

Effective Public Speaking

Making an effective presentation takes more than just standing at a podium and talking. Here are some tips to help you become a confident and engaging speaker.



by **Chris Xia**





Eye Contact

Establishing eye contact is an essential part of making a connection with your audience. It shows confidence, makes the speaker more personable, and allows for monitoring the audience's interest.



Gestures

1 Makes speech dramatic

It makes the speech more interesting and helps illustrate the key points.

2 Brings speech to life

Gesturing helps show enthusiasm and instills life into the speech.

3 Used effectively, gestures add energy to a speech

Movement



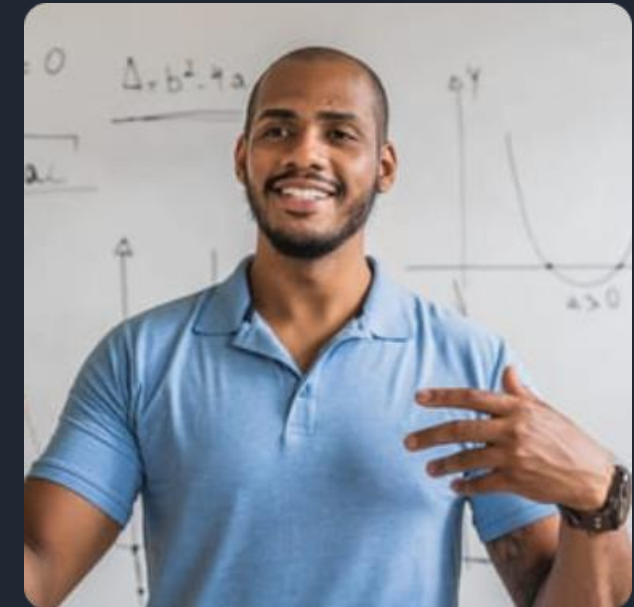
Makes the Speech Animated

Movement can add vitality and flare to the speech, making the speaker appear more engaging and interesting.



Positioning is Key

Proper positioning is important to avoid distracting the audience and should only be used if it enhances the presentation.



Gesture with Movement

Gesturing while moving around can help make a presentation more impactful.

Vocal Variety

Expressive Pitch and Tone

Emotion and meaning can be conveyed by varying pitch, tone, and volume.

Adjust Speed and Rhythm

Varying speed and rhythm and the strategic use of pauses can emphasize a point, or give the audience an opportunity to reflect.

Vocal Warmup

Humming helps to warm up the voice before a presentation to ensure better volume and clarity of speech.

Structure

Middle

The main body of the presentation should provide the information or message you want to convey, and should be presented with a logical flow and structure that is easy to follow.

1

Beginning

A clear and concise introduction sets the tone for the speech. A summary of the topic is defined to give the audience a clear idea of what to expect.

2

3

End

The conclusion should summarize the key points from the presentation. A strong, clear and concise message is important as it's what the audience will take with them.

Tip: Tell a Story

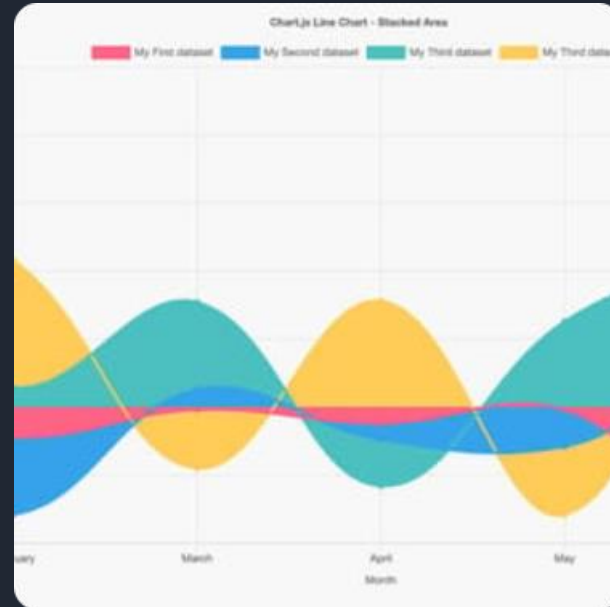
People love a good personal story that's related to your message. It'll help solidify your point and make you appear more relatable to the audience.

Visual Aids



Clarity

Provide clarity and solidify your point with a picture, video, graph, new clipping, or webpage



Reinforce

Visual aids can reinforce the main points of the speech and also make the presentation more visually interesting.



Engage

Nobody likes to just look at text on a screen. Add something visual for different types of learners.

Interacting with the Audience

1 Involve the Audience

Encouraging the audience to participate helps to keep them focused and interested in what you are saying.

3 Immediate Feedback

By asking questions, encouraging comments, or conducting polls, you can gauge the audience's understanding, interests, and perspectives

2 Developing a Connection

Audience interaction builds rapport, trust, and relatability between the speaker and listeners.



Handling Nervousness

Prepare and Practice

Prepare the presentation in advance and practice to build confidence and alleviate nervousness.

Breathe Deeply

Breathing deeply before beginning the presentation can help to calm your nerves and help you focus.

Start from a Personal Story

Starting with a personal story or joke can distract the audience and ease nervousness.

Avoid Common Mistakes

1

Monotonous delivery

Delivering the speech with a lack of enthusiasm or energy can make it difficult for the audience to stay engaged. Incorporating passion and enthusiasm into the delivery helps to captivate listeners.

2

Reading Straight from Slides

Relying too heavily on written materials can make the speech appear robotic and disengaging. It's important to maintain eye contact with the audience and speak naturally.

3

Failure to adapt to the audience:

Not tailoring the speech to the specific needs, interests, and knowledge level of the audience can result in a lack of relevance and engagement

4

Overusing filler words

Excessive use of filler words like "um," "uh," or "like" can be distracting and diminish the clarity and professionalism of the speech. Instead, just pause.



Adding Humor

1 Effectiveness of Humor

Humor can effectively flip the tables of a dry, mundane presentation and revert an uninterested audience back to attentive.

3 Use Humor Sparingly

However, excessive humor can compromise the professionalism of the speech.

2 Know Your Audience!

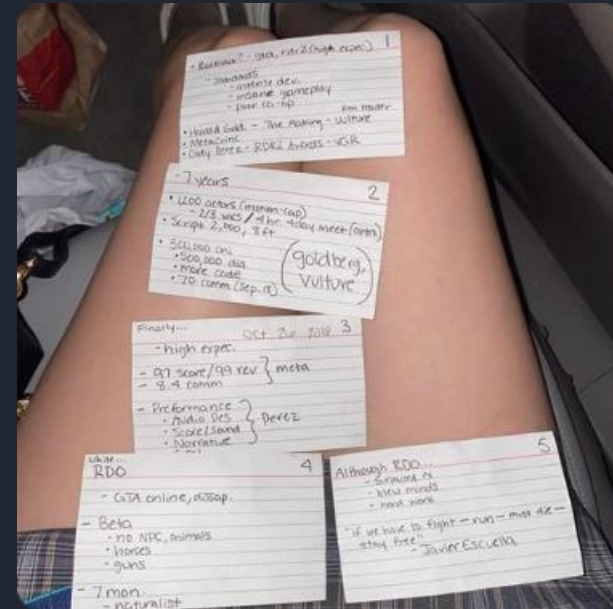
Understand the audience and the context before beginning to add humor, and use it in good taste.

Practice and Preparation



Practice

Practice the presentation until you can deliver it comfortably and confidently.



Note Taking

Organize the speech notes in a manner that will make sense while speaking.

Use bullets!



Scope out the Stage

Take a look at where you're presenting. If it's on stage, go take a walk on stage; if it's online, make sure your camera is ready!

End Strong

Motivational Statement

Make a concluding statement that will motivate the audience to think or act upon the message.

Promote A Call to Action

The conclusion should prompt the audience to take action and present them with the resources to do so.

Q&A

Show appreciation and provide resources or a question and answer session to the audience to maintain engagement.