

# How Public Speaking Can Help Your Career



It's something even the brightest minds in business fear. Something you avoid at all costs. Even those that do it for a living never get truly comfortable with it. We're talking about [public speaking](#). And you're going to have to do it at some point in your career. Whether it's giving a presentation to your team or delivering a speech in front of the entire company at the Christmas party, developing the skill of public speaking is a must. Sure, it's not your favorite thing in the world but believe it or not, developing this difficult skill can be a great benefit both personally and professionally.

## It Makes You Memorable

When you speak in front of any number of people, their focus is on you. For however long the stage is yours, you have everyone's undivided attention. Great public speakers know this and instead of fearing the opportunity in front of them, they see it as a chance to have influence and make a lasting impression. When you have a chance to speak in front of a group, they are going to look to you as their leader.

## There's Scarce Competition

Most people avoid public speaking at all costs. Whether it's giving a best man speech at a wedding or delivering a sermon at church, there aren't many people in the audience that have the courage to share their thoughts and wisdom in front of a crowd. If you're able to become even an average public speaker, people will

look to you with respect because you possess a skill most of them don't.

## **You Connect with People**

If you think about some of the most memorable speeches ever given, names like Martin Luther King Jr., John F. Kennedy and Winston Churchill come to mind. So, what made all these names great public speakers? Their ability to show empathy and connect with people. If you're able to speak in a way that conveys passion, vulnerability and inspiration, your audience can't help but be drawn to you. In short, you will be their champion.

## **You Can Be a Catalyst for Change**

Think about the last time you received that email that was circulated to everyone in the organization announcing a new direction or change in policy. You read it and talked about it with your colleagues but probably didn't give much more thought. Now think about the last time someone at the top gave a speech in front of everyone. Even if it was last year, it still sticks out in your mind.

The fact remains that listening to someone speak always has a greater impact than a voiceless note sent electronically. If you want to enact change in your life or your organization, do it by speaking to people, not through a form letter or email.

## **Leaders Get Promoted**

Have you ever found yourself stuck in a rut? You want to advance in your career, but you keep bumping into that glass ceiling. You know that people with leadership qualities get promoted but you just can't figure out how to break through. Developing the skill of public speaking is a great place to start. If you're able to speak in front of people, you have the power to change their minds. It's no secret that leaders have the ability to influence others and there might not be any greater way to have influence than the spoken word.

# You Become More Confident

Everyone is afraid of something. Maybe it's heights, needles or tight spaces. One fear that is shared by more people than any other however, is public speaking. Getting over this fear takes some practice but if you're able make it an asset, you'll feel empowered both personally and professionally. Even more, when you're able to connect with people, it's a great reminder of your value and worth to everyone around you.

## What if You Mess Up?

No one is going to deny that there are more enjoyable things than public speaking. Being the center of attention makes you nervous and what will people think if you screw up? Believe it or not, the best public speakers in the world will tell you that they make mistakes all the time. The best part is most of the time, nobody notices. And when mistakes do happen, it brings about a moment of levity that reminds the audience that whoever they're listening to is a human just like them.

Most people aren't born as great public speakers. Fortunately, it's a skill that can be learned and a fear that can be overcome. If you're willing to step outside your comfort zone and put in the work, you'll be setting yourself apart both personally and professionally. Not only will you have developed a skill that makes you more valuable to your organization, your confidence and sense of self-worth will grow in other areas of your life as well. It can even help you improve your everyday communication skills as well. Challenge yourself and give it a try.

If you work in the [Life Sciences industries in the Bay Area](#), I am a recruiter that can help you advance in your career. Contact me, Jeff King, at [jking@rqfocus.com](mailto:jking@rqfocus.com) or (541) 639-3501.

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# 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.