

NRF's Tips for Outdoor Speaking

1. **Visit field trip location beforehand.** Familiarize yourself with your surroundings. This prevents unexpected situations like fallen trees or unpassable trails. This will also give you an opportunity to look for good places to address the group or take breaks.
2. **Wait to begin talking until the group has stopped walking and are gathered together.** This way everyone has a better chance of hearing you clearly.
3. **Wait for everyone in your group before making a turn at a trail junction.**
4. **Keep your remarks brief when possible.** If you are able, stop periodically throughout the trip to share interesting facts or have the audience observe something. Choose this option instead of lengthy talking at the beginning.
5. **Speak loudly & slowly.** You'll need to project your voice to be heard outside. Slowing down can help you be understood more. Some participants may wear hearing aids.
6. **Repeat questions asked,** then give the answer.
7. **Move up higher.** Sometimes the landscape will provide this for you (a raised mound; a big rock). Other times, you will need to be more creative (a picnic table; a tree stump). But please, be careful of your footing.
8. **Use broad gestures & visuals.** There are so many moving distractions outside that you'll often need to be particularly expressive to compete with them. Use visuals when possible.
9. **Position yourself so the sun is not in your audience's eyes.** Looking into the sun is too much to ask of most audiences. Position yourself so the sun is off to the side or, if necessary, in your eyes. Hope for clouds (but not rain).

Other important things to note:

- **Never leave anyone behind!**
- **If you have multiple leaders, it is best to have one leader at the front and one at the back of the group.**
- **Perform a head count—at the start and several points throughout the trip.**
- **Your pace may be different from participant's pace. Be mindful of all activity levels.**