

The Free State Project

Guidelines for Free State Project Speakers



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Much of the following information comes from personal experience.
Some of the following information was ripped off from the Kaplan Teacher
Development Program.

Six Principles of Great FSP Speaking.....	3
Core Capabilities for FSP Speakers	4
The FSP Speaker As Expert.....	5
The FSP Speaker As Presenter.....	7
The FSP Speaker As Mentor.....	11
The FSP Speaker as Representative.....	14
About the Author.....	17

Six Principles of Great FSP Speaking

Speak to the Free State Project

- Everything you talk about should be relevant in some way to the FSP.

All roads lead to the Free State

- Talk about what we will do when (not if) we get to the Free State.
- Refer often to your positive vision of what the Free State will be like.
- When talking about specifics, don't lose sight of the overall goal.

We make declarations, not speculations

- Speak with authority and confidence. Instead of "I think the FSP is a great strategy," say "The FSP is a great strategy."
- Don't be afraid to admit that you don't know something; offer to find out and get back to the person or refer them to the website.

Our presentations are polished

- Use your voice effectively. Use tone, cadence, volume, intensity, and variation.
- Organize your presentation into a few main points.
- Repeat key ideas; highlight them as a "human highlighter."
- Create strong transitions. The presentation's structure should be clear, and the audience should always know where they are in the presentation.
- Work the entire room. Shift your position periodically and include everyone in the conversation.

We focus on the audience

- Watch for audience feedback, verbal and nonverbal.
- Don't read a speech word for word, but use your notes appropriately.
- Monitor the expressions of the entire room so you can adjust your presentation to suit the audience.

Talk, don't tell

- Adopt a conversational tone with the audience.
- Ask questions that move the talk forward.

Core Capabilities for FSP Speakers

The FSP Speaker As Expert

- ❑ The FSP Speaker is prepared.
- ❑ The FSP Speaker shows confidence and composure.
- ❑ The FSP Speaker relates everything to the FSP.

The FSP Speaker As Presenter

- ❑ The FSP Speaker creates a lively and interactive environment.
- ❑ The FSP Speaker uses clear organization and strong transitions.
- ❑ The FSP Speaker is polished.

The FSP Speaker As Mentor

- ❑ The FSP Speaker uses encouraging language.
- ❑ The FSP Speaker answers questions appropriately.
- ❑ The FSP Speaker exudes confidence about the FSP.

The FSP Speaker As Representative

- ❑ The FSP Speaker is a team player.
- ❑ The FSP Speaker recommends FSP resources.
- ❑ The FSP Speaker asks for commitment and support.

The FSP Speaker As Expert

FSP Speakers are masters of FSP history, organization, goals, and progress. You may not feel like an expert yet, but your audience will perceive you as one and expect you to perform accordingly. Your knowledge of the FSP, your preparation, your poise, and your command of libertarian principles need to be top notch.

Expertise – What You Need To Know

- ❑ Opening paragraph of the website. (memorized)
- ❑ <http://freestateproject.org/>
- ❑ The Statement of Intent. (intimate familiarity)
- ❑ <http://freestateproject.org/soi>
- ❑ Participation Guidelines (intimate familiarity)
http://freestateproject.org/volunteer/part_guidelines
- ❑ Frequently Asked Questions (intimate familiarity)
<http://freestateproject.org/org/faq>
- ❑ The organization of the website (general familiarity)
- ❑ How To Help (general familiarity)
<http://freestateproject.org/volunteer/helpwanted>
- ❑ New Hampshire Information (general familiarity)
<http://freestateproject.org/nhinfo>
- ❑ 101 Reasons To Move To New Hampshire (general familiarity)
<http://www.freestateproject.org/files/101-Reasons-to-Move-to-NH.pdf>
- ❑ U.S. Constitution (general familiarity)
<http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/charters.html>
- ❑ FSP Bylaws (general familiarity)
- ❑ <http://freestateproject.org/org/corpbylaws>
- ❑ Libertarianism: A Primer (general familiarity)
- ❑ <http://www.libertarianism.org/>
- ❑ David D Friedman's The Machinery of Freedom: A Guide To Radical Capitalism (general familiarity)
http://davidfriedman.com/Libertarian/Machinery_of_Freedom/MofF_Contents.html

Core Capabilities for Expertise

The FSP Speaker is prepared.

- ❑ You must know the FSP FAQ inside and out.
- ❑ You must know as much as possible about New Hampshire.
- ❑ You should have a good understanding of libertarian principles and philosophy.
- ❑ You should have some knowledge of your audience's area of interest. (If speaking to a gun rights group, it is good to have some basic knowledge of firearms.)
- ❑ You should have a clear, organized outline of your main points, a catchy introduction, and a strong conclusion.

The FSP Speaker shows confidence and composure.

- ❑ You should be sure of yourself – confident in your command of the material your ability to handle whatever comes along.
- ❑ No speaker makes no mistakes, but the best ones take them in stride and do no damage to their audience's expectations.
- ❑ Your physical and vocal demeanor should exude confidence.

The FSP Speaker relates everything to the FSP.

- ❑ The audience expects to hear about the FSP, so you should meet their expectations.
- ❑ Make sure everything is relevant to the FSP.
- ❑ Bring every conversational tangent back to the FSP.

The FSP Speaker As Presenter

The number one goal of every FSP Speaker: Delight the audience. Only a delighted audience will be eager and willing to sign on as a member. Only a delighted audience will spread the word about the FSP to their friends and neighbors.

Presentation – What You Need To Know

We focus on the audience

- ❑ **It's not about you.** *Do I look okay? What should I do next?* Great speakers never permit these questions to overshadow more important ones, such as: What do their eyes suggest that they are thinking right now? From their point of view, what would be the most useful thing to hear about next? What do their questions say about the clarity and fullness of my explanations?
- ❑ **Don't be a bookworm.** A sure sign of a speaker who has not prepared fully for his talk is her eyes continually reverting to her prepared speech for guidance.
- ❑ **No exceptions.** Great speaking involves balancing the needs of the individual with those of the group. It means monitoring the expressions of the entire room, not just the audience member with whom you're having an exchange.
- ❑ **Be reflective and flexible.** Start fresh. Each audience presents a new set of challenges. Effective speakers are flexible and reflective enough to be able to alter their pace and approach to meet those challenges.
- ❑ **Walk into the room energized and ready to speak.** If the speaker is energized and motivated, the audience will be likewise.

Our presentations are polished

- ❑ **Use your voice effectively.** An abrupt change in volume, either up or down, can emphasize an important point. Passionate delivery can motivate the audience to find out more about the FSP.
 - Use your voice to convey patience, authority, and passion.
 - Do not speak too slowly or quickly.
 - Vary speed and intensity.
 - Vary your presentation for purpose of emphasis or to indicate presentation structure.
- ❑ **Be a “Human Highlighter.”** FSP Speakers make key points stand out through tone of voice, word choice, and simple repetition. To be sure, you must highlight only key points, not every point. If you say that everything is especially important, then nothing will be.
- ❑ **Create strong transitions.** The logic and organization of the presentation should be clear, moment-to-moment.
- ❑ **Work the entire room.**
 - Use hand gestures to give emphasis.
 - Never stay in one place too long. Especially don't stay parked behind a podium.
 - Move toward a questioner, not away from him or her.

Creating Participation

You and your audience will find the experience more enjoyable and more constructive when you **encourage** and **channel** participation.

Three steps toward creating participation.

- ❑ **Step 1. Prepare for it.** Prepare your presentation thoroughly and plan opportunities for participation *before* the presentation begins. As you prepare your presentation, note when, where, and how you will ask questions of your audience. **Write down** the exact questions that you will ask or a few prompt words that will remind you of the questions you will ask. (Example: “Who knows why we chose the porcupine as our mascot?”)
- ❑ **Step 2. Encourage it.** Tell your audience that you want and respect their ideas and questions. Treat every honest question or opinion, no matter how daffy, with respect. If a person’s question elicits laughter or groans from the rest of the audience, affirm strongly and publicly everyone’s right to ask questions.
- ❑ **Step 3. Get it.** If you *tell* your audience that you want their participation, you have to back it up by creating an environment where participation can flourish, and where the audience feels comfortable and safe enough to express opinions and ask questions. You hope to make everyone in the audience eager to participate, making the discussion so compelling and lively that no one wants to be left out.

Get to know their names immediately. Using a person’s name signals that it’s *their* opinion, not just anyone’s that you’re interested in. By the end of the Q&A, you should have learned and be using as many names as possible. If it helps, jot their names in an improvised seating chart as they raise their hands to ask questions.

Reward participation. Offer resounding verbal encouragement (“Super question!”; “Great insight!”; “That’s exactly right!”).

Strong Introductions

A strong introduction sets the tone for the presentation and creates interest in and excitement about the FSP. A strong introduction is not a long one (quite the contrary). It’s an attention-getting, interest-enhancing, appropriate one. You want to whet the appetite and introduce your main points.

Transitions

Transitions are the glue that holds your presentation together. Effective transitions allow your audience to follow the logic and structure of the presentation. They remind the audience how each topic relates to every other topic, and how the topic at hand relates to the FSP. You need to make smooth transitions from topic to topic.

An effective transition

- ❑ **Reinforces** the value of the topic just discussed;
- ❑ **Sums up** briefly what the audience just heard;
- ❑ **Previews** the next topic for discussion; and/or

- **Relates** the next topic to the one just discussed.

Endings

Endings tie up the topic and the presentation into a neat package. At the end you remind your audience what they've just heard.

An effective ending

- Reinforces the importance and value of the FSP;
- Reiterates the main points of the presentation;
- Instills confidence;
- Gives guidance and motivation for what the audience should do next; and/or
- Generates enthusiasm for the FSP.

Core Capabilities for Presentation

The FSP Speaker creates a lively and interactive environment.

- You must keep the audience engaged through your personal energy and your management of their participation.
- You must focus on the audience and respond appropriately.

The FSP Speaker uses clear organization and strong transitions.

- Almost as important as what you say is how you move from one topic to the next. Audience attention and interest hinges on appropriate presentation flow.
- You should be able to link your main points into an effective presentation.

The FSP Speaker is polished.

- You should use your voice, gestures, and movement effectively.
- You should be a “Human Highlighter.”

The FSP Speaker As Mentor

A mentor is an inspirer, a coach, and a role model. You are the person who has learned about and committed to the FSP, and is now passing along your knowledge and dedication to your audience. You have a direct influence on the psychological dimensions of their relationship to the FSP, and therein lies this role's importance. As a mentor, the FSP Speaker exudes confidence and offers guidance that makes each individual think, "Yes, the FSP can and will succeed. Yes, I do have what it takes to join the FSP and help it succeed."

Most importantly, it is as mentor that you boost your audience's confidence in the FSP and their role within it. When an audience member wants to throw in the towel on liberty, you in your role as mentor must keep her in the game... **and sometimes you don't even know who that person is**, because she fails to approach you and reveal those fears. So your mentoring must occur whenever you're addressing the entire group, to ensure that you're influencing everyone who happens to need a dose of positive energy. (And who doesn't?)

Mentoring to your audience is a task that never ends. If you've done your job excellently (as we fully expect), many in your audience will thank you and some will sign up as members. Accept these compliments gracefully: you've earned them, and they're one of the many things that makes speaking for the FSP so satisfying. But don't stop there. Tell your audience that while you were glad to speak with them and appreciate their compliments, it is really their commitment and enthusiasm that will make the FSP a success. Send them off with your vote of confidence ringing in their ears.

Mentor – What You Need To Know

Creating Confidence: The Psychological Dimension

The FSP's primary goal, and hence your primary goal as an FSP Speaker, is to get 20,000 liberty-oriented people to move to New Hampshire where we may effect real political change. We can only do so if your audience has confidence that the FSP can actually work and signs up to be a part of it. How can you accomplish that goal?

- ❑ Believe in the Free State Project.
- ❑ Transfer that belief to your audience.
- ❑ Focus on the FSP's successes rather than failures.
- ❑ Have a "can do" attitude during your presentation and in every non-member interaction.
- ❑ Treat the FSP's missteps as opportunities to learn, rather than failures.

Turn "I Think I Can" Into "I Know I Can"

- ❑ Remind the audience that the FSP is different from all of those other libertarian strategies. The FSP model is based on several *successful* migrations whose purpose was societal change.
- ❑ Legitimize the difficulties we will face. There will be times when we face difficult situations and yes, failure. Embrace that fact, and overcome it. Like learning to

ride a bike... every time we fall off the bike, we learn something for next time. While their worries are real and understandable, we need to make sure that we don't make them self-fulfilling prophecies.

- ❑ Keep using positive, action-oriented language.

Answering Questions

Questions are the lifeblood of a presentation. When you ask them properly, you are asking your audience to think, challenging their pre-conceived ideas, reinforcing that which they already know, and taking them to the next level. When you respond to questions properly, you are expanding everyone's knowledge, while mentoring to both the questioner and the audience as a whole.

- ❑ Get in the habit of repeating an audience member's question, especially for the benefit of those in the back who have momentarily drifted away.
- ❑ Congratulate the questioner for good questions when the praise is warranted. And even when it isn't; just for speaking up, the questioner should get the proper recognition.
- ❑ Never blurt out a response. Mull over what you've been asked; take a breath; make a conscious effort to respond cordially and positively; be sure that your response ties into your presentation topic. Ask for clarification if need be.
- ❑ Questions that are off-topic must be acknowledged as such. Always be courteous, but never let a questioner "hijack" the agenda. Here are some options: "Let me ask you to hold that thought until later on." "That's a great question, but it's not relevant to the FSP so I think I'll table it for now and you and I can discuss it during the break." "I honestly don't know what would happen if space monkeys infiltrated the Libertarian Party, but I'm confident that it won't be an issue for the FSP."

Core Capabilities for Mentoring

The FSP Speaker uses encouraging language.

- Give pep talks, reassure the doubters, boost confidence. Weave this into every part of your presentation.
- Communicate your enthusiasm. “This can work, if we work at it.”

The FSP Speaker answers questions appropriately.

- Thank the questioner, repeat the question, and think about it.
- Respond cordially and positively.

The FSP Speaker exudes confidence about the FSP.

- Acknowledge that there will be difficulties along the way, but that we can overcome them.
- Speak of the future *when* (not if) we are all together in New Hampshire.

The FSP Speaker as Representative

Representative – What You Need To Know

Your role as a proud and enthusiastic FSP booster is every bit as important as your role as an expert, devoted mentor, and great presenter.

You are asking your audience to invest a considerable amount of time, energy, and emotion in the FSP. You embody the FSP. You are our most visible and influential component. As such, when you speak, it is both your voice and the FSP's voice. When you delight your audience, so does the FSP. Their confidence in (and willingness to sign up for) the FSP hinge on you.

The FSP Attitude

Your belief in and enthusiasm for the FSP need to permeate your talk.

- ❑ First, get in the habit of saying “we” rather than “I” or “they.”
- ❑ Never forget that you are part of the FSP team. You may have never met them or even know their names, but the thousands of FSP members & volunteers are your colleagues. You share in their successes; they share in your missteps. And vice versa. They deserve your respect even as you are the recipient of their respect.
- ❑ Exhibit a professional demeanor and respect for each and every audience member.
- ❑ Keep an even temper in all situations.
- ❑ Keep your promises, including returning phone calls and e-mails.

Opening the Talk

The first time you meet your audience, you set the tone and the expectations for your entire presentation. Your audience will quickly make judgments as to whether you're on the ball and whether you're someone to look up to and trust. Whatever they decide about you will color their perceptions, about you and the FSP, from that point forward. The first few moments should inspire these thoughts in every person in the audience: “I did the right thing by joining the FSP.” “I'm going to be OK in New Hampshire.” “This Speaker knows his stuff.”

- ❑ **Prepare the board, projector, powerpoint, or other visual aids.** Before the audience arrives, write some basic information on the board. At a minimum, you should include the title of your presentation, “Free State Project,” www.freestateproject.org, your name, and your contact information. If you are hesitant to give out your contact information, include the info@freestateproject.org e-mail address and the 888-532-4604 number.
- ❑ **Welcome and congratulate.** A warm hello means a great deal to the audience. Congratulate those who have already joined the FSP for taking their first step toward achieving Liberty in Our Lifetime.
- ❑ **Introduce yourself.** If your audience is small, there may also be time for everyone to introduce himself to the group. If not, have the audience at least introduce themselves to each other in pairs, and get the group dynamic going.
- ❑ **Get started.** You have prepared an interesting presentation, and your audience is eager to hear about the FSP. So get started!

Closing the Talk

Send your audience off with excitement and enthusiasm for the FSP. Ask them for their support.

- ❑ Open the floor for any Questions & Answers that weren't addressed during the presentation.
- ❑ Thank them for their interest in the FSP.
- ❑ Ask them to complete Statements of Intent and give them to you before they leave.
- ❑ Ask those who are not ready to commit to support the FSP in other ways, by either volunteering or sending donations.
- ❑ Invite them to contact you with any questions that didn't get answered during your talk.
- ❑ Invite them to become FSP Speakers or to support (form) Local Groups in their area.

After the Talk

- ❑ Follow up with anyone to whom you promised information.
- ❑ Periodically check in with those in the audience who were interested, but hesitant to join.
- ❑ Send a thank you note to your host, and offer to speak again in the future.

Core Capabilities for Representation

The FSP Speaker is a team player.

- Say “we” instead of “I” and “they.”
- Be professional, courteous, and respectful toward your teammates.

The FSP Speaker recommends FSP resources.

- Refer your audience to the website often.
- Bring handouts of interesting FSP literature & articles from the website.

The FSP Speaker asks for commitment and support.

- Ask your audience to complete Statements of Intent.
- Ask your audience to support the FSP in other ways, such as volunteering and donating.

About the Author

Speaking Experience

Amanda Phillips is the New England Representative for the Free State Project. She has spoken to local groups all over New England about the FSP, including the LPCT convention, the LPNH convention, the Students For Liberty at Brown University, and many TV and radio interviews. An accounting professional, she regularly gives presentations on accounting topics to business audiences all over the country. She also trains teachers for Kaplan Test Prep, the industry leader in test preparation. She ripped off much of this handbook from her Kaplan Teacher Development Program.

Speaker's Bio

Amanda Phillips is the New England Representative for the Free State Project. Amanda is an accountant, manager, teacher, and single mother to Elaine, a rockin' eight-year-old girl. In her spare time (hah!) she likes to fly small airplanes, shoot at the archery range, run long distances, and read about everything. An avid proponent of school choice, she serves as an officer on the PTA for Elaine's private school. Amanda has been a libertarian since before she knew the meaning of those words. She was once a Special Agent in the U.S. Air Force. She maintains a blog at amanda42.livejournal.com.

