10 Ways to Internalize a Speech and Reduce Dependence on Notes

1. **Repetition.** Read it several times out loud. Or, listen to a recording of yourself.

2. **Chunking.** Chunk the content and practice parts of it (for example introduction, point 1, point 2, point 3, conclusion). Include transition statements that occur before and after each chunk.
   - Read the chunk aloud, along with transition statements.
   - Recall—try to say the chunk without peeking at the written speech
   - Check by reading again (or if you recorded, you can listen to the recording)
   - Repeat until you get the first chunk down, and then move onto another part.

3. **Gestures.** Connect specific gestures to your points (but make sure the gestures are natural).

4. **Method of loci** (also known as a memory journey or the mind palace technique)
   a. Physical journey: assign parts of your speech to different physical objects on a path and practice those parts at the object as you walk the path. For example, in my home, I will give my introduction at my front door, then point one is at the refrigerator, point 2 is at the stove, point 3 is at the sink and my conclusion is that at the dining room table.
   b. Imaginary journey: you can create a mental or physical map that you visualize as you practice your speech. Some people even imagine the face of a clock.

5. **Keywords.** Practice from keywords (use memory-trigger keywords, no more than 3-4 per sentence). Stories you tell may only need a trigger phrase, such as “Family Christmas Party.”

6. **Use picture and symbol notes.** While picture and symbol notes can take longer to construct, they can quickly connect your brain to your content.

7. **Practice from an outline.** A logically structured speech, with a main idea and all content supporting the idea will facilitate internalization. If you can remember the structure, the logical flow, you will facilitate your own internalization of the content.

8. **Tell stories.** Relevant stories are the easiest parts of speeches to remember.

9. **Use visual aids strategically** to convey information that would be difficult to recall (statistics, charts)

10. **Speaker notes on the handout.** If you are using a handout, add a few speaker notes to your handout copy and use that as your notes.