

Tips for Delivering a Eulogy



1. When you sit down to write it, don't give the biography—that's covered in the obituary. First, establish your connection to the person, and then move on to an anecdote that reveals something about the person's character. Talk about a time when the person went out of their way to help you when you didn't expect it, for example. Don't be afraid to be lighthearted. At funerals, people are desperate for a chance to lightly laugh. But keep this in mind: You want them to remember your talk as moving, not funny. Keep it about 3 minutes long.
2. The day before the funeral print your eulogy in a large font, double-spacing the lines. Using only the top two-thirds of the page, to keep from having to glance too far down and preventing the audience from seeing your face. Practice reading your comments at least five (5) times aloud, preferably in front of a few friends to see how people react.
3. Before the service, find as many familiar faces among the attendees as you can so you feel anchored. Speak with the priest or minister about having someone else read your eulogy if you can't finish it.
4. During the eulogy, keep a bottle of water by the lectern in case you lose your composure. Take a sip, pause, and focus on your breathing. Make eye contact, if that's too hard, fake it by looking at the back wall or at strangers, who are less likely to trigger emotion.