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# The Speech Clinic®

**Speaking Tips # 45** 080625

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*What they don't learn at the university!*

## Wedding Speech Taboos

1. **Negative embarrassment:**

- a. The bride's or the groom's earlier relationships with members of the opposite sex. You have no idea how embarrassing this might be for either party.
- b. Their sexlives. This is taboo, and it is none of your business. Just because you may have discussed this with either or both of them, you can take it for granted that you know nothing about it.
- c. Their stag and hen parties if they were shamefully wild. However, the parties that were full of harmless and unlimited fun, you would do well to bring them up.

2. **Heavy sad stories**

For example, one of them has had a difficult childhood that has now been helped by this marriage. Marriage is not a last resort for sinking individuals!

3. **Speaking endlessly**

If you manage to make the guests double up with laughter for more than two minutes, you may continue for 5 minutes more. But otherwise, beware! There are few things worse than a speaker who goes on and on – and on – without coming to the point, i.e. generally blurred drivel. It is not the length of the speech that gives it quality. It is the way it is presented and the message that makes everybody understand that there was a reason for you speaking. My father's speeches always hit the audience. How? Well, he was so sensitive that he didn't squeeze out anything but a few tears; after which he sat down. That message had an impact in one minute!

4. **To drink wine during your speech**

Well, it goes without saying and yet it is worthwhile repeating. Wine is there to give a toast at the end of the speech and may not be touched during the speech. But it is fine to drink water while you speak. That also gives you the opportunity to glance at your manuscript while you take a sip. Also remember the following. You can ease your nervousness with alcohol but it requires quantities large enough to work as an anaesthetic. That will show! You will be less nervous, not feel your tongue and have put your brain to sleep – a dreadful combination which will pass unnoticed by neither eye nor ear. Do drink normally, but not abnormally just because you are going to speak.

5. **No improper jokes**

Don't tell vulgar jokes. Nor jokes that you are unable to tell well, or jokes that are irrelevant. The best humor is not jokes invented by others. The best humor consists of your own experience, stories, preferably with self-irony, or stories and events you have heard from real life. Such humor is also much easier to present with empathy.

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