

Stand Up and Deliver: Public Speaking Made Easy

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Speaking in public is a common source of stress. Many people would like to avoid this stress entirely, but speaking is an important method of communicating information and expressing ideas. It is a primary medium for presenting and selling products and ideas. Being able to verbally communicate effectively to others or to groups, large and small, is essential in school, business, social situations, and your personal life.

The truth about public speaking is that IT DOES NOT HAVE TO BE STRESSFUL! If you understand the hidden causes of stress, prepare for speaking in public, and keep just a few key principles in mind, speaking will soon become a satisfying experience for you.

10 Tips for Successful Public Speaking

Feeling some nervousness before giving a speech is natural and healthy. It shows you care about doing well. But too much nervousness can be detrimental. Here's how you can control your nervousness and make effective, memorable presentations:

1. **KNOW** your room. Be familiar with the place in which you will speak. Arrive early, walk around the speaking area, and practice using the microphone and any visual aids.
2. **KNOW** the audience; greet some of the audience as they arrive. It's easier to speak to a group of friends than to a group of strangers.
3. **KNOW** your material. If you're not familiar with your material or are uncomfortable with it, your nervousness will increase. Practice your speech and revise it if necessary.
4. **RELAX**. Ease tension by doing exercises. **BREATHE!**
5. **VISUALIZE** yourself giving your speech. Imagine yourself speaking in a loud, clear, and assured voice. When you visualize yourself as successful, you will be successful.



6. **REALIZE** that people want you to succeed. Audiences want you to be interesting, stimulating, informative, and entertaining. They don't want you to fail.
7. **DON'T** apologize. If you mention your nervousness or apologize for any problems you think you have with your speech, you may be calling attention to something they hadn't noticed. Keep silent.
8. **CONCENTRATE** on the message – not the medium. Focus your attention away from your own anxieties; focus on your message and your audience. Your nervousness will dissipate.
9. **TURN** nervousness into positive energy. Harness your nervous energy and transform it into vitality and enthusiasm.
10. **GAIN** experience. Experience builds confidence, which is the key to effective speaking. Ask to give presentations or to speak in public often.

REMEMBER: You are unique and have your own special way of presenting and interacting with your audience. Share your information confidently. Let your enthusiasm for the presentation shine. And, when you share your information, you share yourself, too.

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Some Do's and Don'ts

Whenever you speak to people, you are attempting to verbally express your thoughts and ideas, to satisfy the listener or audience, and to get rewards from the process. As you organize your thoughts before speaking to a group, remember these points.

Do: Plan ahead and have plenty of practice time.

Don't: Put off writing your presentation until the last minute.

Do: Arrive early, know where to sit, and walk to the podium.

Don't: Rush into the room at the last minute.

Do: Remember a few important highlights or words.

Don't: Memorize your entire speech.

Do: Use note cards to remind yourself of key points, and to keep going.

Don't: Read note cards word-for-word.

Do: Anticipate questions and practice how to handle them.

Don't: Hope that no one will ask questions

Do: Look at your audience.

Don't: Keep your head down as you speak.

Do: Make eye contact with everyone from time to time.

Don't: Stare at one person.

Do: Have a glass of water handy if your mouth gets dry.

Don't: Chew gum or candy.

Do: Stand straight but comfortably.

Don't: Fidget or stand too stiffly.

Do: Have props or visuals if they are useful.

Don't: Use distracting or hard-to-use props or visuals.

Do: Know that the audience wants you to succeed.

Don't: Apologize to the audience if you are nervous or forget something.

Just keep pushing yourself into the speaking arena.

In no time, your skill, confidence, and natural ability will come to the surface. It may take time, but the long-term rewards will be impressive.

Speech Outline

Select a topic you are interested in, know something about, or are willing to research. The topic may relate to a club activity or a major social issue. It should be one that interests your audience. In developing your speech, focus on a main idea or theme. Remember, do not try to cover a topic that is too broad. The following outline will help you develop your speech.

Name of organization _____

Description of event _____

What type of remarks are requested?

Welcoming remarks (3 - 5 minutes)

Brief remarks (5 - 10 minutes)

Speech (15 - 20 minutes)

Major address (specify length)

Other speakers during the same session?

Who, and on what topics? _____

Will there be a question-and-answer period?

Yes No

How many people will attend? _____

Are reporters expected? Yes No

What is the main topic you want to cover?

What are some key points you want to make?

What conclusion do you want the audience to reach after hearing you speak?

Do you have other instructions or audiovisuals to include?



Remember: One never becomes a “perfect” speaker. Developing public speaking skills is a lifelong experience. But, the points discussed in this educational program topic will get you started in becoming the speaker you want to be and the speaker your audience wants to hear.

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