

Beyond The Jokes

There are so many ways to make an audience smile and laugh and humour is a fantastic way of hooking an audience to your key messages, creating connections through shared experiences, and relaxing an audience by letting them know that they are in safe hands with you as a speaker. Below are some highlights of humour that is particularly effective for the spoken word.

Type	Description	Examples
Wordplay	Puns, jokes, or witty remarks based on language – Clever way of establishing your credibility as a comedic speaker.	<i>"Time flies like an arrow. Fruit flies like a banana."</i> <i>"I don't trust stairs... they're always up to something."</i>
Observational	Commenting on everyday situations and behaviours and universal experiences – Many people love this type of humour because its relatable.	<i>"You know you're getting old when you start using 'LOL' to mean 'Lots Of Love' instead of 'Laughing Out Loud.' Grandma's text messages just got a whole lot weirder!"</i>
Self-Deprecating	Belittling or mocking yourself or making fun of your own flaws – strong method of building a rapport with your audience.	<i>"Feel free to use me as a bad example... that way at least I am not totally useless."</i>
Dry	Humour delivered in an emotionless, deadpan way which uses irony and bluntness – Seems unintentional but it's well practiced.	<i>"You know what always makes me smile? Face muscles."</i> <i>"Most people are shocked when they find out how bad I am as an electrician."</i>
Satire	Criticizes human flaws and failings through exaggeration, sarcasm, and parody – The goal here is to entertain and to make your audience think.	<i>"I would have made a joke about trickle-down economics. But most of you won't get it."</i>
Absurd	Unrealistic or surreal situations or things – Unpredictability and surprise are the key factors of this type of humour.	<i>"Why didn't the cheese want to get sliced? It had grater plans."</i>

Remember that humour is subjective so test it out with people before inserting it into a prepared speech, and when you do get a laugh, remember to stop speaking and let people enjoy the moment with you.