Public Speaking With Confidence

Speak in Public with Confidence and Enjoyment

Speaking in public, in front of groups and conducting presentations are commonly agreed as the least favourite activities that anyone can perform.

However, if we are well prepared, well equipped and well supported, you will find that speaking in public really can be quite enjoyable – honest!

Here are some ways to make public speaking an enjoyable experience both for yourself, as well as for your audience.

Following are some ways YOU can make speaking in public an enjoyable experience:

As much as possible/appropriate, include your audience

You don't always have to be the talking head at a meeting.

Prepare questions in advance that will encourage the audience to participate.

Consider your audience in advance—Who are they?

What might their histories and/or interests be?

Prepare opportunities in your presentation/speech for audience participation.

Inject appropriate humour in your delivery

It will do you good, enabling you to lighten up and release any tension.

It will also enable the audience to loosen up, pay more attention, and receive you in a much more favorable way.

Share a little known fact

Most audiences are especially grateful to hear something they haven't already heard before.

One single piece of new information can make the time spent listening completely worth their while.

If you can find one little known, yet especially relevant fact, you will have a captive audience.

Smile and the world smiles with you

It's true!

Others can sense your discomfort, and despite any earth shattering information you have to share, your audience is apt to discount your brilliance if the delivery of your key messages isn't clear and assertive.

Instead remember to smile, make eye contact and believe your own words—and they will too.

Keep it relevant

To the extent possible, make sure your audience is the *right* audience for the information you are presenting.

In other words, don't lecture on retirement options to a newly graduating class.

Know before hand what you want to say and practice until it comes naturally.

This will enable you to spend more time relating to your audience, than trying to remember what comes next in your delivery.

Create fun visuals (as appropriate)

Some individuals will retain more if they are able to see graphic representations of the information you plan to deliver.

Consider which parts of your message can be presented visually, and remember to keep visuals simple, attractive, and large enough so everyone can see them.

Any fun, relevant clipart or comic can also be a nice perk.

So, what are the qualities of a good speaker?

Here are a list of the qualities and characteristics of a good public speaker/presenter.

- **Make sure you include these points when you have to speak in public**
- **They talk to us as though we are having a conversation**
- **They speak our language**
- **They look as though they are enjoying themselves.**
- **They inspire us to find out more about the subject**
- **They tell stories/use the human-interest angle**
- **Someone who conjures up pictures in our mind**
- **They don't talk for hours**
- **They let us know where we are going**
- **They look at us-not their notes**
- **They stress important points and pause to allow ideas to sink in**
- **The talk appears well prepared but has an air of spontaneity**

The importance of body language

Don't forget your non-verbal action signals!

You will want to look confident even though you may not be on the inside.

Don't just stand there, with your arms by the side of you!

ACT CONFIDENTLY and you will FEEL CONFIDENT!

Try it, it really works.

So, how do you act confidently?

- **With your posture – wall tall with your head up.**
- **Smile**
- **Maintain eye contact**
- **Handshake**
- **Move around**
- **Gestures**
- **Relax**

Speak with confidence as well.

People will believe what they see more than what they hear, but once you look confident, you have to sound the part too!

- **Breathing**
- **Sound quality of your voice**
- **Pitch**
- **Speed**
- **Tone**
- **Pausing**
- **Listening**
- **Use confident words**

15 Ways to overcome your STAGE FRIGHT!

- **Be well prepared. Rehearse several times**
- **Co-operate with your body – rest, eat and sleep well beforehand**
- **Dress in clothes that make you feel good**
- **Take several deep breaths to relax your body**
- **Concentrate on the messages you want to get over to your audience**

Move around and release your nervous energy.

Visualise yourself doing well

Remember that your audience wants you to do well

Think of a similar occasion in the past when you did it before and did it well. Think about it for a moment.

Make no negative confessions "I'm so nervous"

Put the situation into perspective

If you get nerves during your talk, move around or do something different to get into a different "state"

Pick out some friendly faces and make eye contact with them

If you make a mistake you make a mistake, laugh at it and the audience with laugh with you. Make a joke out of it.

The more you do it the better you will become. Practice makes perfect.

Sean

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