it is misplaced at a coffee hour.