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Speaking Tips # 36 070515

Dearth of Ideas?

This letter has been delayed not only due to travelling, but also because of my, hopefully momentary, inability to find a topic to write about. I therefore dived into my little notebook library where I occasionally make notes about events, stories or quotes picked up from everyday life, which I could use in future speeches. There I found a remark from years ago. It said "if you don't have anything to speak about, then speak about that!". And swish, there I had the topic.

I am not alone with this kind of dearth. After all we only recall a fraction of what the brain holds, so why would we not sometimes also lose that fraction? Or simply happen to recall the wrong fraction for a while? We may be asked, or would like to, deliver a speech in a certain situation but have no idea what we should speak about. The question is how we can prevent this dearth of ideas and, when it happens, what we can do about it.

Here are a few tips of which I have just applied the first one;

1. **Always keep a little notebook** and a pen available in order to collect "your" unique material from what you see and hear. Make notes of what you can use in future speeches or writings. Don't trust your memory. The book is an indispensable tool among all the things you carry about. Make notes of humorous or dramatic events, in particular those which happen to you or which you observe. Also note your thoughts about and reactions to them. Don't forget to consult the book. Communicate with it! You will then be able to recall things and use them in all kind of speeches from humorous to technical informative presentations.
2. **Scan Googles** or any other search engine. You can search on whole sentences listing what it is supposed to be about. Wedding? Funeral? Sermon? Else? Of course you won't find "your" speech and if you would, it wouldn't be yours. What you will get, though, are ideas about contents which you can then mould into your personal speech. You should do the search in your own language, if not English, but you will get most input from a search in the English language.
3. **Ask your friends for suggestions.** As they know that they don't need to stand in front of the audience, like you, they will be relaxed and full of suggestions "being" the audience. Such suggestions are really valuable. When they offer you their advice and suggestions, they see themselves as the audience listening to you. They give you what they would like to hear and with that knowledge you will develop plenty of ideas. Their input will also do for a large audience.

Well you see? It is not at all necessary to suffer from dearth of ideas. I, for one, just solved my problem!

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