

chapter twelve

# PRESENT

SPEAKING WITH PURPOSE,  
PASSION, AND POWER



*"There are always three speeches for every one you actually give—the one you practiced, the one you gave, and the one you wish you gave." —Dale Carnegie*

but not me. My sister kept telling me 'Don't worry, just finish college.' But, I just felt so guilty."

Biatríz reflects on her growth over the past four years and shares this advice with students: "Don't get so caught up in who or what you are supposed to be. You will learn a lot about who you are as a person in college, and it is okay for some of your original goals or thoughts to change. Look at everything as an opportunity for growth." Biatríz did just that. She attended advising sessions, sought out resources, used tutoring, and even took a significant risk and studied abroad for a semester in Brazil. "Everyone should study abroad—you will learn

so much about another culture—but mostly you will learn so much about yourself. Oh, and find someone to vent to! The SSS staff were those people for me. They helped me out by listening to me and just giving me a place to go for support."

Biatríz is graduating with her Bachelor's degree and has earned a position with one of the top five accounting firms in the state. She has largely accomplished her starting goal. "With the salary I will be earning, I will be financially stable. That was my first goal when I came to college. Since I now have accomplished that, my goals have changed. Now I ask myself 'How can I give back?'"

## THINK about it

1. Biatríz looked up to and emulated her sister. Who do you admire and look up to in your life? Why? How can they be a mentor to you?
2. Biatríz mentions that she wants to "give back." How will your education help you give back to your community?

*"Words are, of course, the most powerful drug used by mankind."*

*—Rudyard Kipling*

## THE ENORMOUS POWER OF WORDS

### Why Is It Important to Know How to Master the Power of Words?

Words are among the most powerful forces in existence when used by a skilled orator or writer. When people are able to get others to do what they want them to do, they usually employ words, not physical power. Words can inspire, comfort, teach, encourage, persuade, and sell. They can also be used to manipulate, misinform, and spread propaganda. Words can lift us up and bring us together. They can tear us apart and create fear and despair. They can twist our thinking, cause us not to use common sense, and even control our behavior. Words can change our opinions, make us act foolish, lead us to join a cause, and touch our emotions.

Words have started wars, led people into battle, stirred entire nations to do the right thing—or the wrong thing. "Words influence how we think, and our thoughts determine our actions. There is a powerful connection between the words we use and the results we get. Poorly chosen words can kill enthusiasm, impact self esteem, lower expectations and hold people back, while well-chosen ones can motivate, offer hope, create vision, impact thinking and alter results" (Russell, 2004). To underestimate the power of words is to do so at your own peril.

Spoken words are powerful and can literally change the course of your life if you learn to use them effectively. From job interviews and leading teams, to working effectively with others, words can be your best friend or your worst enemy.



How can the power of words affect others' actions and thoughts?

# SPEAKING PUBLICLY

## Is It Time To Scream or Shine?

"If I had wanted to speak in front of people, I would have taken a public speaking course," you might be saying at this moment. Relax. You are not alone about *glossophobia*—the fear of speaking publicly. In fact, "far above the fear of death and disease, comes fear of standing in front of a crowd" (Eggleston, 2012). Fear of public speaking ranked ahead of fear of sickness, insects, financial troubles, deep water, and even death! Most people would rather die than speak in front of a group!

So, why do we include a chapter on public speaking in a first-year success text? You probably won't like the answer, but the simple truth is that you are going to be asked to speak and make presentations in many of your classes; from history to chemistry, from engineering to computer programming, speaking is a way of life for today's college students and today's employees. The more you know about researching and writing speeches and delivering presentations, the more confident you are going to feel in every class. We can't overemphasize the importance of mastering the spoken word now and in the future!



What steps can you take to reduce your own anxiety over speaking publicly?

# SPEAKING PUBLICLY IN A DIGITAL WORLD

## Does Oral Communication Still Matter?

During the past decade, sweeping changes have been implemented as the world changed from analog to digital technology that marked a period of development that is comparable to the Industrial Revolution.

This new age, often referred to as the Information Age, brought with it cell phones, computers, fax machines, iPads, and numerous social media technologies that have vastly changed our world. Most of us feel lost without new technologies at our fingertips. Some children spend more time playing with their avatar pet on a virtual website than they do with their real pets. Many people are addicted to their cell phones, constantly texting their friends. So has the power of speech lost its effectiveness in this brave new digital world? The answer is a resounding "No!"

The ability to speak fluently and persuasively is as important today as it has ever been. As a matter of fact, employers today rank oral communication skills the number one most important skill needed for the world of work (Shindell, 2011). The difference between making a speech today and fifteen years ago is that you will most likely be required to use some type of technology to complement your spoken words. Remember, however, any technology used will not replace the spoken word—it will enhance it.

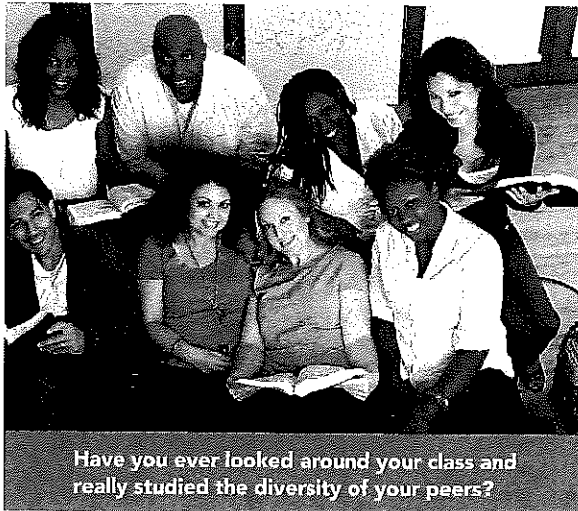
Today you may be required to interact with coworkers who belong to a virtual work team using Skype, GoToMeeting, WebX, and other such software. You will almost certainly be required to make presentations in class and at work using PowerPoint or Prezi. Your reputation as an effective team member will depend on your ability to articulate your ideas and defend your positions. When you enter the workplace, you will be required to interact effectively with coworkers in meetings and with customers and clients on the telephone and face-to-face. You will also most likely be required to make oral presentations in most of your classes and beyond. The requirement to be able to speak powerfully will continue to gain importance as technology intensifies the important role of spoken messages in the workplace.

"If all my talents and powers were to be taken from me, and I had the choice of keeping but one, I would unhesitatingly ask to be allowed to keep the power of speaking, for through it, I would quickly recover the rest."

—Daniel Webster

"Give me the right words and the right accent, and I will move the world."

—Joseph Conrad

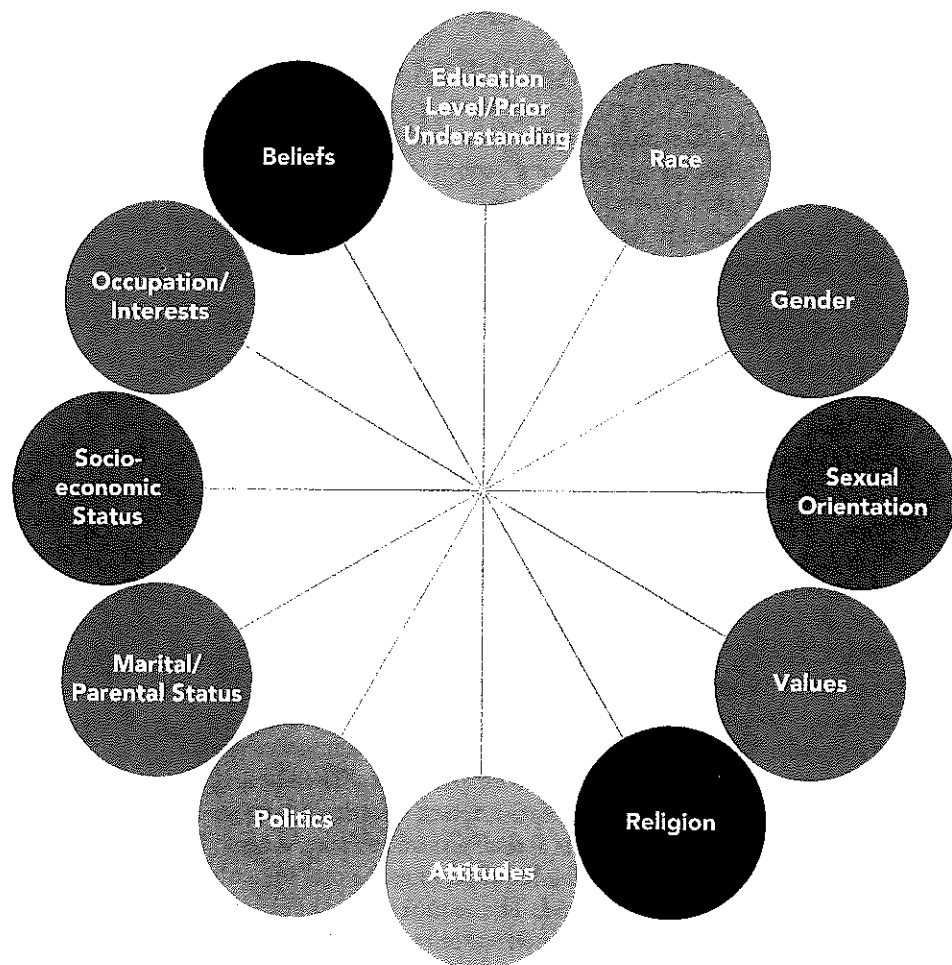


## Analyzing Your Audience

Have you ever listened to someone speak about a topic that was so technical that you understood very little of it and could have passed out due to boredom? It could be because the speech was poorly written, but it may be that the boring technical speech was unappealing to you because it was written for a different audience. If you don't understand your audience, it is unlikely that you will be able to write and deliver a presentation that maintains their attention, informs or persuades them, or asks them to act on your advice. Although your immediate speech will be written for your instructor or class, there will be instances in the future when it will be advantageous to complete an analysis of your audience to assist you in learning more about the diversity or similarities of your audience. You will also want to do this for your class. Figure 12.1 will guide you in developing a comprehensive audience analysis.

Using your classroom setting as your audience, write a brief analysis of this audience. You may have to make some educated guesses based on observation and keen listening skills. You may also have to interview them or issue a questionnaire to learn more about them. As a basis for your understanding, you will want to seek

*Figure 12.1* Audience Demographic Wheel



answers to the 12 factors in the demographic wheel. You may also need to answer questions, such as: "What do I know about them?" "What do I need to find out?" "What do they expect?" "What would interest them?" and "What does my analysis mean to my speech?" Some answers will be obvious, such as gender and age. You can also make some inferences about your audience based on classroom discussions and conversations.

Analyze your classroom audience and summarize in the space below.

---

---

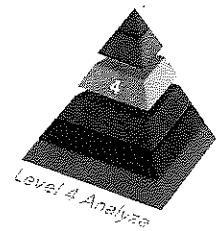
---

---

---

---

---



## SELECTING THE MAIN IDEAS AND ISSUES FOR A PRESENTATION

### Why Is Organization Important?

At this point, you need to carefully select and narrow your topic. You are not ready to begin writing your presentation until you have a topic, so at this stage you should just start writing down ideas and thoughts. Some experts on writing suggest that you choose a topic on which you are an expert. This is not always possible based on the assignment or audience, but it helps if you know a good bit about the topic you choose. To begin, list ideas nonstop for 5–10 minutes without worrying about grammatical correctness or structure. Step away from this list for a few minutes, then come back and see if you have any additional ideas.

When you have your list, group your ideas into clusters that seem to go together. Review what you have written and decide which topic relates best to the assignment and/or audience. Which one do you know the most about? Which topic would be most interesting to you? Often students say, "I can't think of anything to speak about." Basically, that's bull. We all care deeply about something. Consider this exercise. When was the last time you got angry? What aroused it? What caused you to feel this way? This could be your topic. When was the last time you felt passion, real dynamic passion? Here is a topic for you. When was the last time you felt really frustrated and agitated? There is a topic. When was the last time you were scared, really frightened about something? There is a topic. When was the last time you learned how to do something new? There is a topic. Your best topics will come from your emotions and experiences and your desire to explain your anger, passion, fears, or other feelings. Some tips for topic selection are listed below.

### Tips for Topic Selection

- Know what type of speech you will be writing and/or delivering (informative, demonstrative, persuasive, etc.).
- Think about your talents, interests, and experiences, and what appeals to you most.
- Determine if your topic is appropriate to you and your audience.
- Decide if you can adequately cover a speech on this topic in the allowed length of time.

- Build your speech around an interesting theme.
- Analyze your audience and their interests. Why will they want to hear your remarks?
- Be sure you can deliver a speech on this topic in a reasonable length of time.

Now, you are ready to decide on the main issues and major details that you plan to share with your audience. Main issues are the major points of your speech.

## Organizing the Body

One of the most effective ways to begin composing your speech is to create a rough outline of the points you would like to cover. As you begin to outline, remember that your organizational pattern should guide you through this phase.

Assume you are writing a speech on date rape. Your outline might look similar to this:

- I. Introduction
  - A. Thesis statement
  - B. Overview of the speech
- II. The problem of date rape
  - A. What is date rape?
  - B. Facts and statistics supporting its prevalence
  - C. Laws relative to date rape
- III. Where does date rape happen and why?
  - A. Where are the settings that this typically happens?
  - B. What are the usual circumstances that cause date rape?
  - C. Who does it typically happen to?
- IV. How to prevent date rape
  - A. Avoid excessive drinking and drugs
  - B. Be responsible for watching your drink
  - C. Get to know people before you are with them alone
  - D. Go out in groups
  - E. Check on each other
  - F. Pay your own way
- V. What to do if date rape happens
  - A. Report it to campus security or the police
  - B. Do not destroy evidence
  - C. Report it to the proper college authorities
  - D. Press charges if advised
- VI. Conclusion

Once you have developed your outline, you can begin to research and write your speech.

# CREATING EFFECTIVE INTRODUCTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

## Why Are the First Thirty Seconds So Important?

Communication experts suggest that you have only *thirty seconds* in which to gain your audience's attention (Moyer, 2012). If you do not do so, it is unlikely that you will gain their attention for the remainder of the presentation. In Figure 12.2, you will find a variety of techniques used to help you start your speech by creating an effective introduction.

## Figure 12.2 Creating Effective Introductions

- Telling a story or creating a vivid, visual illustration
- Using startling facts or statistics
- Referring to an incident with which the reader is familiar
- Asking rhetorical yet pertinent questions
- Using novel ideas or striking statements
- Using quotations
- Using humor or humorous stories
- Using a powerful visual aid or demonstration

Using the topic of date rape, choose one technique, or a combination of the techniques we've discussed, and compose a draft of an introduction.

---

---

---

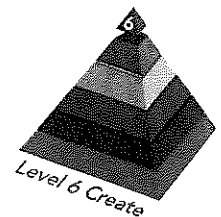
---

---

---

---

---



## Writing Conclusions

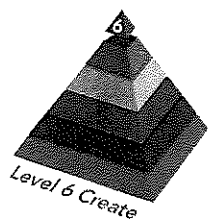
Conclusions are very important to the overall quality of your speech. They are designed to leave the audience wanting more and remembering your words. Figure 12.3 features several techniques to help you construct an effective conclusion.

## Figure 12.3 Techniques for Concluding a Speech

- Summarize and re-emphasize the main points.
- Make a final appeal for action or a challenge.
- Refer to the introduction you used (story, quote, or joke); this is parallelism.
- Complete the opening story.
- Re-emphasize the impact of your topic.
- Use a vivid analogy or simile.
- End powerfully! You want your reader to remember your topic and your compelling points.
- If possible and appropriate, leave your audience on a high note—laughing, and feeling special or highly motivated.

(continued)

## Figure 12.3 Techniques for Concluding a Speech (Continued)



Write the draft of a memorable, creative conclusion on the topic of date rape.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## THREE MAJOR TYPES OF FORMAL PRESENTATIONS

### Does It Take Information to Persuade or Persuasion to Inform?

The chances are very good that you will encounter the following three types of formal presentations in your classes. There is also a very good chance that you will be required to deliver all three types in one situation or another in the workplace. While all three types are similar in some ways, they have distinct requirements in order to deliver them effectively.

### Informative Speaking

The secret to making effective *informative presentations* is to present information in an interesting, clear, and memorable way. Regardless of how fluent you are or how many big words you use, you have not communicated unless your audience understands. Remember, you are simply trying to convey information to them—you are not trying to persuade them to accept your position in an informative presentation. Consider the following questions as you prepare to make an informative presentation:

- Have I researched my topic thoroughly and would I be able to answer audience questions about my topic?
- What can I do to make this topic clearer to my audience?
- Do I need a visual that explains my words more clearly?
- What attention-getting devices can I use to communicate my ideas more effectively?
- How can I simplify my ideas to make them more understandable?
- Am I talking too fast or too slow?



- Can I relate new information to information the audience already understands?
- How can I tailor my presentation to this particular audience's interests? Can I touch on something in their lives, such as money or health?
- What word pictures can I use to effectively paint a mental picture or describe a smell?
- Do my nonverbal actions and gestures match my words in a powerful way?
- Is my presentation audience-centered rather than speaker-centered?

## Possible Topics for Informative Speeches

- Global Warming
- The San Diego Zoo
- Traveling to Europe
- Invention of the Computer
- Steve Jobs

## Demonstrative Speaking

**Demonstrative presentations** certainly inform, but go further in that they are used to explain how to do something or to teach how something works. An effective demonstrative speech is a visual speech and must incorporate physical activity or the use of objects or visual aids, such as charts, diagrams, pictures, maps, or graphs *with* your words. Consider the following questions as you prepare to deliver a demonstrative presentation:

- Am I using the proper type of physical object for this presentation?
- Is it legal to bring the objects required for this presentation onto campus?
- Are my physical objects large enough for my audience to see?
- How can I make the demonstration significant and interesting to my audience?
- Have I chosen clear, vivid word choices that complement my demonstration?
- Are my words and accompanying aids appropriate for my presentation?
- Can I give my audience ingredients or materials that they can use to participate in the demonstration as I share my directions?
- During the presentation, am I paying attention to my audience to ensure that they are following and understanding?

## Possible Topics for Demonstrative Speeches

- How to change the oil in a car
- How to grill a chicken
- How to construct a website
- How to balance a checkbook
- How to caulk a tub or shower

## Persuasive Speaking

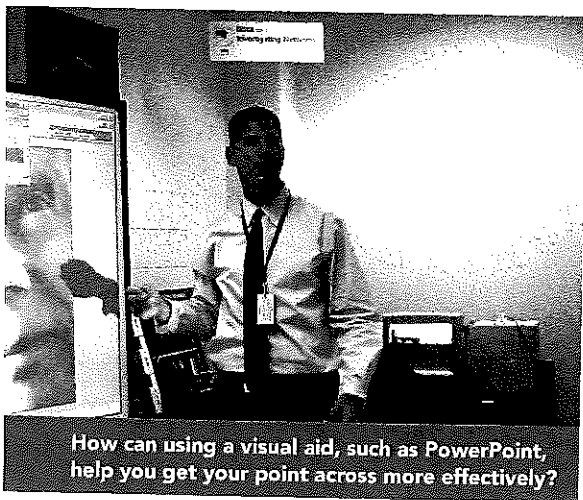
**Persuasive presentations** differ from others in that you are not simply trying to inform an audience or show them a demonstration; you are trying to get them to do something – to take action! You are trying to motivate an audience to follow your wishes, which means that you may have to change or alter their thinking, their wishes, their beliefs, their values, and/or their

behaviors. Although informative and demonstrative speeches differ from persuasive speeches, many of the same principles discussed in the informative and demonstrative presentations apply. The difference is that you are not only informing and/or demonstrating, you are going one step further and trying to get your audience to do what you want them to do, even if it is contrary to what they want to do. Consider the following questions as you prepare to deliver a persuasive presentation:

- Have I clearly defined my purpose and exactly what I am trying to persuade people to do?
- Have I identified my central argument? In other words, with what exactly do I want my audience to agree?
- How can I establish credibility with my audience without sounding boastful?
- What can I say that encourages my audience to accept me as trustworthy?
- Does my research support my argument?
- Did I provide evidence that what I am saying is factually based?
- If possible, did I establish common ground with my audience?
- Am I using non-threatening language and demeanor?
- Am I using any unethical strategies to get others to do what I want them to do, such as manipulation and coercion?
- Am I practicing honest and forthright practices as I try to persuade people?
- Have I used positive appeals? For example, if you were running for the city council, you might promise a better educational system for people's children.
- Have I thought about my audience's responses to what I am presenting and how I might counter specific negative comments?
- Have I thought about my audience's values and how I might have to change them to persuade them to do what I want them to?
- Does my presentation include a statement that gets the audience to take action? If my audience does nothing, I have not persuaded them.

## Possible Topics for Persuasive Speeches

- Persuading the audience to give blood
- Persuading the audience to vote
- Persuading the audience to conserve water
- Persuading the audience to recycle
- Persuading the audience to volunteer at an animal shelter twice per week



## CREATING POWERFUL VISUAL PRESENTATIONS

### Do Visuals Really Help My Cause?

You can hardly take a class today or go to work in any position that does not require you to use PowerPoint or Prezi to make presentations. Even elementary school children are using this software. Used effectively, this software can greatly enhance your spoken words. Used poorly, the same software can be boring and deadly.

PowerPoint continues to be the most popular presentation software, but Prezi has introduced an exciting package as well. You absolutely need to know PowerPoint, but you are also highly encouraged to review the up-and-coming Prezi presentation package at <http://prezi.com>.

Almost everyone has had to develop a slide presentation while they were in school, and all of us have tried to stay awake during a long, boring, tedious, computerized presentation. This is an area of technology and communications that you need to be able to do well. While entire books have been written on making effective slideshows, we are going to share a few major points with you in this chapter:

- Your first slide sets the stage, so be sure it gets attention in a positive way and includes your name, your course, and the title of your presentation.
- Use real pictures instead of clip art because they are more interesting and professional. If you can use photos that fill the entire slide, the visual is more appealing.
- Avoid wordiness! Never put every word you are going to say on a slide and then proceed to read to your audience. This is deadly! Nothing is worse than one slide after another that is filled with many points typed in a size 12 font that no one can see. Words in the body should be at least 18 points, and preferably larger. Titles and headings should be at least 4 points larger than the body.
- Light text on a dark background is more difficult to read than dark text on a light background.
- Present no more than one concept per slide.
- Try not to use more than three or four bullet points per slide, and use animation to introduce them one point at a time.
- Number your points to show order, and use bullets to emphasize certain points.
- Use no more than one or two fonts, and avoid the fancy, hard-to-read styles.
- Use simple, clear graphs and charts that complement your remarks. Photos, graphs, and diagrams can often be used to explain a concept better than words.
- If you use a handout to complement your slideshow, distribute it at the end of the presentation because people will be focused on reading the handout instead of paying attention to your slideshow.

Figure 12.4 illustrates a slide that is boring and has too much information. Figure 12.5 illustrates an interesting and appealing slide.

## Figure 12.4 Slide with Too Much Information

### MAKE STUDENTS FEEL IMPORTANT

Remember that every student wants to be somebody. Ask them what they want to be. Help them research what it takes to become this person they dream about.

Remember the power of the gold star.

Pay attention to students' strengths and weaknesses.

Create activities that cause interaction.

Be expressive—smile.

Bring high fives to your classroom!

## Figure 12.5 Visually Appealing Slide

the **FUTURE** is  
purchased by  
the **PRESENT**

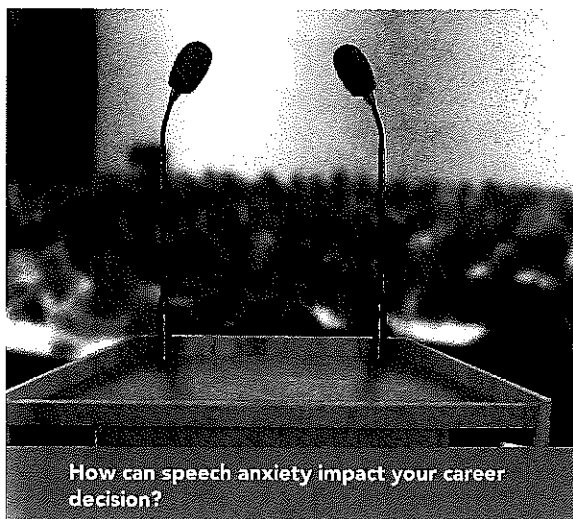


## REDUCING ANXIETY

### Is It Possible to Relax, Have Fun, and Walk Tall?

The day has finally come for you to speak in public—actually, it may have arrived way too early to suit you. If you have prepared using the steps outlined in this chapter, you have every reason to believe you are going to do well. Try to look at this presentation as an opportunity to practice a skill that will serve you well all your life. You may feel nervous, but you need to remember that no one else knows that but you if you don't tell them or show them. Below, you will find some helpful tips to help overcome performance anxiety.

- Be prepared! Nothing trumps preparation in overcoming anxiety. If you know what you're talking about, you'll have more confidence. *Be the expert* on your topic.
- Walk to the front of the room, turn and face your audience, and establish eye contact before you start speaking. Take a few deep breaths on the way to the front. Do not begin speaking while walking to the podium or the front of the room. Remember, you'll feel more anxious than you look to your audience.
- Use your anxiety as a positive. Extra adrenaline can increase your energy level.
- Never, ever, under any circumstances begin by apologizing for your presentation. Remember, your introduction must grab your audience! Begin powerfully and positively! "I'm sorry" is neither powerful or positive.
- When rehearsing for your presentation, try to re-create the physical environment in which you will be speaking. Be certain to rehearse aloud.
- If you are using a lectern, don't lean on it.
- Remove temptations to fidget with things, such as keys, change in your pocket, pens, and clips.



How can speech anxiety impact your career decision?