COLORADO COLLEGE
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Academic Excellence

Tips for Public Speaking
Group Roles

In group presentations, assigning and understanding group roles is vital for ensuring a smooth and successful presentation. Each member contributes unique skills and responsibilities to the team. Here are some tips for effective group collaboration:

- Role Assignment: Clearly define each member's role and responsibilities within the group. Consider each member's strengths and expertise when assigning roles.
- Communication: Establish open and effective communication channels within the group. Regularly update each other on progress, challenges, and decisions that impact the whole group.
- Collaboration: Encourage collaboration and cooperation among group members. Value diverse perspectives and ideas, and be willing to compromise when necessary.
- Leadership: Designate a leader or facilitator to coordinate group activities and ensure that everyone stays on track. The leader should facilitate discussion, resolve conflicts, and keep the group focused on its objectives, ensuring that all group members arise to their expected workload.
- Planning: Rehearsing the presentation to iron out any uncertainties before getting up for the audience can create a much smoother experience for all involved. Structuring presentations using dialogue can provide a smoother experience for the audience and help them feel more engaged in the presentation, especially in transitions between group members.
- Accountability: Hold each member accountable for their contributions to the presentation. Set deadlines and milestones to track progress and address any issues that arise promptly.

Tips for Public Speaking
Group Work

What makes group work significant in public speaking?
When it comes to public speaking, introducing the feature of group work adds a unique nuance to the preparation and presentation process. With group work comes consolidation of ideas, division of work and group dynamics.

Focuses for group work:

1. **Consolidation of Ideas**
   Diversity of ideas is one of the most powerful tools within group work but it can certainly be difficult to ascertain how to consolidate the ideas of multiple people - ideas about the content of the speech itself *and* how to prepare for it. Start by getting it all out on the table - know what groupmates feel is important about the speech and what they wish to include in it. Delineate the stages of the preparation process so that organization can be maintained. When each voice has shared what they wish to regarding the project at hand, it is time to communicate respectfully about which idea or which combination of ideas best serves your group with the goals you have for your speech.

2. **Division of Work**
   An area of struggle in group work can be an unequal division of work. Having an equal distribution of time and effort put into a group project can build ill feelings within the group but also negatively affect the speech itself through the loss of certain voices being represented. To avoid this outcome, the group should discuss expectations surrounding work distribution and converse about which areas of the project individuals can be most useful with their unique skills. Respectful but assertive communication is a pillar of much group work.

3. **Group Dynamics**
   When gathering a group together of individuals with distinct personalities and skills, it can feel difficult at times to parse out how the group can best work together cohesively to accomplish a common goal. Spending a few moments getting to know each other and the personalities within the group can be helpful in determining what sort of role people feel most comfortable and useful in. Clarifying what role each person is taking in the speech's preparation and presentation helps hold group members accountable in valuing each spoke of the proverbial wheel.