Advice for Speakers: How to Captivate an Audience by Shawn Stoller

Shawn Stoller studied business administration at Seattle University. He got his start in accounting at Knight Vale & Gregory before establishing his practice as a CPA in 1984. Today, he is a business consultant with Eastside Consultants, the firm that grew out of his original practice. Shawn Stoller has also served on the internal audit staff for Washington Mutual, Inc. and COO for 10th Street Entertainment. At present, he [lectures](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lecture) and consults with clients on personal finance matters and business issues across the country.

Every day, thousands of business leaders, teachers, and political figures address audiences. Some of those speakers are effective, but unfortunately, most are not. One of the most important aspects of delivering an effective lecture is paving a two-way street between speaker and audience. Lecturers should pose questions before segueing to the next section of their talk in order to give audiences the chance to fully digest information.

In addition, effective lecturers share many characteristics with storytellers. A good storyteller weaves a relatable thread into his or her story, establishing a central idea and circling back to that idea at every major point to establish a sense of unity and coherency. Lecturers should craft a beginning, middle, and end to their story, and move between each section at an even pace.