

10 COMMANDMENTS FOR SPEAKERS IN INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS

- 1) **Speak, do not read**, whenever possible! Written language, because of its complex structure and high information density, is fully intelligible for readers only, not for listeners. If you have to read, do not exceed a rate of one type-written page (double-spaced) per three minutes and make sure that your interpreters have received your manuscript in time.
- 2) **Speak clearly and distinctly**. Remember that your language may be a foreign language for many in your audience, who need more time to comprehend what they have heard.
- 3) **Avoid rapid and monotonous enumerations of names, facts and figures**. Without the appropriate background knowledge, no-one could follow you, not even your interpreters.
- 4) **Explain abbreviations**, and remember that puns do not translate well and that they are often meaningless in other languages.
- 5) **Provide copies of all your supporting papers (manuscripts) to the interpreters** as early as possible so that they may prepare your presentation.
- 6) **During a discussion never interrupt a speaker**. Wait until the previous speaker has finished and your microphone has been switched on. Even simultaneous interpreters can only serve one speaker at a time.
- 7) **Always speak into a microphone**. When you turn away from your desk to show slides or overheads, use a button microphone. The interpreters are working in sound-proof booths and cannot hear even the most powerful voice without a microphone.
- 8) **Never knock on the microphone**. Today's microphones are so highly sensitive that a knock becomes a painful noise when heard in the earphones. Most microphones are equipped with a light signal to indicate whether or not they are switched on. Switch off your **mobile phone** completely to avoid interferences.
- 9) **Use a large format for graphs and lettering on your overheads and slides** that can still be seen from distance. Normal typescript is too small for lettering.
- 10) **At multi-lingual meetings remember to use multi-lingual texts on overheads and slides**. Your foreign-language listeners also need such information in order to be able to follow your presentation.