

PUBLIC SPEAKING

Here are some proven tips on how to control your butterflies and give better presentations:



Know your material. Pick a topic you are interested in. Know more about it than you include in your speech. Use humour, personal stories and conversational language – that way you won't easily forget what to say.



Practice. Rehearse out loud with all equipment you plan on using. Work to control filler words; Practice, pause and breathe. Practice with a timer and allow time for the unexpected.



Know the audience. Greet some of the audience members as they arrive. It's easier to speak to a group of friends than to strangers.



Know the room. Arrive early, walk around the speaking area and practice using the microphone and any visual aids.



Relax. Begin by addressing the audience. It buys you time and calms your nerves. Pause, smile and count to three before saying anything. Transform nervous energy into enthusiasm.



Visualize yourself giving your speech. Imagine yourself speaking in loud, clear and confident voice. Visualize the audience clapping – it will boost your confidence.



Realize that people want you to succeed. Audiences want you to be interesting, stimulating, informative and entertaining. They're rooting for you.



Concentrate on the message – not the medium. Focus your attention away from your own anxieties and concentrate on your message and your audience.



Create a contingency plan. What if the PowerPoint fails, the light goes off, or your opening falls flat. Be prepared for the worst and you won't be that bad.



Share an interesting and emotional story. Share a genuine story and let your emotions flow. This is sure to connect with the audience.



Pause. Pause for 10 seconds (2-3 seconds will make them feel you've lost your context) and resume your speech with confidence. This will give you bonus points and get everyone's attention.



Share one thing no one knows. Even if it's about them. It's sure to give them a "wow" feeling.

Focus on earning attention. Now let's look at a few things to immediately start doing. Instead of playing the "turn off your mobile devices" game, because no one will (and you'll just look stodgy), focus on earning their complete attention. Make your presentation so interesting, so entertaining, and so inspiring that