

## Conduct audience analysis (UW-La Crosse Public Speaking Center)

Knowing specific information about your audience before your speech can help shape your message and help you as a speaker connect with your audience.

### Sources of audience analysis

- **Demographics:** characteristics for groups of people including, race, self-identified sex, age, ethnicity, religion, political affiliation, socioeconomic status, education level, sexual orientation
- **Artifacts:** objects that represent and/or stand for something about a group of people. Artifacts may reflect values, beliefs, practices, and/or history of a group of people
- **Informants:** a person in an organization or group with information about the audience
  - Try to speak to informants prior to the speech
- **Interviews:** speaking with potential audience members about their prior experience with a topic.
  - Interviews help a speaker get a general sense of their audience
- **Polling the audience:** ask questions during the speech for agreement or disagreement
  - Polling is often used as an attention getter
- **Direct Observation:** watching the audience react to the speech content during the speech

### **Tips for integrating audience analysis into your speech**

- Be careful about making too many assumptions about your audience
- Difference or perspectives may not be visible to the speaker
- Use inclusive language – use the term “some” instead of “all”

Handout adapted from: Husiman, D., Berry, I., Peterson, J., Van Oss, J. (Eds.) (2019). *Communicating Effectively*. Southlake, TX. Fountainhead Press.