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# Lecture: 01 Introduction to Public Speaking

Good morning friends, and welcome to NPTEL online certification course on public speaking. I do hope, that learners enrolled for this course comprise students, research scholars, insurance agents, counsellors and professionals of various lucrative and committed jobs. Now, most of you might be thinking as to what this course on public speaking is. Many of you might have a query about the title itself. and as the word public speaking itself says, and it of course defines a lot about what public speaking is.

But at the same time most of you might be thinking that will this course be a course in speech making? Will this course be a course on presentation? Will this course be a course on group discussions? I think to a great extent you are right but then in order to drive my point home I would actually like you to be a part of an imagined situation? Imagine once upon a time while you were travelling by a bus or a train, suddenly your eyes are struck by the sight of a crowd listening to one person, and the crowd is silent.

The crowd is patient and there are huge rounds of applause. You are reminded of one of your college teachers, in whose class you often were glued to your own seats and then you were listening to him throughout. My dear friends, it was only later that you were told by one of your friends that in the previous week also there had come an environmentalist and who had given a very motivating lecture and that actually brought a change in your behaviour towards environment.

Dear friends, all these are actually the examples of public speaking but at the same time most of you also might be thinking rather, that why one person can bring such a lot of applause. No one, but you too could wish alone that if you too could speak and you could motivate, you could actually be fascinated by the crowd behaviour and there could have been all sorts of applauses. The incidents that I have referred to are not only the examples of public speaking but they are also the examples of how one person can control a lot of people only because of his or her speech activities. Now today's younger generation may not believe that in olden times people could wait longer in order to listen to a radio speech, either by a great leader, or by a great scholar. Of course things have changed and you are living in a world where you can not only see the people live, but you can listen to the people live, my dear friends. Now the question is, while the world has changed a lot has there been a change in the speech behaviour of the people?

Has there been a change that people are not listening to it? I think still people would go miles and miles and they would actually go back to the pages of history, and to the old records of those people who have given a very effective speech. You at times, might have heard how Winston Churchill, Adolph Hitler, Napoleon Bonaparte, John F Kennedy, Pundit Nehru and even Vivekananda had a spell bound influence on the crowd when they spoke.

How is that possible my dear friends? That was actually possible only because of their speech activities, their choice of words. Who can ever forget the beautiful lines that Churchill had once spoken and the lines were," I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat." Same is true of John F Kennedy, about whom it is said, that one sentence of him has become so immortal in the pages of literature, and in the pages of speeches. And the sentence was, "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country."

Many such words and phrases you can come across, provided you have the yearning, you have the zeal to speak in public, and that perhaps is the aim behind this course on public speaking. Now most of you might be thinking, is public speaking also relevant for you. My dear friends, in a changed scenario today, when you have already seen a Covid- like situation you also might have seen; what was the power of speech of several people who actually pulled you to listen to their class lectures, or to their speeches.

Now, since this is going to be the first lecture, I will not bombard you with my words but let me introduce you to the first lecture, and let me say what I am going to do here. Now, if we have to think of public speaking and if many people often ask you how can we define public speaking. The very first thing that goes to my mind is the definition given by Merriam Webster's dictionary which actually says.

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# What is Public Speaking? According to Merriam Webster Dictionary , Public Speaking is "the act or process of making speeches in public" or "the art of effective oral communication with an audience" "Speech is power: speech is to persuade , to convert, to compel" - Ralph Waldo Emerson To be successful, says business leader Midge Costanza, you must have "the ability to stand on your feet, either on a one-to-one basis or before a group, and make a presentation that is convincing and believable." (Lucas 34)

Public speaking is the act or process of making speeches in public or, it is the art of effective oral communication with an audience. The words are **Public speaking**, meaning thereby, to speak in public, to speak before public, to speak to public and to be spoken by public in response. You have already heard a beautiful line which says, "Speech is power, speech is to persuade, speech is to convert." I have already given you the example how people could wait for hours and hours. And even today people wait for hours and hours to hear to a beautiful speech by an eminent personality. My dear friends, it is not one-day affair it actually takes months and years to develop that sort of charisma, that sort of motivational speech but then in order to be successful as a business leader, Mitch Kostanjo says- one must have the ability to stand on one's feet. either on one to one basis, or to a group in order to make a presentation.

Now many of you who are college going pupils, they might have come across situations where suddenly their names are called, and they are all hands, their limbs, they are shaking they actually want to see where the back door is so that they can make an exit. Dear friends, but if this becomes the problem with many of you, would you not like to have a course in public speaking which can actually help you to stand on your own feet and to deliver fearlessly, and to deliver effectively the thoughts that you actually wanted to share with people.

Now many of you also might be eager to know, how did this public speaking come into practice or into its use. What was the origin? If we have a look at the advent of public speech or public speaking, we will find that it started in Greece and Rome as a discipline dating back to 2500 years ago.

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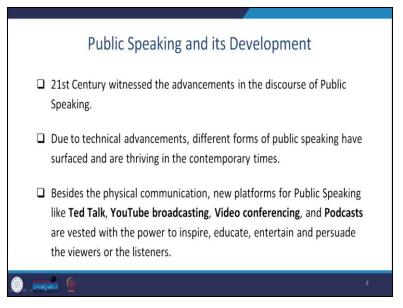


Who has not heard the name of Aristotle the Greek scholar who has written one very famous title entitled *Rhetoric* which is considered to be the first book on public speaking. Even you know, apart from Aristotle we have had many names like Confucius, like Quintillion, a Christian a preacher like Saint Augustine----- all these people have brought a sort of change in many of our lives because of their speech. Because of their speaking, because of the use of language, and then you might be thinking at times how one man can with his ideas not only catapult the entire crowd, motivate the entire crowd but at the same time bring certain changes in his line of thinking. In the present day world also, I think most of us should be proud that our prime minister is a great orator. You might have seen him speaking not only in public.

But even when he speaks on the radio, you can find the way he actually makes a magic of words, and he tries to create suspense, is it not a beautiful art, my dear friend? This is actually a beautiful art to keep everyone glued to their cheers and listen to and they are always in a way extracting each and every word which are actually going to provide meaning. Many of you have also heard the name of Hillary Clinton fine, the former president of America, Bill Clinton's wife.

And even Margaret Thatcher of England she was also a great orator all these people have actually brought changes in society. Who has not heard the name of Nelson Mandela who actually brought a change in the lives of people, I mean in the lives of coloured people through their revolutions, through his speech how he could persuade people. So, all sorts of changes that have been brought to this world, that have been possible only because of public speaking. Now many of you also might like to know, how its development took place. I mean not only in 20th century, because it is said that in 20th century these people Churchill, Kennedy and others brought a lot of change.

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But even in 21st century we have witnessed a lot of changes, a lot of advancement in the discourse of public speaking. Today, you know your entire life is guided by technology but do you know how this might have come into force, how people could have been persuaded to adopt technology? I think it is actually only two years ago when we're in the midst of a crisis and you all know this crisis was **Covid 19** and we suddenly thought that the world will come to a stop.

But the world is still agog and thanks are due to those people who through their speeches and through their motivational talks enable people to make use of technology, enable people to give them patience, enable people to take the vaccinations and to fight the danger that was before us. This could not have been possible unless and until these effective speakers, would have persuaded people to come and join. Earlier, several ambiguities were there, several doubts were there. But all these doubts were cleared and that was possible only because of these speeches of people.

Now you might have seen that besides the physical communication nowadays, you can come across different platforms, where you can if you feel, you have the need, you have the urge, you want to have the charisma, then you can go and can watch, you can learn from Ted Talk,

YouTube, video conferences, Podcasts----- all these actually are the extensions of public speaking, and that actually have brought a lot of change in the lives of people.

If the world today is beautiful, this is only because of one activity of mankind, the activity to speak. I remember what Descartes said, "Thanks to language, man became man". The ability to speak actually has a lot to do, and that can really bring a lot of changes in your lives. Now you might be thinking, that since the speech is an innate activity, and some people also may say talk is cheap, but now they realize that talk is not cheap, talk is very costly, fine?

There are many people who are making out a livelihood out of their talks, how is that possible? Fine? They always are busy. In many organizations you will find because many of the listeners might be from organizations. In many organizations, you will find there are several occasions where you have to give a talk, where your boss has to give a talk, and the boss is running short of time. So, who should write the talk of the boss? They need to be somebody who can write it well, they need to be somebody who can help a person come out of the crisis, and that is possible only when that person is adept at writing.

He knows the pulse of the people, he knows the emotions of the people, he knows the critical nature of a particular situation, and then his words can help the other person come out of this critical situation. Meaning thereby, all sorts of public speaking are actually a form of communication. Now the moment we say communication, so many things come to your mind. Remember most of you people who are today busy with their WhatsApp, Twitter, Google whatsoever, but ask them to come and deliver a talk.

Ask them to come and speak on a particular topic, and you can find the sort of expression that are there on the faces. What happened? The same person who continues to speak continuously over WhatsApp, and chats, and speaks but when there is a formality of the occasion the same person feels nervous. The same person is frightened, why? Because he does not know what it is to communicate. Though as human beings, all of us can communicate we have the power to communicate.

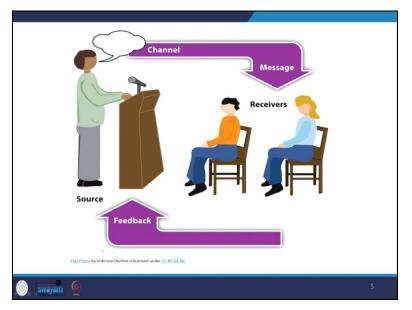
But to use that part effectively, you require something more and once you understand all the nitty- gritty of communication perhaps you will not be having the fear. The fear that many people have often before a talk, you know it is a fact, that even seasoned speakers when they

have to speak before an unknown crowd, they also feel some bouts of nervousness, some bouts of anxiety, fine. We have a separate talk on this, when we proceed fourth in the course.

In today's lecture I am simply trying to familiarize you with public speaking. Now if, public speaking is a form of communication, naturally like all other forms of communication there must be some mechanism in it, and what is that mechanism which is involved in it? You will find that even when you want to speak something, how do you do it? You first think of an idea, you think of an experience, you think of an imagination, you think of some habit of yours, which you want to share with some of your friends.

Now once you have the idea, now you want to share it. Everyone has got the idea and I always say if you do not have the ideas, have the idea. So, how can we have the idea, we will talk to it later in some of the lectures, because ideas can be had, ideas can be borrowed, ideas can be gathered, but ideas have to be expressed. And in order to express the idea, what do we do and what we must do? We must think of a message the idea is to be formulated into the form of a message.

And in order to formulate that message you have to think of a medium which in the scientific way we can say channel.



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Now imagine yourself talking over WhatsApp or whatsoever, you first think of the person to whom you are going to talk to and depending upon the person naturally the nature of your words, and the channel that you are going to choose they vary. So, you have to decide a channel, and once you have the channel, then what you do? You actually want to create the message, put the message in the channel, and the channel actually transmits the message. So, after the ideation process is over. Now once you have sent the message, of course, here I may take a dig at the youngsters who the moment they send a message, they are so impatient, that if the message is not replied and none or at the same instant they actually get very helpless as to what happened? Is the Heaven going to fall down, or the earth going to crumble fine? My dear friends, it is actually the result of technology that has actually made us so impatient.

But remember when you send a message depending upon the person's age, background, knowledge, sex, his exposure to the outside world. Perhaps now you are waiting for the response, and once the response comes, whether good or bad, yes or no, positive or negative, favourable or unfavourable, then you think, whether your communication process is complete or it is still incomplete.

So, first you have to think of an idea, and to whom you are going to pass on this idea, and then you start creating the message, and once the message is created, you transmit it through a channel, and wait for the response. This waiting for the response is called **feedback**. In scientific terms, this feedback can be said as a sort of energy which is actually transmitted, and this energy is returned but of course in communication it is somehow different, my dear friends.

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So, as I have been saying, public speaking is a form of communication. Now in order to make this communication successful, what exactly is expected? All of you must know whatever be the type of communication, whatever be the type of public speaking, but then you will find that it is communication and communication alone that can play a chief role in public speaking. Now what sort of communication? The communication that is transmitted by one person to the other depending upon their nature, but in and between there has to be the presence of cordiality and cooperation.

Imagine, I am talking here, and if my listeners are not paying any attention to me, if they are not cordial to me, naturally my message will turn out to be a failure, is not it? So, some amount of cordiality and co-operation between the sender and the receiver is a mandatory thing, in a successful communication. Now, all sort of effective communication ensures that the message has not only been transmitted properly, because sometimes it so happens, you applied for a job, you wrote a letter, you sent a memo, you sent a report, and you are waiting for the response, and the response does not come.

Now what should this sender, or what should the speaker, or what should the source do? The source would find out, where lies the problem, was there something wrong? I mean, did I not provide the proper email- id, did I not send the proper address, or did I not use the proper language that was expected. There are so many things My dear friends. Of course, your WhatsApp communication has become easier because of the emoticons that you are putting. But remember you are living in a professional world, where these emoticons do not do, where words matter, sentences matter, formality of the sentence matters, length of the sentence matters.

So, all these actually play a vital role in communication. In order, that communication becomes effective, first thing that a speaker has to do is, the speaker should be convinced, unless and until I am convinced I cannot deliver this talk, my dear friend. So, first I have to be convinced with what I am doing. Meaning thereby, you have the message and you must be sure of the message, you must be confident of the message, your conviction matters a lot. So, if you are convinced, and you are sending the message, of course the result will be good.

Now, again another thing that comes is **Style**. If I am speaking to a younger friend of mine, what should the language be like? If I am speaking to my teacher, should the style not be changed? If I speaking to my boss, naturally there has to be a proper selection of words, not only words but also occasion, you know. I remember that once upon a time a man who was

not being promoted for so many years he always wanted to steal some amount of time of his boss to say, or to put his own problem.

And one day he found that the boss was in a meeting fine, and he thought it is the most pertinent hour when I can ask him in the midst of all these people. And he straight away went to the boss chamber, and asked him when am I going to be promoted? The boss stared, did not speak any word, and by the evening came another letter to the gentleman, the gentleman was fired. What sort of communication it was? Because the person did not understand the exigency of the situation.

As a sender he did not realize that the boss was having a formal meeting with some Entrepreneurs fine, with some customers or clients. So, it is not only the question of style, it is also the question of occasion which is very important. Now one thing that most of you might be thinking as to how public speaking because when we say public speaking suddenly in your mind there is a question, is public speaking different from everyday form of speaking, everyday communication?

Of course! it is different. In everyday communication, because you do not have any regulation, you can choose your words at your own privilege, according to your own wishes, but then at the same time when you are speaking in, when you are speaking for public, speaking for a formal occasion, the situation will be different. Of course, I consider public speaking also to be a part of conversation, but then this conversation is different. This conversation will have some amount of formality, my dear friends. What sort of formality?

You will have to think twice, before you go, and before you speak to the boss. What sort of language should I use, fine? Because this is going to be very formal. It is public speaking, is not an everyday routine, you are not asked every day to speak, unless and until you know, you are at a very lofty position. So, there are times when you are asked to speak, fine, it is not an everyday affair. And public speaking is special, you know, there is an occasion, a farewell party fine, an inauguration party fine, a conference going to begin, a group distinction, an interview a talk, a speech, an invited lecture.

So, naturally you will find, that all these things are completely different, and what makes them different? It is not only the question of formality or informality, there are other things also involved and what are these things? It is actually structured, fine. In an everyday communication, you can choose a sentence, sometimes you choose a sentence that is only a half sentence, sometimes it is only a word.

But when you are speaking for the public, or when you are speaking for formal occasion, you will find that it is not as spontaneous as an everyday communication. It has to be structured, and when you are going to structure it, there are so many things involved what are these? How many sentences should I speak? Is there a time limitation also? Of course, when you are going to speak to your boss, the boss is always a busy man, fine? So, naturally you seek an appointment first and then you visit him.

So, you have got a time limitation, not only you, but the other person also has got to try time limitation. So, since there is a time constraint, you actually choose your words very carefully, fine? That is what we will discuss when we talk about how communication has to have a sort of brevity, have a sort of conciseness. Language again. Language has to be very decent, not only decent, but language has to be formal you know.

In everyday form of communication, you, at times, crack jokes, use slangs, fine and you talk in a very informal manner but when you are going to talk in a formal manner and that also for an occasion naturally, you have to be wary of your words. And why words alone? Imagine even if your sentence is correct grammatically and you are going to speak in a different tone which at times may be satirical, which at times may be derogatory, will it be a proper communication my dear friends, no.

So, what is needed? What is needed is, having a proper body language fine and not only body language but the way you throw your words. You cannot speak in the same tone that you apply in all sorts of formal situations.

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You actually need to have some mannerism also, you are going to put your own ideas, and you know you can come across several such expressions like, "Sir if you permit, may I suggest something sir, though it does not become me, but then I think I have an idea, fine. Now look at the tone I look at the way the sentences are crisp, short and it is having a different style. Actually, in public speaking unless and until it is for a very technical reason, one has to avoid making use of jargons.

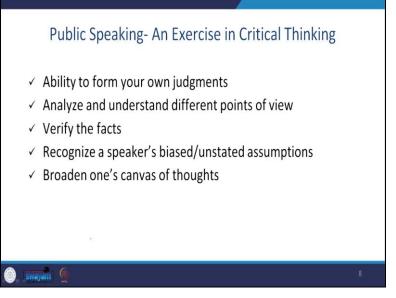
Imagine an environmentalist talking, and talking to a mixed crowd, he will be very careful that he does not use those words which are straight from the environmental sciences, because many people in the group will not understand it. So, he will go for such words which are very familiar, he will not go for some colloquial expressions otherwise he cannot be an effective speaker. Moreover, there are some **fillers** now you might be thinking what are these fillers? We can have a proper discussion on fillers.

But you will find that at times people have nasalized pauses, there are many ah, ums, oh-that creep in, when somebody speaks. So, you will have to be careful of all these realities my dear friends, when you are speaking in public. Now another thing that I want to share with you is, and that will actually satisfy you more than me, the advantages of public speaking. Why public speaking is beneficial?

You know, if you are trained in public speaking, you will find some changes in your personality as well. I mean you will have a sort of critical thinking. So, public speaking has got a sort of exercise in critical thinking. You know, you listen to so many lectures you listen

to so many presentations, you talk to so many people what happens you have all the facilities, and the facilities of even if somebody is narrating an incident you know. Even when somebody is sharing some fact, you can listen to other person you can verify the fact.

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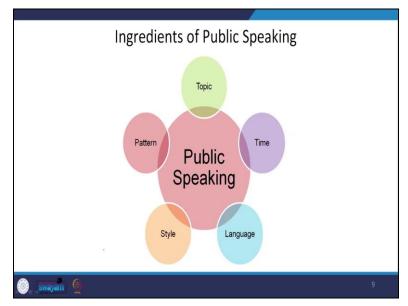


You can also change your own judgments, you can also recognize a speaker's confidence, conviction, and his communicative ability. Sometimes you know because we say that public speaking may be at times very subjective and the person speaking may be very much biased, sometimes a person wants to say something but he is not able to. So, there are some unstated realities also and when you listen to them, perhaps you will be in a better position to understand his points of view.

And the most important thing, that public speaking as well as your critical thinking can do is, your horizon can be broadened, my dear friends. You will have a broadened canvas, that is why it is said, listening has a greater role in public speaking. Sometimes you are the speaker, sometimes you are the listener. So, you have a double role to play, and both of them enrich each other. So, please take it from me, that if you really want to be a good public speaker, if you are going to listen to so many people perhaps your thought patterns will change.

Now, again one thing that majority of you might be curious to know as to what actually are the components of public speaking. We have been blabbering a lot about public speaking, but then many of you might also would like to know that if you want to be a public speaker, what are the things that you should have? And what are the guiding philosophies or principles ones would have.

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The very first thing, my dear friends is **topic**. Imagine the other day you listen to somebody and you become so excited that you also want to give a talk to your friends and then you call some of your friends and then you say I am going to deliver a talk. Now on what you are going to deliver a talk? So, you decide the topic, and this topic may vary, from occasion to occasion, from people to people, from time to time.

So, once you have the topic, then you have to decide how much time you are going to speak? If you are going to speak for 20 minutes, naturally the topic will be very informal, but if it is formal, those 20 minutes appear to be one hour, my dear friends, fine? So, one has always to be careful that when one is going to speak, before going to speak, one actually says that he knows his topic well, he also knows the time limit that he has got and he also takes care of language.

What sort of language is he going to speak in? Among a group of friends, the language may be a bit sloppy, crispy, there may be jokes. But when you are going to give a small talk to a group, and that also in a class, it has actually to be formal, meaning thereby style. And then comes the pattern. There can be different patterns--- you have to decide which pattern you are going to follow, fine. We shall also have a lecture on pattern----- how you can weave your talk in a cause-effect relationship pattern. In a geographical pattern, in a spatial pattern, in a locative pattern----- there are many patterns to be followed. It is up to you which pattern you are going to do. Another thing that you must think is, who are going to be the beneficiaries? Whenever we say public speaking, naturally the beneficiaries are many. There are many ways to reach people nowadays even then before.

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But there is no substitute, at times you always think as many of these youngster friends, who were doing an online class, and the teacher was blabbering throughout. So, both the teacher and the student are now in a condition, they think oh! had there been a change, oh God! when can we get free from this pandemic. So, that we can have a face- to- face communication where not only can we speak but where we can also get the feedback instantly my dear friends. So, face- to- face communication has got no alternative, no substitute.

In this course we are also going to talk about the several domains. Here, I will simply touch upon the different domains of public speaking.

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Domains of Public Speaking - I	
Entrepreneurial Communication:	
> Interviews	
> Leadership	
> Meetings	
> Group Discussions	
> Negotiations	
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In the very first category we will be talking about **entrepreneurial communication**. Now what is this entrepreneurial communication? Nowadays you find actually in the world of employment, when people are actually hankering after the jobs, many sound suggestions and sane suggestions come. hy do not you become an entrepreneur so that jobs you will have, you will provide jobs to others.

But then, when we talk about communication in a broader way, we will find that in entrepreneurial part of the communication things or public speaking practices which are followed are interviews. Most of you might be thinking of appearing at the interviews, that is also form of communication and that is also form of public speaking, where you are going to inform people what you have done. They are actually going to explore your depth, explore your knowledge, and from that the way you speak the leadership traits can be visible.

If in a corporate world, every day or every alternate week, you are going to participate in a meeting either you are going to conduct the meeting, or you are going to participate in a meeting. So, your role becomes very important both as a participant, or also as a leader who is going to conduct a meeting, and you will have to be very wary of how you can manage the entire thing. Then, there are group discussions, many of you might be familiar with it, of course, we will devote a lecture to it.

And then **negotiations---** the world today banks on negotiations and when negotiation fails what happens? You are all wary of the situation in Ukraine, I mean talks are going on but at the same time there is a fusillade, there are bullets being exchanged, and ultimately things

will cool off when they will come to a negotiating table. And this negotiation is also a form of public speaking my dear friend, and you will also learn how you can have a proper way of negotiation, so that there can be a win-win situation.

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Another domain of public speaking can be scholarly, or classroom where the teacher, i.e myself and my students fine, while I am delivering a talk and here also I am delivering a talk and you are listening silently, patiently, visibly, invisibly. So, this is also a part of public speaking. Then at times, there can be elocutions, recitations and at times there can be debates, and of course conferences, and symposiums. They are also very important part of public speaking we shall devote our time equally to all these portions.

So that by at the time you come to the end of the course, you find yourself a sort of change within, and you will find that how you can also, not only you, why only you there are others also who feel that they are very shaky about public speaking, will also derive a new strength a new momentum. There are many impediments which you might be feeling at times in public speaking. The very first is nervousness, as I have mentioned that many people when they are asked to speak have all their limbs shaking.

Sometimes they are not able to speak properly, the delivery is not proper. The delivery is quite inept, they are not able to cohere, or they are not able to connect, it is actually the world of connect, my dear friend. So, you will have to cohere your talk from one sentence to another, one paragraph to another, one thread of thought to another and then listening. At times it appears that people are not listening.

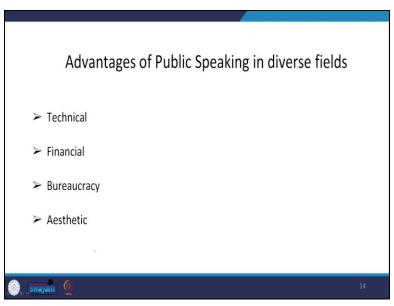
So, as a public speaker, you have to derive the way, you have to derive the tactics, as to how you can pull them in so that they can listen to you how you can overcome this negligent listening.

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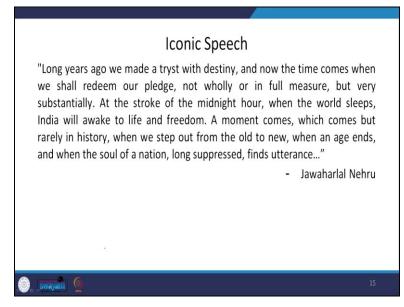
And finally, what is of utmost importance is at times you will find that when a person speaks in public, sometimes you find there is not a proper context. The content is something else, whereas the topic is something. Is content totally divorced from occasion. So, all these things we shall be discussing as we proceed forth in the course.

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And there are different advantages of public speaking as you might have realized and you are realizing it every day, whether it is in the field of technical, whether it is in the field of finance whether it is in the field of bureaucracy, or even in the field of aesthetic, painting, art, literature, whatsoever every now and then you find it is public speaking that is going to help you by all means. You are going to gain a lot my dear friends. But then all of us, before we end this talk must realize one of the famous speeches, one of the famous public speeches that was delivered by our first prime minister.

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And still many people would like to love to listen to those beautiful lines, and the lines are— "Long years ago we made a tryst with destiny, and now the time comes when we shall redeem our pledge, not wholly or in full measure, but very substantially. At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom. A moment comes, which comes but rarely in history, when we step out from the old to the new, when an age ends, and in the soul of a nation, long suppressed finds utterance...."

My dear friends, I also hope this course will also lend you utterance, and your utterances will be full of allocations, full of meaning, full of messages, full of health, full of harmony, full of happiness. And with this, we come to the end of lecture one. Thank you very much. I wish you all a good day ahead and look forward to meeting you in the next lecture that is lecture number two. Thank you very much.