

7 Tips to Calm Your Nerves When Public Speaking



Just thinking about public speaking can make our palms sweat. Inevitably, leadership positions require speaking to large groups.

If this sparks anxiety for you then you are not alone!

3 out of 4 people suffer from public speaking phobia. More specifically, 75% of females and 73% of men.

It is important to take control of public speaking anxiety. Incorporate the following tips into your speech instead of turning down your next public speaking opportunity.

Visualize Your Success

We need to “see” our success to manifest our goals. Visualize yourself presenting your speech. You are standing in front of the crowd, calm and collected. You provide your audience with the information with they need, receive questions, and sit down. You must believe that you can be confident to be confident.

Know Your Audience

Many people that despise public speaking feel confident with one-on-one discussions. If this is you, make your presentation feel more like a conversation. You can do that by knowing your audience.

- What are their professions?
- Why are they at your presentation?
- What problems are they facing in their career?

The more you connect with your audience, the more comfortable you will feel.

Memorize Your Opening

The beginning of your speech often creates a rush of adrenaline. Learning the first few lines can decrease your adrenaline levels to speak confidently. You start strong despite your nervousness.

Practice, Practice, Practice!

When someone is learning an instrument or training for a marathon, they put in hours of practice. However, many people do not practice for speeches.

You will feel more confident, prepared, and knowledgeable if you practice for your speech. Memorize the opening and key points. Create an outline. Prepare a visualization but do not read from the material.

Adjust to Your Surroundings

Every venue is different. The lights could be brighter. The microphone might be on a stand versus headphones. Some venues seat hundreds of people.

Know your venue before you give your speech. That way you will be aware of distractions that could increase your nervousness during the presentation.

Practice Positive Affirmation

Stop being so hard on yourself! The audience won't notice if you say your opener differently or skip a point. Repeat positive affirmation throughout your speech (in your head) to appear positive and confident.

Positive Affirmation for Speeches

1. I enjoy presenting and sharing my ideas.
2. Today, I am making a difference by being brave.
3. I am confident and comfortable.
4. I am a powerful, inspiring speaker.
5. My words have a powerful effect on people.

Take Deep Breaths

We rarely think about our breath in daily conversations. However, when we stand in front of an audience, we can easily forget to breathe, heightening nerves and causing us to gasp.

Speak slowly and take the time to breathe. Deep breaths will be easier if you maintain correct posture. Speak as you are inhaling and exhaling. Pause at the bottom of your exhale and top of your inhale.

Practice this exercise before your presentation to ensure that you are comfortable with the technique.