

## **PUBLIC SPEAKING TIPS: HANDLING QUESTIONS**

The way we handle questions often determines whether we achieve our goal. Here are two basic types of questions and suggestions for how to deal with them.

### **Information Questions**

These questions are designed to find out more about a particular topic or to clarify points. What do you do? How do you respond?

- **Check to make sure you understand the question.**  
*“Let me make sure I understand your question...”*
- **Answer the question.**
- **Check back to make sure you have satisfied the concern.**  
*“Does that answer your question...?”*

### **Trap Questions**

They are designed to trick you and to make you look foolish. What do you do? How do you respond?

- **Listen to the question very carefully.**
- **Recognize the question for what it is: a trap.**
- **Defuse them:**
  - **Do not become defensive.**
  - **Acknowledge the concern.**
  - **Ask for more information about the comment.**

**Example Question:** “You aren’t interested in helping the elderly. Why aren’t you representing the elderly?”

**Example Response:** “It may seem that way to you. Why don’t you tell me about your concerns.”