



So you need to write a speech?

Whether you intend to make it short and sweet, or to really reap the benefits of the spotlight, your speech will need to be well prepared and contain some basic elements if it is to be in keeping with tradition, entertaining and engaging.

PREPARE

Don't walk into the wedding reception thinking you'll know exactly what to say when you get there. You have the benefit of time before the wedding, start to think over some ideas for the speech. Begin taking down thoughts, jokes, stories, and quotes you might want to use. The goal of the speech is to celebrate the couple and the occasion, talk them up and be sincere.

You should aim to write around 350 to 550 words (3-5 minutes, depending on delivery and response).

JUST DO YOU

No one has the expectation that you are going to deliver a Barrack Obama-esque speech so take the pressure off. If you are naturally shy and nervous then feel free to let your audience know and they will support you, or if you are a natural speaker stay in your lane and don't overcook it with the cliché and google jokes. Did I mention that preparation is the key.

HUMOUR

I'm a fan of it, truly. It is difficult to give examples of the type of humour you can inject into your speech because it is so personal and every relationship is different.

While the below examples might seem like pretty 'dry' content, look at it as a wall of defence that has gaps offering opportunities for humour – e.g. an anecdote about the first meeting or how they got together works well. This will work a lot better than a cliché or a google joke and is much more personalised.

DON'T BE CRUEL

May sound obvious but I have seen it too many times, you are appealing to a wide audience so a dirty joke your mate told you at the pub may be hilarious at the time but a wedding just isn't the right forum, sorry. And outing the groom or bride or anyone else for that matter on a past dalliance, is a huge No No.

Parents speech

1. INTRODUCTION

“Good evening family and friends, my name is..... and I am the very proud mum/dad of”

You need to introduce yourself, This is simple. Tell them your name and maybe crack a small joke to make yourself feel relaxed. If you are nervous then feel free to say “I am nervous” this will immediately relax you and your guest will show some empathy as well.

THE WELCOME

“Firstly we would like to welcome.....”

Make a formal welcome to everyone, and thank them for coming. Be sure to mention the new side of the family especially parents and siblings and you get extra points if you name them all off the top of your head.

YOUR BABY

They have made you pay for it, and now’s your chance to get a little of your own back on them. Recall a funny or memorable anecdote or trait from their youth or a totally sincere love story about how great they are, or simply tell them how proud you are of the person they have become.

YOUR NEW SON/DAUGHTER IN LAW

Formally welcome your new son/daughter in-law to your family, in any way you feel appropriate. You can mention how you felt about them when you first met, or a moment when you’ve been particularly glad they are around.

PARTING WORDS OF WISDOM

As the head speaker at the wedding, you should impart some of your wisdom to the happy couple about maintaining a healthy marriage or living a happy life. If you are a funny person in general you will be able to react or improv on your speech as you go along. Please do not include cliché or google wedding jokes, (no ball and chain or happy wife happy life etc)

Be real it will be much more memorable.

WRAP IT UP

Finish up by asking everyone to raise a glass to the happy couple. Don’t worry about the “please stand”. A simple raise your glasses will suffice.
After the toast you should approach the happy couple for some love.

SCROLL DOWN TO PAGE 4 FOR WHAT TO DO AFTER YOUR SPEECH IS WRITTEN.

Best man, Matron of honour, Great mate speech

INTRODUCTION

“Good evening family and friends, my name is..... and I am the.....”

A great opening and a very endearing quality is gratitude, firstly thank the couple for having you onboard and allowing you the pleasure of a speech. Thank the couples parents by name and then follow with your fellow bridal party members.

If you are a Male and thank the bridesmaids, don't just say you all “look” beautiful as it is expected and in all honesty a little shallow.

Boys be genuine and focus on other more important attributes such as ***“you are so supportive, funny, legends and are wonderful friends to Michael and Lauren of course you all look amazing. It has been great to spend this special/ awesome/fantastic day with you all”***. This tip works well if you know the bridal party, if you have just met them you can preface it with “Michael and Lauren have told me”

and if your a female don't forget to tell the boys how good they look. They love that sort of thing.

STORYTIME

Here is your chance to inject some humour or sincerity in the form of a great story. You can tell a story singling out either Bride or Groom, or a story about them both or a story about you all. The story is really whatever you want it to be but remember to follow the rules above and keep it well away from any controversy.

Don't let me get in the way of a good story though, if it is a cracker and above board, then hit it!

Remember if you are worried about having to be funny, don't be. A much more effective strategy is to be sincere ie..... ***“and that was the moment I knew Michael had found his one, the girl he would marry”***

You can make it funny by simply adding, ***“Once he stopped returning my text and never came to the pub with me, I knew he had found his one, the girl he would marry”***.

WRAP IT UP

You should be feeling pretty relaxed by now so Its time to wrap it up and get on it. (drink responsibly:)

Finish with a bang!!, scrap the toast and finish with, ***“friends and family if I could have you all please stand, (pause) Now I want you to put your glasses down and your hands together and give the biggest ovation to two of my favourite humans, now give it up and make some noise”***. (Insert mic drop here)

IMPORTANT.

SCROLL DOWN TO PAGE 4 FOR WHAT TO DO AFTER YOUR SPEECH IS WRITTEN.

Bride - Groom - Partner speech

This is a biggie and can be a real highlight of any reception, no pressure!. It has to be sincere as well as be entertaining and also cover a bit of 'housekeeping'. It can be the hardest because you have to tug at the heartstrings with words of love for your partner, it should show your new in-laws that someone of substance has joined the family. I suggest not googling a funny wedding joke, all have been done and most are not funny. Think about quotes, sincere stories or anecdotes or use the story time section for some fun an humour.

INTRODUCTION

Hi Everyone, "Firstly let me say how much "we" both would like to thank you all for being with us today....."

On behalf of both of you thank the guests for coming, and for their wishes and the gifts. You can make note of any guests who have made a huge effort to be there as well. Thanks the suppliers and venue (only if they have done a great job of course) Thank the Bridal party and you can throw in a gag here if your keen.

THE NEW INLAWS

"To my new side of my family....."

Thank both parents for their welcome into their family (and for providing or helping the wedding if that is the situation) and for giving their child so many characteristics you admire, respect and love in them.

YOUR PARENTS

At this point your own parents need a mention as well. Its a pretty big thing bringing your arse up so do it justice.

STORYTIME

If you need a little more content and would like to add some humour focus on a fun or cool story you guys have shared that gives insight of how you are as a couple or the moment you realised they were the one. As it's a real story you will have no problem telling it without having to read it and it will also provide a bit of natural humour which is far more digestible than a set up type joke.

YOUR NEW HUSBAND OR WIFE

"and now for the most important person in this room, and certainly in my world"..... You know the rest. You can pretty much stuff up everything else but get this right and all will be forgiven. Give this bit your all and show the love.

WRAP IT UP

The best way to finish your speech is with a toast to "friends and family", I also suggest having your partner stand and join you at the end of your speech, this works in two ways,

For the great photo opportunity and the other is you can segue straight to the cake cutting from there. (if scheduled on your run sheet)

So I have written my speech, Now what?

PRINT IT

Importantly you should print your speech out on cardboard (easy to hold in one hand without folding as your other hand will have the mic. It also looks better than a crumbled up piece of paper) and definitely “**No #**#@!! phones**”.

Use large 13+ point easy to read font and break it up into paragraphs (just like this guide) and then arrange to have it given to the venue, your Master of Reception or whatever suits. Have a copy on your phone for a practice version as well.

REHEARSE IT

My rehearsal strategy is to read it 5 times a day for the three days leading up to the wedding and even better if done in the mirror which should help you to remember to look up and stand tall. You don't have to memorise it but it is great if you have the ability to read the start of a sentence and then be able to get your head up for the rest of the sentence. This creates great photo opportunities as well as making your speech much more engaging as you can make eyes with your audience.

MICROPHONE

In most cases you will be using a microphone, it is important that you hold the microphone around the middle (not at the top like a rapper) and position it just below your chin (keeps your face open for photos) and you must speak a little louder than normal, The Master of Reception or DJ will be sure to adjust the sound to your particular voice if its too loud, not much they can do if its too quiet though so speak up.

You may need to use a lectern which will make it easier for you but isn't as great for photos. If the opportunity arises before the reception head in and do a sound check with your Master of Reception or DJ.

STAY SOBER (relatively)

Sorry, but it would be negligent of me to have a speech guide and not include this major point which may seem obvious.

You don't want to be completely uninhibited or you might say something you'll regret later on or even worse the videographer picks up. As much as it can be a burden in you having a good time, part of the role is that you are able to postpone your own gratification until after the speeches.

CHOREOGRAPHY

If you have a Master of Reception and DJ package they will work in unison musical choreography to suit the introductions and closing out of speeches. These are the in between bits that avoid any awkward silences that can create tension for the speaker.

DELIVER AND ACCEPT THE ADULATION

Just follow the guide and you will smash it out of the ball park. Hope it helps.