

PUBLIC SPEAKING

The Complete Guide



Table of Contents

Introduction	1
What Is Public Speaking?	2
Models Of Public Speaking	3
Other Influences on Message and Meaning	4
Purposes For Public Speaking	7
9 Reasons Public Speaking Is An Essential Skill	9
You Will Gain Confidence	9
You Could Be Better at Your Job	9
You Will Feel More Comfortable in Many Situations	10
You Can Fight for Something Important to You.....	10
You Will Stand Out Among Your Colleagues	11
You May Need These Skills at Some Point	11
You Will Grow As A Person.....	11
You Will Learn How To Think Critically	11
You Can Become a Leader	12
Understanding Fear of Public Speaking	13
Your Thoughts and Beliefs	14
Your Body.....	14
Your Skills.....	15
Certain Situations	15
Overcoming Your Fears	16
Practice Relaxation Techniques	16
Be Prepared.....	17
Think About What You Want to Communicate	17
Change Your Self-Talk.....	17

Speak More Often	18
Get Help from Others	18
How To Deliver A Strong Message	19
Remember Your Goal	19
Be Passionate	20
It's a Story, Not a Report	20
Support Your Main Ideas	20
Be Cautious with Presentation Tools	21
What About Body Language?	22
Body Language	22
Facial Expressions and Eye Contact.....	23
How To Prepare For Your First Speech.....	25
Plan Your Speech.....	25
Practice Your Speech	26
Speak To Your Audience	27
Engage Your Audience	27
Think Positively and Confidently.....	28
Using Visuals And Props In Your Public Talk	29
Tips For Giving An Emotional Speech.....	30
22 Strategies For Excellence In Public Speaking	32
Practice, Practice and Practice Again	32
Dress Professionally but Comfortably	32
Remember- It is Normal to be Nervous	32
Watch Your Pacing	33
Be Aware of Fillers.....	33
Stop Worrying About Mistakes.....	33

Be Sure to Address Questions.....	34
Use Body Language Naturally	34
Take a Class	35
Meditate	35
Focus on Your Speech.....	35
Reflect And Learn From Each Speech	35
Use Pauses	36
Be Aware of Language Diversity	36
Prepare Yourself.....	37
Respond to Feedback	37
Be Yourself	37
Practice Dealing with Distractions	37
Test Your Equipment	38
Solicit Feedback.....	38
Include Yourself in the Audience	38
When in Doubt, Practice More	39
7 Last-Minute Calming Techniques	40
Use Your Rational Mind.....	40
Focus on your Audience.....	40
Be Genuine.....	41
Become Focused and Centered.....	41
Visualize a Successful Speech	41
Don't Memorize a Script.....	42
Use Deep Breathing.....	42
Final Thoughts.....	43

Disclaimer: The information contained in this eBook is strictly for informational purposes. Every possible effort has been made in preparing and researching this material. We make no warranties with respect to the accuracy, applicability of its contents or any omissions.

Introduction

Learning to speak effectively in front of others, whether in larger or small groups, is an essential skill today. Designing and delivery your message to a public audience, though, can be a terrifying possibility for many people. Whether you are afraid of public speaking, simply have no experience, or are trying to hone your skills after a few successful talks, then this eBook is here to help.

We will explore the various models and purposes for public speaking as well as explore the reasons why people are often afraid of engaging in this activity. We share helpful tips on how to overcome your fear of public speaking as well as how to prepare for your very first experience speaking in front of others.

We share lots of ideas and suggestions to public speakers of all skill levels, including how to calm those last-minute nerves. If you are ready to take your public speaking game to the next level, this guide has you covered.



What Is Public Speaking?

Public speaking happens in a variety of contexts for many different purposes, but fundamentally, it is speaking to a live audience of some kind. There are many reasons you may need to give a speech or presentation, especially for work or to celebrate or honor someone. Before delivering your address in public, you must prepare what you want to say, so public speaking is also about getting ready to share your thoughts with others.

Effective public speaking is not just about the words you say. In addition to creating a compelling message, you must also deliver your words in a way that encourages people to listen and pay attention. Some speeches are also designed to elicit action from listeners, so the success of your talk will depend on how many people do what you want them to do.

Today, people are constantly receiving messages from multiple sources, including print, social media, tv, and the internet, so it may seem like public speaking is no longer as important as it used to be. But that is not true.

Being able to deliver a message or persuade others in person is still a highly sought-after and necessary skill. As technology allows us to communicate with anyone anywhere at any time, being able to create a powerful message and deliver it well has become even more critical.

Effective communication of any kind involves three essential components- the source, the channel or delivery method, and the receiver. This is true for all types of communication, including public speaking.

Knowing how these influence the message and ways to enhance each will help you to perfect your public speaking skills. There are also various models of communication, as well as different purposes for addressing an audience, and understanding these can help you become better at addressing a crowd.

Next, we will explore these components to help you improve your message and delivery.

Models Of Public Speaking

One model of communication is often referred to as the linear model. This model applies to one person addressing one or more people and doing most, if not all, of the talking. This is common in lectures, public addresses, and other types of public speaking.

You, as the speaker, are the source of information, your verbal and nonverbal cues are your channel, and your audience is your receiver. In linear communications, the receiver may be communicating with you by applause, laughter, or other forms of feedback, but the information is usually going only in one direction, from you to the audience.

The interactional model of communication emphasizes the importance of how a message is both sent and received. Encoding is how you prepare and deliver a message, while decoding is how that message is received by the audience as well as how they respond.

The decoding aspect of this model is often where problems can arise, as often what you intend as the speaker is not what is interpreted by the listener. Using excellent communication skills helps you to make your message as clear as possible while using nonverbal cues and presentation aids to clarify your intent further.

Additionally, part of the interactional model is the feedback that the speaker receives from the audience. In a public speaking situation, that feedback may be more indirect, but depending on the size and purpose of your audience, feedback may also be more direct. Learning to pay attention to and adapt to this source of information is another critical skill you must develop as a public speaker.

The final model of communication most often discussed is the transactional model, which emphasizes the instantaneous nature of communication, wherein people are sending and receiving messages all the time and often at the same time. The transactional model acknowledges that you can be both a sender and a receiver simultaneously, and together, both people make meaning from the exchange.

This model of communication helps us to understand how your culture, past experiences, and current state of mind all influence how we send and receive messages. This can become tricky when you are speaking to a large, diverse audience, as each person is bringing with them a whole set of beliefs and traits that influence how they understand what you are saying.

As a public speaker, your job, then, must also include building shared experiences and knowledge upon which to base your message, so that others understand what you are trying to communicate.

Other Influences on Message and Meaning

When you think of public speaking, you most likely think of one person standing on a stage or in front of a group of people and doing all the talking. This type of monologue is the archetype for public speaking, but it may not necessarily be the most effective for engaging listeners or



communicating effectively.

Think about when you are most engaged as a listener or receiver. Is it when you are sitting passively and listening to someone talk at you for extended periods? Or, is it when you are interacting with the speaker or the information presented?

As humans, we are naturally social animals, and we create meaning as a social construct. Our context and social situations affect what we say, how we say it, and how others interpret our meaning, and the very definition of our words relies solely on other people. So, learning to make your public speaking more about dialogue and less about monologue can help improve the delivery of your message.

If you want to make your public speech more interactional, you can have audience members ask you questions, ask your listeners to share their thoughts on a particular idea with you or with

those seated near them, and ask audience members to actively write about their thoughts, which is another way for them to interact with the information you are sharing.

Finding ways to interact more with your audience and create a dialogic nature to your speech will enhance your experience as well as those of the audience.

Another aspect that affects the response to your speech is whether your audience uses the same meanings as you for essential words. For example, if you are in a technical field and trying to convince others without your same background and training to support an idea you have, using jargon and technical terms may keep them from understanding your message or embracing your request. Understanding your audience and tailoring your message to ensure they know what you are saying is crucial to effective public speaking.

The purpose and context for your speech will also play a role in what you say as well as how you say it. You would not address a large group of children in the same way you would a large group of older people, nor should you use the same speech for an audience of 1,000 as you would for a presentation to 10 people.

Different settings call for different methods and strategies and knowing these and how to adapt also improves your communication skills.

Other crucial factors that you should consider when planning and executing your public speaking experience include:

- How the physical space will affect how you deliver your speech. Will you need to use a microphone, will you require a screen to show visuals to your audience, how will the lighting, temperature, or noise level of the room influence your talk?
- How your speech fits into the context of time. Does the time of day affect how well people will be listening or able to pay attention? Are there recent events that could influence how people think about your topic? Is your talk part of a larger event, and if so, how does it fit into the other topics that your audience may be hearing before yours?

- How well the people in the audience know each other. If your audience is filled with people who know and work together regularly, you can communicate differently than if they are all strangers with no connections to one another.

If everyone in the room has a similar role, such as being a leader, your message should focus on that commonality, as they will interpret some things differently than if their position is one that does not make decisions.

- The cultural makeup of the audience also influences how your message is received. Understanding specific cultural norms or references can be helpful when addressing an audience whose background differs significantly from your own.

Purposes For Public Speaking

There are many reasons you may need to engage in a public speaking opportunity or event. The most common purposes for public speaking include informational talks, demonstrations, persuasive or motivational speaking, and ceremonial or celebratory speeches.

Most public speeches involve informative speaking or sharing your knowledge about a particular subject or topic with other people. Many times, work presentations are informational, as you share important knowledge with those in your organization who need to know. Imparting information is the goal of this type of speaking, and it differs slightly from demonstrations, which are designed to teach someone HOW to do something.

Informational and demonstration speeches are frequent in many different fields and disciplines. Whether your audience is your whole company, your team, or just your mentee, sharing information or



demonstrating a skill is a prevalent task in most fields today, so understanding how to deliver information to others effectively is an essential skill in today's workforce.

Persuading other people is also a common purpose for public speaking. Whether you are trying to persuade someone to take action in your local community, to purchase a particular product, or to achieve their goals through taking a specific action, convincing others to do something is a powerful and much-needed skill. While some professions use persuasive speaking more than others, we all need to understand how to talk to others to get what we want and need in life.

Speaking of ceremonies and special events is another essential purpose for using public speaking skills. Weddings, award ceremonies, funerals, parties, and other events are all times when you may be asked to address those who are assembled.

The purpose of these speeches is usually to entertain or communication a strong feeling, and while you may not need to do this every day of your life, having this skill when you need it is important and allows you to feel confident when you are asked to speak in these types of situations.



9 Reasons Public Speaking Is An Essential Skill

There are many reasons why you should improve your public speaking skills. Knowing how to address an audience and communicate a message can not only help in your professional life, but it can even help you personally.

Learning to speak in front of other people can improve your confidence, help you fulfill other vital goals in your life, and allow you to communicate more effectively with people for all sorts of reasons. Here are some of the many reasons why having excellent public speaking skills is important and why you should invest the time into improving yours.

You Will Gain Confidence

When you can effectively deliver a message or convince other people to engage in a behavior, you will feel confident in your abilities to inform and persuade.

Being able to speak well in front of a group of people teaches you things about yourself that you may not have known before, and your self-esteem will expand with this newfound ability. When you are a better communicator, you are also more likely to get what you want or need, which improves your self-worth, as well.



You Could Be Better at Your Job

One of the skills that is critical in nearly all careers these days is communication. You need to be able to tell customers information, to explain how your product works, or you talk confidently with your co-workers to solve problems or create innovative ideas.

Learning to perfect your public speaking skills can help you make more sales or can lead to higher ratings by satisfied customers. And when you are ready, having effective communication skills can help you land a better job, because you will be able to present yourself with confidence to whomever interviews you.

You Will Feel More Comfortable in Many Situations

Learning public speaking skills can also help you feel more confident in other situations where communication is essential. For example, when you know how to talk with a large group of



people, having a one-on-one conversation with a new person no longer seems so scary, either.

Public speaking is something you do at parties, when you meet new potential mates, and in other social situations, too, and when you feel confident in putting

together a message and delivering it well, you will not feel so awkward in these settings anymore.

You Can Fight for Something Important to You

When you feel confident in your ability to speak publicly, you can use those skills to make a difference in your life, community, or business. When something is important to you, such as a social issue or a problem that needs to be solved, you can use your public speaking skills to inform other people of the problem or to present viable solutions.

You have the opportunity to influence the thoughts and opinions of others when you use your public speaking skills in specific ways. Speech is a powerful tool in our society to muster hope and action, which can lead to change.

You Will Stand Out Among Your Colleagues

When you have the confidence to speak to larger groups, you will feel more comfortable speaking up in front of your colleagues, as well. You can differentiate yourself from others at your job when you are not afraid to share your ideas, suggest new ways to operate, or show your leadership skills to others.

You May Need These Skills at Some Point

We all have at least one occasion in our lives when we are asked to speak in front of other people. Whether it is a work event, a wedding, or to honor a friend who has passed away, you will be presented with an opportunity, and if you have the skills to address the group, you will feel more confident in your abilities. The more you practice your skills, the more comfortable you will be in using them, too.



You Will Grow As A Person

When you speak to others publicly, you are sharing your knowledge and skills with others. You are teaching them. And teaching is a wonderful way to improve your own abilities. Preparing and executing a speech helps you know your information better, and it enables you to explore your knowledge on a deeper level so that you are sure that your speech is clear and that you are communicating effectively. This entire process improves your knowledge and helps you develop.

You Will Learn How To Think Critically

Preparing a speech forces you to research your topic, come up with a logical argument or course of action, and understand how your solutions or ideas affect other people. You must learn to analyze information carefully so that you are not presenting lies or half-truths to your audience.

Public speaking is not just about standing in front of people and talking. It also includes crafting a powerful message that informs, persuades, or entertains people, and you must use many crucial critical thinking skills when doing this.

You Can Become a Leader

Those who are leaders in their field are excellent communicators. They can deliver a strong message with confidence, which makes others want to follow them or to believe their ideas. The best leaders are also the best communicators, which is why people want to support them.

Learning public speaking skills can help you become a leader.



Understanding Fear of Public Speaking

So, if public speaking is so great, why are so many people afraid to do it? Glossophobia, or the fear of public speaking, is one of the most common fears reported by people, with about one-



fourth of all people reporting this phobia in their lives.

Even having just, a mild aversion to speaking in front of other people can have enormous impacts on your life, though, which is why it is important to address this fear head on to conquer it.

Being able to communicate your ideas to others and in public forums is a necessary part of leading a successful life for many people. You use these skills in both professional and personal situations and being able to speak well in front of others can improve your work performance, help you grow your own business, or improve your relationships and connections with other people across all facets of your life.

When you are afraid all the time about speaking in front of groups, it can limit your life and possibilities for success.

When you fear speaking in public, you are less likely to share your ideas with others, to speak up at work, to help solve problems that may be harming or affecting other people, or to stand up for something you believe in.

All of these can prevent you from growing professionally and personally. So, why are we so afraid of talking in front of others? There are several reasons why this is such a common fear, and while there are many theories that try to explain this phobia, at least four contributing factors have been identified.

Your Thoughts and Beliefs

How you think and what you believe about public speaking have a great deal of influence over your fears. The first belief that often gets in the way is that you may be overestimating the stakes when it comes to your ability to communicate your ideas to others.



In very few cases does your job, life, or personal happiness depend solely on the success of one public speech. And no, your credibility or image will not be irreparably damaged if you make a mistake during your speech. That is just not realistic.

When you believe negative thoughts about your public speaking abilities, it influences your ability to communicate effectively. Focusing on what you are communicating and its importance to the audience, instead of focusing on your communication skills and whether people will be judging you, can help you to overcome fears and move past your nervousness.

Thinking of a public speech as the same as a conversation with good friends is another way to overcome these negative thoughts about public speaking. You can view any discussion with other people as “public speaking,” so treating a presentation as something more can increase your worries. Focus on being heard and understood, and the rest will take care of itself.

Your Body

When you are confronted with a potential threat, your body reacts automatically, releasing hormones and neurotransmitters that allow you to respond to this threat. This physiological response is immensely helpful when running away from a wild animal that is chasing you but less so when the threat is an audience to whom you are about to speak.

The stress response prevents you from thinking clearly, inflates your emotional response, and leaves you grappling with all sorts of symptoms and feelings that will not help you deliver a better speech. Learning to stop this physiological response to stress and fear will help you to keep your body calm and avoid this fear cycle.

Your Skills

One thing that can definitely contribute to a fear of speaking in public is a lack of skills in this area. When you have more practice and experience in something, you have more confidence.

So, if you are trying something for the first time or are still developing your skills, you are more likely to be nervous or afraid. Taking a class, working with a coach, or practicing your public speaking skills is the easiest and most efficient way to feel more competent and to alleviate some of your fears.



Certain Situations

Even the most seasoned public speaker can get nervous when the situation is particularly important. There are certainly lots of situations that can make it more likely that you will be afraid of speaking in front of other people, including having little experience speaking in front of others, whether you are being evaluated on your speech, if that evaluation has stakes.

Speaking to people with more status or power than you, sharing new ideas that may be unusual or controversial, or talking to an audience that is a new demographic for you are also situations that can cause more angst.

Overcoming Your Fears

Now that we understand what causes your fear of public speaking, it is time to start working on overcoming those fears. It turns out the targeting the same factors that cause your fear is necessary for learning to conquer them.

Each of the strategies listed below focuses on either the physiological, cognitive, or behavioral aspects of your concern. You will need to choose the ones that address where your fear is coming from for best results, but all work to eliminate the anxiety of public speaking and to calm your mind when you are nervous.

Practice Relaxation Techniques

When your body starts to react physiologically to produce the automatic responses we perceive as fear, you can help it to relax and to reduce that response. When you practice relaxation techniques while you are thinking about public speaking, during your preparations for your speech, and while you are giving your talk can not only help you get through your presentation this time but also reduce your fear when the next opportunity arises.



Relaxation techniques involve the control of your breath, which reduces your heart rate, and to relax the tense muscles that result when your body expresses fear. Many techniques will work, so just do a quick search for “relaxation technique” to learn about the dozens that are out there. It is important that you start practicing these early in the preparation phase of your speech, and to continue practicing these regularly as the time for your talk nears.

Be Prepared

One of the ways to reduce your anxiety about public speaking is to ensure you are as prepared as possible for your speech. When you are prepared, you will worry less about failing, forgetting what you want to say, or becoming muddled during your talk.

With good preparation, you can focus on what you want to say and how you want to say it, but when you lack preparation, you are much more likely to be nervous and feel like you are going to mess up. Practice your talk often, including in front of other people, and you will feel more confident that it will go well.



Think About What You Want to Communicate

Instead of worrying so much about your performance and how people will judge you, focus instead on how your information or demonstration will benefit your listeners. Your purpose is to inform, persuade, or entertain people, and that should be your focus.

Many people fear public speaking because they focus so much on how others will evaluate their performance and neglect to consider that what they have to say is valuable. Shifting your focus can help you to allay your fears.

Change Your Self-Talk

One of the ways you can make your irrational fear of public speaking worse is the way you talk to yourself, which reinforces your anxiety and keeps you fearful through negative statements.

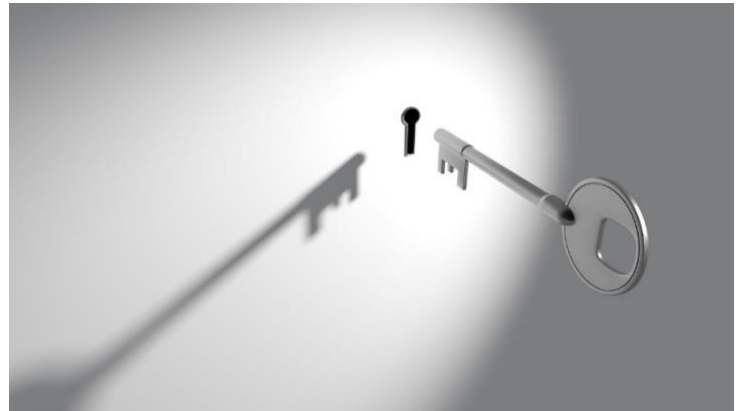
When you tell yourself, “I am not a good speaker,” you reinforce this notion and believe it. Instead, change these statements to positives, telling yourself that you are capable and have something worthwhile to say.

Repeating positive affirmations to yourself can help you to remain calm and overcome your fears of public speaking.

Speak More Often

Getting better at public speaking happens when you engage more in public speaking.

The more experience you have with this activity, the more confident you will feel doing it. Start small. Look for opportunities to address small groups of close friends. Move up to making short speeches in front of colleagues or during work meetings. The more you do it, the better you will feel.



Get Help from Others

When trying to overcome your fear of public speaking, it can be helpful to work with others who have mastered this skill. Whether you go straight to a professional coach or you engage the help of friends or loved ones who display this skill, asking for help can give you perspective and advice that helps you to overcome your fears.

How To Deliver A Strong Message

When you are preparing your talk, you want to ensure that your message is clear, well-organized, and elicits the response you want.

Crafting a speech that entertains, engages, and reaches your audience can not only help you accomplish your purpose for speaking but also gives you more confidence that your address was received well and had the intended effect.

The following are tips for creating a strong message that will help your presentation or speech accomplish its goal and allow you to feel better about delivering it.

Remember Your Goal



Your entire speech has a purpose, a goal. Each part of your talk should be moving you and your audience closer to achieving that goal.

When you fill your speech with unrelated information, irrelevant stories, or inane anecdotes, your audience loses engagement, and you will end up feeling more nervous when you sense that you are not engaging your listeners.

For every part of your speech, as yourself...

“Does this address my goal?”

“Is this necessary to accomplish my purpose?”

The best speeches are tight, move along logically, and take the listener on a purposeful journey. Keep this in your sites as you draft your address.

Be Passionate

When you care about your topic, it shows in your speech. And when you care, your audience is more likely to care, too. When you lack enthusiasm for your topic, you are more likely to come across as disingenuous, and your audience will be able to sense this.

When you care about what you are sharing, you will seem more believable and authentic, and that means people will listen more closely to you. When you are enthusiastic, you are more likely to be forgiven for minor errors that you might make, as well.

It's a Story, Not a Report

If you want to make your speech engaging, make sure it has a more narrative line, that it tells a story. People love stories, and the narrative structure of stories are engaging and keep your audience focused on what you are saying.

Stories should be relatable and relevant, so do not just throw some in just to have stories. Stories make your topic real and help people understand why they should care.



Support Your Main Ideas

When you start thinking about what you want to say, start with an outline. What are your main ideas? For each of these, you should be sure to include supporting details, facts, examples, or other illustrations that make these ideas more concrete for the listener. These details help you to be specific, allow people to see the relevance of your ideas, and provide legitimacy to your premise.

Be Cautious with Presentation Tools

While there is nothing inherently wrong with using PowerPoint or other slide presentations to enhance your talk, you want to be sure that you are using them well. Below, we discuss this topic more in depth, but remember that visual aids are meant to engage your audience, not just become your notecards for your speech. Learning to add multimedia sources and engaging visuals to your slides will add value to your talk.



What About Body Language?

Your audience members are not just paying attention to the words you say. They also get information and construe meaning from your body language, gestures, facial expressions, and clothing. All these nonverbal cues are part of delivering a public speech, so it is important that you address each of these in your preparation and delivery.

Body Language

Your body language communicates a lot about your emotions and interest in a topic as well as your overall confidence in your ability to deliver a message to your audience. You can learn to use your body to help you emphasize points, clarify meaning, and reinforce your sincerity for your subject matter.

When you are practicing your speech, it is essential that you also practice your body languages, gestures, movements, and facial expressions, so that these feel more natural when you are delivering your talk. Body language should feel natural and relaxed, a part of your talk, so that it does not look forced.



While you are talking you may want to move around the space, as well. Make sure that this is not too distracting for your audience, though, or that you are not pacing out of nervousness. Some movements are good, but fidgeting, playing with your hair or the microphone, or swaying in place are all signs of nervous energy and not adding anything to your speech.

You may wonder what to do with your hands while you are talking. If you must hold a microphone, that takes care of one hand. Some people prefer to keep their hands in their pockets or rest them on a podium, which are all okay, too. But your hands can help you

emphasize important points, make your talk feel more conversational, and allow you to express yourself more distinctly.

Whatever your movements, they should match your words and your facial expressions, or they will appear insincere. Body language is meant to enhance your talk, so again, practicing, especially in front of a mirror, can help you to decide how best to communicate your ideas.

Facial Expressions and Eye Contact

Facial expressions convey meaning just like your body language and words. When you are talking, your face should show your engagement with the topic, can express amusement when you make a mistake, and give reassurance to your audience that you are an expert to whom they should be listening.

Your face communicates a wide range of emotions, and you should capitalize on this by using your facial expressions to help you communicate with your audience.

Making eye contact is also important for connecting with your audience. When you look others in the eye, it shows you care and are interested in what they are thinking. It takes practice to make eye contact with audience members, and this is easier when the group is smaller, but it is vital that you establish eye contact with people during your talk.



There are some common mistakes when trying to make eye contact with the audience. These include constantly glancing from your notes up at the audience and then back down, staring at the back of the room, looking directly at only one or two audience members, or always looking at the same section of the room.

Ask someone to watch you practice your speech and make comments on your ability to make eye contact. You should be able to look up and speak directly to specific audience members at least 80 percent of your speech, so again, practice is necessary to make this happen.

How To Prepare For Your First Speech

Well, the time has come, and you have been asked to give your first public speech. Whether you are addressing a small group of coworkers or an audience of strangers, you can learn to present yourself well and avoid many of the common mistakes of novice public speakers. If you are preparing your first public presentation, here are some tips to help you prepare and for your talk to go smoothly.

Plan Your Speech

If there are two hard and fast rules of public speaking, one is to be prepared with what you want to say, and the other is to practice. But, before you can practice, you need to write your speech.

Start by crafting an attention-getting introduction that also lays out what you will be sharing during your talk. Why are you here, and what will people learn from you? Examples of good openers are proactive statistics, a funny story, or important headlines to make your speech relevant to your audience.

Several excellent tools can help you organize your speech, including using the 7Cs of communication, which are: completeness, conciseness, consideration, clarity, concreteness, courtesy, and correctness.



Read advice from expert speechwriters and use speech-writing templates to help you organize your thoughts. Write down your speech in its entirety but also write an outline of your major points and details.

Planning your remarks helps you to be able to think on your feet, so that is something unpredictable happens or someone asks a question, you can adjust or respond appropriately. The more you plan, the easier it is to feel relaxed.

Practice Your Speech



It is likely to surprise that this is the second most important tip for anyone giving a speech.

Practice not only allows you to feel more comfortable and confident, but it helps you solidify your speech into your long-term memory and makes you so familiar with the topic that it will be a great success the day of. Becoming very familiar with the topic also helps alleviate nerves and anxiety because you will feel more confident in yourself.

Practice in front of mirrors, in front of other people, and even in front of a camera. Recording yourself and then watching it back can help you identify areas where you need to work on body language, facial expressions, and eye contact as well as soothe any worries you may have about your ability to perform your speech.

If you are planning to use technology during your speech, be sure to practice with that, too.

There is nothing worse than preparing and working hard to learn your presentation, then getting flustered because your technology tools do not work correctly, or you did not plan ahead for eventualities.

Practice enables your words to flow smoothly, and so you can work on your timing, as well.

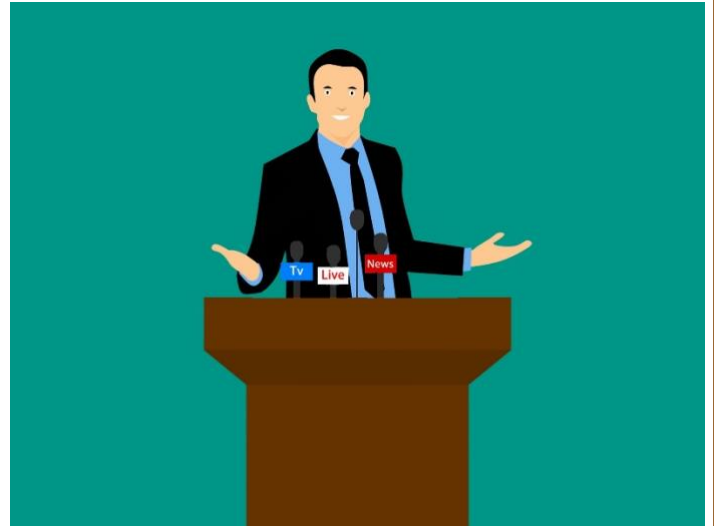
Remember that you are more likely to speak faster when you are nervous, so you can watch your time to practice your rate of speed and monitor how fast you are going. Always ask for feedback any time you have someone watch you give your speech.

Speak To Your Audience

Never read your speech, nothing is worse for an audience than a speaker reading in monotone. It's boring! Do not memorize your speech. Prepare an outline to have in front of you and practice often delivering your address just using these bullet points as reminders of what you want to say.

Keep eye contact with your audience and avoid looking down at your notes. Practice often so you can recreate the speech from memory covering your main ideas and details but using the words that come naturally to you at the moment.

You are telling a story, not reciting a script. And the more relaxed and conversant you sound, the easier your speech will be for you and your listeners.



Engage Your Audience

We have all been to talks where the speaker is talking AT the audience the entire time and does not engage with a single person in the room.

Guess what? You likely remember nothing of the content of that speech. Engaging your audience helps to keep them focused, makes you feel more relaxed because people will be listening and responding, and it ensures people retain the information that you are sharing with them.

Asking leading questions to elicit responses from the audience is one way to engage people. You can ask for a show of hands to illustrate a point, too. Letting people know that you are open to questions throughout the talk can help them feel like they can stop you when they need. But, if you are not comfortable with that much dialogue, you can also ask for questions to be posed at the end.

There are many other ways to engage with the audience, but making eye contact, using your facial expressions to communicate your emotions, responding when you see people have a strong reaction to your words are all excellent and easy ways to show people you are connected to them and that you are not just there to talk AT them.

Think Positively and Confidently

No matter what, you will learn a great deal from the process of preparing and delivering your first speech, so you should look at this experience as a positive, learning opportunity. Thinking positively will help to keep nervousness at bay, and the more positive you feel, the more confident you will project.

Speak with authority, because that is why you have been asked to present. You know something that others need to know. Standing up straight and taking deep breaths shows confidence, as does looking people in the eye and smiling.

Using your body language, facial expressions, and words to convey optimism

and confidence will show your audience that they should listen to you, and you will feel less nervous when you choose not to dwell on negativity.

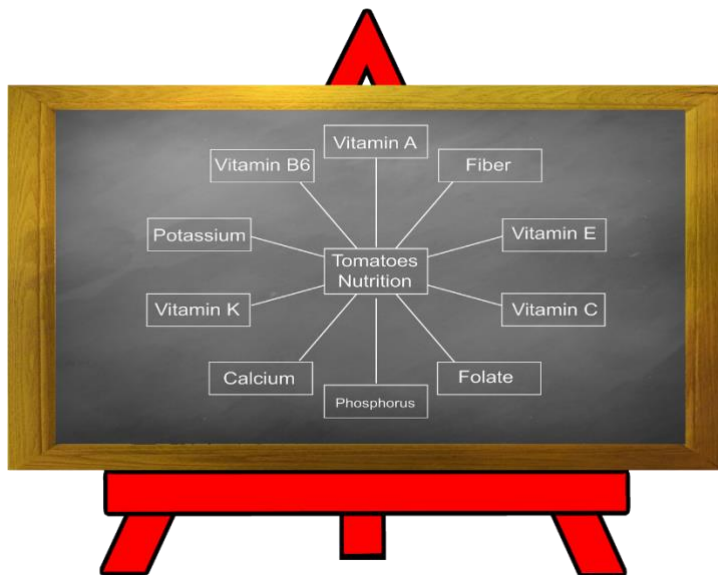
Below, we offer many more tips on how to give an effective speech, and all of these are appropriate for first-time public speakers, as well, so please be sure you read that chapter, as well.



Using Visuals And Props In Your Public Talk

If your audience has nothing else to look at while you are talking but you, they are less likely to remain focused or to retain the information that you are presenting. Our brains learn better when we see AND hear ideas, so using visual aids and props can effectively support and supplement your speech.

Visual aids should support your words but not detract from your address, so it is essential to make them informative and visually appealing but not so busy and colorful as to detract from you.



Most people immediately think of PowerPoint to create and organize a presentation, but this may not serve your needs or be the best tool for the job.

When considering what type of visual aid will improve your speech, consider your purpose and what you are trying to convey. Visuals can spark interest, clarify points, provide visual representations of abstract ideas, and increase understanding for the listener.

Visuals are great for illustrating processes or for showing demonstrations, and they can help you explain things that are difficult to visualize. Pictures can help convey meaning or evoke emotion. Visuals should be simple, purposeful, relevant, and easy-to-see.

While projecting a presentation on a screen is one option, you can also use music, videos, photographs, posters, handouts, or even physical props or objects to help solidify the message of your speech.

Tips For Giving An Emotional Speech

There are times in your life when you will be asked to speak about an emotional topic or at a time of celebration or remembrance. Many times, these types of speeches are less formal than, say, a work presentation, but they are also much more emotional, which can make them hard to plan as well as to present.



Examples of these types of speaking opportunities are giving toasts at a wedding, anniversary, or birthday celebration, delivering a eulogy at a funeral, accepting an award, or introducing someone.

For all these types of occasions, your most powerful weapons against nervousness and fear of public speaking will be preparation and practice (surprise!).

Planning out what you want to say, then practicing your speech will help you work through some of your stronger emotions privately instead of in front of lots of people.

Preparing ahead of time allows you to choose words that are meaningful and to highlight what you think is important about the event or the person.

Here are some additional tips that can help you prepare and present a speech that has emotional connections to you.

- Be genuine and heartfelt.
- Show excitement for celebrations or accomplishments.
- Speeches are meant to honor the people being recognized, so keep the spotlight where it should be.
- If you are accepting an award, be sure you remember everyone you want to thank, including acknowledging the hard work of fellow nominees.
- Limit your speech to two or three main points. Most speeches of this nature are far too long, so keep your remarks focused.
- Use personal stories, quotes, or anecdotes to personalize your speech as much as possible.
- If giving an award, be sure to describe the significance of the honor as well as a short background of the recipient.
- If you are introducing a speaker, be sure to highlight their authority or expertise on the topic, so the audience sees them as credible before he or she begins.

Many of the tips listed below are also appropriate for giving these types of speeches. Be sure to read this section as well as the concluding chapter on calming your nerves if you are a reluctant public speaker.

22 Strategies For Excellence In Public Speaking

Whether you are new to public speaking, terrified to talk in front of others, or have experience but want to improve your skills, the following tips will help you improve your communication skills and perfect your public speaking abilities.

Practice, Practice and Practice Again

Practice is key. Never give a speech cold, especially if you are new to public speaking. Practice makes you comfortable and well versed with the material. Practice helps you perfect your speech body language and ability to manage nerves. The more practiced you are the more comfortable you will be during the main event.

Dress Professionally but Comfortably

When you feel confident, you will be confident, and your clothes are one way to help you feel good about yourself. Wear something comfortable and you can move easily in but that looks professional.

You want to pick something that you have worn before, so you know how it will wear over time and behave when you move. And choose something that you know looks good on you so that you will feel good about yourself all day.



Remember- It is Normal to be Nervous

Even people who give speeches all the time still get nervous before a talk, so do not worry so much about being nervous. It is natural, and it will calm down once you start speaking and see

the audience react to you. Practice your relaxation techniques, take deep breaths, and remember that you are prepared and have practiced, so you will be just fine!

Watch Your Pacing

When you are nervous, it is natural to talk more quickly. This is because of the extra adrenaline that is released during stressed as well as a psychological desire to end your ordeal as quickly as possible. So, when you are making a public speech, it is vital to watch your rate and be sure that you are not talking so fast that your audience can't understand you.

Remembering to breathe deeply while you are talking can help to slow your rate and keep you speaking at a more natural pace. Take a sip of water now and then to keep you talking slower, as well.

Be Aware of Fillers

One frequent problem with nervous speakers is the use of verbalized pauses, such as "um" or "uh" to fill the void when you don't know what to say or are getting back on track with your speech.

When you say these words a lot, you sound less confident in your topic. While practicing your speech, watch out for these types of fillers, and work to eliminate them from your speech patterns consciously. Working with a coach may be necessary to get rid of this habit if it is persistent, though.

Stop Worrying About Mistakes

Most people who are afraid of public speaking say that their biggest fear is making a mistake in front of others and embarrassing themselves. If this is you, we are here to tell you that it is okay to stop worrying about this.

First, everyone makes mistakes, and no one in your audience expects you to be perfect. They will forgive minor transgressions without a second thought. In fact, you may know that you messed

up, but there is a good chance your audience will never realize it. Practice helps to reduce the likelihood of mistakes, as well, so prepare and practice, and you will feel more confident.

If you make a mistake, do not call attention to it. Just keep going with your speech. Minor mistakes are easily covered up with this strategy.

For significant errors, use humor to deflect the situation. Acknowledge that you are nervous, take a deep breath, and move on. Handling your fumble with grace will go a long way toward helping the audience to feel more confident in you.

Be Sure to Address Questions

Questions and answers are an excellent tool for not only connecting with your audience but also solidifying your argument and credibility. Be sure to leave time in your presentation or talk to address questions from the group, so that you can hear your audience's ideas and concerns.



You can prepare for this part of your talk by making your own list of possible questions or by soliciting possible questions from others who listen to you practice your speech.

If someone asks you a question you can't answer right away, it is acceptable to say so. Simply take their contact information and promise to get an answer to them soon.

Use Body Language Naturally

While movement can make your speech more effective, it is important that your gestures and facial expressions are natural and purposeful. Do not overdo it. You do not have to be moving the entire time. Talk and move as you would when you are speaking to friends or a small group of people, and your audience will be better related and connect with you.

Take a Class

If you are really new to or nervous about public speaking, take a class. There are many free, online courses available on this topic, and getting help and support from a mentor can help you gain the skills and confidence you need.

You can also join a local Toastmasters International group, where you will have many opportunities to practice speeches and get feedback from experts.



Meditate

You can clear your head of negative thoughts by practicing daily meditation. Meditation is a perfect strategy for overcoming fear and anxiety, whether related to public speaking or someone else. There are many guided meditation apps and websites that can help you get started.

Focus on Your Speech

When you start to feel nervous, just think about what you want to say and how this is important for your audience. Do not worry about or overthink the audience's reaction but focus on delivering your talk as best as you possibly can.

That is the only thing you can control and all you should worry about. There are a million reasons besides your speech why someone in the audience may be disengaged or not paying attention. That is not on you, so do not let it distract you from what you came there to say.

Reflect And Learn From Each Speech

After you have finished a presentation or talk, take some time to reflect on what went well and what you can learn for next time. If there is a video of your speech, watch it while taking notes.

If there is no video, sit down immediately afterward, while it is still fresh in your mind, and make notes.

- Where did you feel awkward or confident?
- What mistakes were made?
- How was your body language?
- Did you make eye contact?
- How did you handle stumbles or mistakes?

Use this information to help you practice for your next speech and learn from each public speaking experience.

Use Pauses

Some people have this fear that, if they stop talking, the audience will stop listening. That simply is not true. You are not on the radio, so “dead air” is not something you should worry about. In fact, pauses can be immensely powerful for drawing in your listeners, emphasizing a point, or making a transition. Dramatic pauses tell the audience to pay attention, so learn to use them purposefully in your speech.

Be Aware of Language Diversity

If you are speaking to an audience that contains many people who are not native English speakers, you may need to make some adjustments to accommodate them and to ensure they are engaged throughout your talk.

For example, be sure you are speaking at a natural pace and enunciating clearly, to make it easier to understand you. If you are using technical jargon or medical terminology, and the listeners are not experts in this field, be sure to define words, perhaps with your visual aids.

Do not use slang or idioms, as these can be confusing to non-native speakers.

Prepare Yourself

Just as you should prepare your speech, make sure you prepare your body. Get a good night's sleep the night before. Do not drink too much coffee or tea that day, as caffeine can make you more anxious and jittery.

Be sure you have water handy during your speech to keep your mouth from getting dry. Make sure you eat a healthy meal beforehand that is not high in sugar, which can spike your blood glucose and make you feel even worse.

Respond to Feedback

Be sure you are staying aware of audience reactions and adapt as you go. Remain flexible, so that you are not so focused on your speech that you neglect cues from your audience that you are not meeting your needs.



Be Yourself

Your audience will respond more positively to you when they see the real you. Be yourself. Establish your expertise early on, but make sure your listeners know something about you as a person, too.

Practice Dealing with Distractions

When preparing, be sure you practice with distractions. While the ideal environment would allow you and your audience to focus entirely on your speech, this is not reality. Try doing your speech with the TV on or when there are children running around. Try to answer a text message while staying on track with your talk.

While these are different from what you may encounter during your talk, they show that you can keep talking and deal with distractions or technical problems that may arise.

Test Your Equipment

Technology is great until it isn't. Always practice with your technology, if you are using any, and test your equipment at the venue well ahead of your speech. That will give you time to solve any problems. It is a good idea to have a back-up plan that doesn't use technology, in case something goes wrong, as well.

Solicit Feedback

After your speech is over, it can be beneficial to hear feedback from audience members. Find someone you think will give you an honest assessment and ask for their feedback. Tell them you are looking for honest advice so that you can improve their skills.

Ask them specifically what they liked and three areas where you can improve. Then be sure you use this information in preparing for your next talk. Constructive criticism can help you improve if you are willing to hear what people have to say.

Include Yourself in the Audience

If you want to connect with the audience, use more words that include yourself as a part of "them." Talk about how "we" can solve this problem, how your collective industry is doing something, or how you are all there to learn from each other.

The more you use language that connects you to your listeners, the more likely they are to engage in what you have to say. You are talking with this group, not at them, so do not forget this.

When in Doubt, Practice More

You can't have too much practice when it comes to public speaking. If you really want to improve your skills, get out there and do it more often. The more you do it, the more natural it will feel, and the less nervous you will be.



7 Last-Minute Calming Techniques

So, the big day is here, and you are ready to give your speech, but your nerves are taking over. What now? If you need some last-minute tools to help you remain calm and get through your presentation, have no fear!

We are here to help. Here are seven strategies for calming your nerves and helping you survive your public speaking commitment.

Use Your Rational Mind

Fear is not rational, in nearly all cases. And as you get more nervous and anxious, you begin to



think less rationally the more you fret. So, stop and take a breath.

Breathe in deeply and consider the worst-case scenario.

Are you imagining passing out in front of your audience, losing your job because you messed up, or forgetting your entire speech?

Now, how likely are any of these to actually happen?

When have you ever know these to occur at a talk you attended? The answer is probably never.

So, you are worrying about something that is not going to happen. Knowing that your fears are irrational is the first step to letting them go and moving on.

Focus on your Audience

Instead of worrying about yourself, focus instead on the people who came to hear from you. You are there for them. They are ready to listen and be educated by you, and what you have to say is essential. Focusing on the needs of others can help you calm your nerves and get ready to talk.

Be Genuine

When your audience sees that you are a real, genuine, vulnerable person, they are more likely to connect with you. We all have flaws and make mistakes. Let your audience get to know you so that they can trust you and engage with your presentation.

Start with a story about yourself and how you became interested in this topic or provide a quick anecdote with some humor to ease your tension. Getting the audience on your side early on will help you feel more relaxed for the rest of your speech.

Become Focused and Centered

As you get closer to your speech, you need to find ways of getting your mind off your nervousness and focused on the present. Each of us finds success doing this through different means, so what works for one person may not work for another.

You may need to do something completely new to get your mind off your anxiety, or you may need to exercise to relax. Whatever your trick, be sure you do it in the hours leading up to your speech so that your mind is where it needs to be, which is on right now, not on the unknown future.

Visualize a Successful Speech

If you are nervous about your talk, try imagining what it will feel like a few hours from now when your speech is over, everything went well, and the audience is clapping for you. How will you feel?

What will it look, and sound like to stand in front of your listeners and know you have done a good job? Visualizing this success can help you defeat your nervousness and is a trick used by many successful people, including athletes, doctors, and dancers.

Don't Memorize a Script

Lots of people who are new to public speaking try to write out their speech, word for word and memorize each word precisely. While it is necessary to prepare your speech in this way, it is NOT needed for you to memorize each word and repeat it exactly as you first wrote it.

You are instead recreating your speech from memory, including the main ideas and details but using the words that come naturally to you at the moment. The writing of the speech prepares you to speak conversantly on the topic, not to have it memorized like a script.

Once you have written the speech, write an outline that includes the main ideas and supporting details, and practice delivering your address just using these bullet points as reminders of what you want to say.

You are telling a story of your topic, not reciting a script. And the more relaxed and conversant you sound, the easier your speech will be for you and your listeners.

Use Deep Breathing

We have said this many times here, but it is worth repeating. Breathing exercises really do work and taking just a few minutes to focus on your breath, to inhale and exhale deeply, and to be present in that moment of breathing can do wonders to calm your nerves and help you feel ready to begin.

Final Thoughts

Perfecting your public speaking skills is a goal for many people today, as being able to communicate effectively has become more important than ever in many disciplines and industries. But being a better speaker does not just help you professionally.

It can give you more confidence, improve your ability to talk with your friends and loved ones, and help you feel more at ease in social situations. In short, there are many advantages to learning to be a better public speaker but no disadvantages to learning these skills.

Enhancing your ability to speak in front of others happens over time and with careful preparation and practice. Some people find they develop better in this area when working with a teacher, mentor, or coach while others can practice on their own and grow as they want.



Following the tips and suggestions provided in this eBook will certainly help, but if you want to learn more, there are many professional resources available to help you perfect your public speaking skills, as well.

Learning to be a better public speaker is an easy way to overcome common fears while also getting more of what you need and want in life.

So, if you are ready to take the next step in your career or personal development, then it is time that you looked for your next public speaking opportunity and start preparing today.