

Helpful Tips for Writing and Presenting a Eulogy

To Honour and Respect those who are no longer with us.

A eulogy is a speech given at a memorial or funeral service. It can be delivered by a family member, close friend, priest, Minister or celebrant and it commemorates and celebrates the life of the deceased.

Eulogies began in ancient Greece and the tradition continues today, although not all cultures and religions include eulogies in their funeral proceedings. However, it is still a very common practice.

A eulogy is essentially a way of saying farewell to a person who has passed away by expressing and sharing thoughts, feelings and experiences that honour and respect the deceased.

They can be written in many different ways depending on the person and the circumstances.

- They can be delivered as a more formal speech which includes the person's history, career and achievements
- They can be more personal through the sharing stories, memories and anecdotes, or
- They can be a combination of these two styles.

Writing a eulogy can seem to be a difficult task, however writing one can also be a way to start the healing process. To help with writing a eulogy we have provided some tips.

Tips for a great Eulogy

The most important thing is to write from your heart and express what means the most to you. And remember you don't have to do it alone - there are resources around that can help.

- You could start by looking around the house and pulling out old photo albums, going through old letters or emails, and any other memorabilia.
- Perhaps go for a walk around your loved one's house and garden as this may trigger memories and ideas.
- Talking to close relatives, friends, and acquaintances is also an excellent way to remember things.

If you are still not sure how to put your thoughts and emotions down on paper, here are some tips to help you with the writing process:

- Make some notes of your memories, special moments together, your feelings for that person and anything else that comes to mind. It doesn't necessarily have to be their life story but more about what your loved one meant to you.
- From these notes, pick out a number of items that are especially meaningful. If it is appropriate you could include something humorous as this can help diffuse some of the tension people at a funeral might have and can help to make the tribute personal and unique.
- Write a rough draft without worrying about how it sounds – you can polish and review it later once you have all your thoughts down on paper.
- Organise the information so that it contains an introduction, middle and end.
- Review and polish your speech and practice reading it out loud.

What to include in a Eulogy

A eulogy can also be made meaningful by describing your loved one's life in terms of achievements as well as a timeline of their life. Here are some facts you might like to gather and include in your eulogy.

Your eulogy doesn't have to include all of these to be meaningful, but by adding some of them it can help make your eulogy more complete:

- When and where was the deceased born
- Nicknames and/or names they are known to others by
- Parents names - where they met and married
- Brothers and Sisters
- Early childhood - localities and interests
- Schools attended, awards gained
- Academic or trade qualifications and achievements
- Some interesting items about childhood days
- Details of any war or military service
- Details of marriages, divorces, children, significant relationships
- Details of grandchildren/great grandchildren
- Details of any Club memberships, positions held
- Details of sporting achievements
- Details of any hobbies or interests, travel, crafts etc.
- Details of historical significance
- Preferences likes and dislikes
- Details of activities e.g. music, theatre etc.
- Any special stories, sayings, qualities that are significant to others
- Special readings, music or poetry to be included.