



Center for Writing and Speaking

S | NO. 20 IN THE CENTER FOR WRITING AND SPEAKING HANDOUT SERIES **Special Occasion Speeches: How to Present or Accept an Award**

This handout presents tips on how to appropriately present and accept awards. Award ceremonies are often emotionally charged events, so you will want to be sure to approach them with style and grace.

Presenting an Award:

- Describe the award. Unless you are presenting an Oscar or the Noble Peace Prize it is unlikely your audience will fully understand what this award is. Briefly describe what this honor entails and how the recipient earned this recognition to guarantee that everyone is cognoscente of this person's achievement.
 - Ex. "The Citizens Who Care Award is not just about community service..."
- Focus on achievements solely relating to this award. When presenting an award one must describe the recipient's achievements, but for the sake of the audience please limit your accolades to facts pertaining to the specific honor you are presenting.
 - Ex. It is unimportant to mention a recipient's basketball record when you are presenting them with an academic scholarship.
- Make sure to praise everyone's hard work. Do not go through everyone's individual accomplishments, but do come up with a couple of sentences that sum up the collective experiences and efforts of the group.
 - Ex. "Every one of the nominees for the Citizens Who Care Award has dedicated themselves to their communities above and beyond their share. Their passion for and commitment to helping others is truly inspiring."

Accepting an Award:

- Let your listeners know what this award means to you.
 - Ex. "To me, the Citizens Who Care Award has always stood for ... I am proud and humbled to be included in such a selfless group of individuals."
- When accepting an award it is essential that you express your gratitude. Remember to thank the organization presenting you with this award, but also be sure to single out any team players or advisors who helped you gain this recognition.
 - Ex. "I could not have gotten where I am today alone. Thank you..."
- Don't procrastinate. If you have any suspicion that you might win an award at a special event please write your speech in advance. This does not make you conceited; it makes you a prepared speaker.

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