

Tips on Giving Effective Presentations

Eye Contact – Using a lot of eye contact makes people feel connected to you.

Gestures – Gestures can help you paint with words, but make sure they don't get in the way.

Enthusiasm – Be enthusiastic. If you don't care, why should they?

Articulation – Articulate your words clearly so the members of your audience will understand you.

Breath – breathing helps you control your nervousness. It also gives you time to gather your thoughts. Remember that a pause can be used to provide emphasis.

Posture – Correct posture conveys confidence.

Tone – The tone of your voice can create or change a mood.

Dress – Dress for success. Be neat and professional. Don't wear loud accessories that will distract members of the audience.

Language - Use proper language and be careful not to use non-words such as "um" and "uh" too often.

Smile – A smile will not only make you look and feel better, but make your audience more receptive.

Crossing the Bridge of Shyness

Did you know that Americans, in general, are more afraid of speaking in front of others than they are of snakes, height, or death itself? (According to one widely cited survey)

It is almost as if we believe we are supposed to be afraid.

Yet, effective speaking correlates highly with personal and professional success.

Success in speaking depends on two factors:

Confidence

Competence (both only improve with practice)

You must deal with your internal feelings that can get in the way or help your speech

You must construct and deliver the external message that can miss an audience or reach it.

Examine your fears of speaking: (take two minutes to write them down)

Are they fears of failure?

Of exposure?

Of judgement?

Does your fear SAVE YOU from having to put yourself out there?

Here are some things to try:

Try listing the TOP 10 most humiliating bloopers anyone could conceivable make and imagine living through them.

The worst that can happen, almost never does.

If you are nervous, practice, practice, practice...those fears will lessen

Next, work on your competence.

Express your message in human terms – use quotations, anecdotes and vivid verbs to anchor the message in the emotions the audience can empathize with.

“people are attracted to humanity”

Competence – the content of a speech must show deliberate, direct and transparent organization.

When speaking extemporaneous – just thinking out load – it’s common to be “all over the place”. Listeners only get one chance to absorb a spoken message, so it’s essential to articulate your structure and reinforce it with clear transitions.

The goal is a speech that leaves both the speaker and listeners feeling energized, encouraged and perhaps motivated for future action.