

Perfecting the sandwich or the journey I have taken to become a better speaker.

Fellow toastmasters, honoured guests, what does perfecting a sandwich have to do with becoming a better speaker? That question will be answered at the end of my speech. For now, my speech begins with the tale of my quest to find the perfect sandwich. It all started with a hunger pang in the afternoon: a hunger pang so strong and ferocious only a great sandwich can slay, a hunger pang so deep and abysmal that only a full sandwich can satiate. In order to make this perfect sandwich, I had to figure out what makes a great sandwich. Certainly the meat and veggies that make up the main fillings of a sandwich, the condiments which synthesizes the fillings and lastly, we cannot forget, the bread that holds the sandwich together. It is through all these ingredients that bread, meat, veggies and condiments can together transmute into a delicious meal.

In order to find this elusive and rare sandwich, I decided to survey many of my friends for their opinions on the perfect sandwich. Not surprisingly, my friends all had different opinions. How could I narrow this down?

To me, the perfect sandwich can be eaten at any time of day: in the morning as breakfast, for lunch or snack in the afternoon, or even late night as dinner. Although that did not narrow down the number of sandwiches that could make the perfect sandwich, it did get me thinking about what kind of ingredients the sandwich may have. Since the sandwich could be eaten in the morning, I thought about all the sandwiches that people eat for breakfast, and I came to an eggs-citing conclusion: eggs. Eggs have long been a staple for breakfast in meals such as egg mcmuffins, bacon and eggs and omelets. Although there are many different ways to cook an egg, from my survey, scrambled eggs are the best for the perfect sandwich.

The next ingredient goes extremely well with eggs. A majority of those that I surveyed all suggested BLT's. A BLT is a bacon, lettuce and tomato sandwich usually with mayo. As I was surveying friends, one friend told me a story about how she was waitressing at a restaurant and someone had ordered a BLT with no lettuce and no tomato. The man wanted a sandwich with bacon and mayo in it. Although I think that that is a weird sandwich to have, I think the man isolated the best ingredient in the BLT: the bacon. I just do not think that sandwiches are complete unless there is that extra saltiness and crispiness with two slices of fried bacon. And when thinking about our perfect sandwich, bacon, lettuce, tomatoes and mayo can only add to the perfection of the sandwich.

So far, we have bacon, lettuce, tomatoes, eggs and mayo. As I thought about these ingredients, I felt that something was missing. Almost all of the people I asked agreed that cheese was an important ingredient. In fact, swiss cheese. There was something holy about the swiss cheese and because of that holiness it made me worship the swiss cheese even more.

At this point, we have all the ingredients needed for our perfect sandwich. But what kind of bread can house all these ingredients? Something fluffy when toasted, perhaps a bit sour, maybe even have doughlike qualities. Eureka! Sourdough. It's moist and its sourness balances the saltiness and sweetness of the bacon and tomatoes.

At the beginning, I asked what perfecting a sandwich has to do with becoming a better speaker. First, in order to do a speech, you need to pick and choose the right experiences and stories for your content - that is finding the perfect fillings in the sandwich. You next need to write a good introduction and conclusion to begin and end your speech - that is

finding the perfect bread to house your sandwich in. Lastly, you need a condiment to bind all the ingredients together - in a speech, these can be asking rhetorical questions, referencing material from earlier in your speech, summarizing or paraphrasing.

The most important thing about the speech is that the introduction and conclusion have to be tweaked just perfectly, in other words, the sourdough in the sandwich has to be crispy on the outside yet fluffy on the inside. The sourdough needs to spend a few minutes in the toaster oven, but it has to be timed just right. When you finally have the right crispiness, you will have perfected your sandwich. You will have chosen the perfect fillings and become the "Perfect Filler". You will have mastered the toasting and become the "Toast Master".