

# 50 Public Speaking Tips

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# **Know your material**

Speak about a topic you're interested in and know a lot about. Reinforce your message with facts and statistics, if possible.

# **Make It Personal**

Use humor, personal anecdotes and conversational language to make your speech engaging.

# **Practice Makes Permanent**

Rehearse your speech aloud using any equipment and/or visual aids you'll use during your presentation. Rehearse as often as you can.

# **Time Yourself**

Time your speech every time you rehearse it to ensure you don't go over the five- to seven-minute time limit.

# Pace Yourself

People tend to rush when they're nervous, so practice keeping your speech at a calm, steady pace.

# **Arrive Early**

Give yourself enough time to get acquainted with the stage or presentation area, and test the microphone and any visual aids you'll be using.

# Relax

Breathe and stretch  
before taking the stage.  
Pause for a few seconds,  
smile and count to three  
before speaking.



# **Visualise Your Success**

Imagine yourself giving your speech: your voice is loud, clear and confident. Imagine hearing the audience's applause – it will boost your confidence.

# **Trust Your Audience**

The audience isn't your enemy - they want you to be interesting, stimulating, informative and entertaining. They're rooting for you.

# **Don't Apologise**

If you make a mistake,  
there's no need to say  
you're sorry. Pick up  
where you left off and  
keep going.

# **Use Humor**

If something goes wrong during your speech, tell a quick joke to help put you and your audience at ease. For example, if the lights go out, a good joke might be: “Who forgot to pay the electric bill?”

# **Gain Experience**

Experience builds confidence, which is the key to effective communication. Joining a Toastmasters club can provide the experience you need in a safe and encouraging environment.

# **Eliminate Filler Words**

Using umms and ahhhs in your speech will distract your message. Briefly pause to gather your next thought, or take a sip of water.

# **Ditch distracting mannerisms**

Nervous fidgeting or gestures will detract from your message. Use purposeful gestures to give your speech more impact.

# **Keep Your Notes In Check**

If you need to use notes,  
be subtle and do not read  
your speech.



# **Test Your Volume**

Before your speech, ask a friend or colleague to listen to you from the back of the room to ensure you're speaking at the right volume.

# **Enter Contests**

Entering contests is a challenging and fun way to improve your skills.

Toastmasters offers various speech contests throughout the year.

# **Enjoy Yourself**

Choose a topic on something that is important to you, and that you feel passionate about. Your commitment to the topic will help sell the speech to your audience.

# Use Visuals

Make sure your visual aids reinforce your message and don't distract from it.

# **Embrace Your Unique Style**

Don't copy the style or gestures of other speakers, as your audience will sense a lack of authenticity. Be yourself; no one does that better than you can.

# **Fuel Your Mental Engine**

**Eat a light meal at least 20 minutes prior to your speech.**

# **Burn Off Anxiety**

Your body produces cortisol when you're anxious or stressed, which limits your creativity and ability to process complex information. Be sure to burn off cortisol with exercise before any speaking engagement.

# **Be Prepared for the Worst**

Murphy's Law states that anything that can go wrong will go wrong. Be prepared by having print-outs of your presentation slides and a copy of your presentation on USB drive.



# Pause

Before addressing your audience, pause for a few seconds. This will gain their attention and increase impact.

# Ask a thought-provoking question

Capture the audience's attention by asking a question they may not know the answer to. For example, "Do you know why the sky is blue? It's a question many kids ask their parents as kids, and I'm honestly not sure I could explain it without a Google search. But I do know what will turn the sky from blue to grey, and that's pollution."

# Share a Startling Fact

Everyone loves an interesting piece of information. Be sure to share something that audience will find surprising.

# **Don't overload your slides**

Keep your slides  
concise; don't overload  
them with too many  
talking points.

# **Repeat the audience's questions**

If an audience member asks a question, repeat it back so everyone can hear it and knows what you are speaking to.

# **Give your audience an immediate action item**

Audiences love to come away from a speech feeling motivated. Take advantage of their current motivation and give them an immediate action item.

# **Push The Envelope**

Take risks, but know your audience and don't present material simply for shock value. Have a point and the facts to back it up.

# **Seek Opportunities Everywhere**

Public speaking doesn't have to happen in front of an audience. Seek opportunities to practice your communication skills, whether it's sharing an idea at a work meeting or talking to people in public.



# **Be Specific**

Try to keep your speeches and discussion to the topic on point. Don't convolute your message with too many stories that stray from the original purpose.

# **Be The Expert**

Make sure that you've done the appropriate research prior to your public speaking engagement. Explore the topic in depth so that you're ready for questions and feel comfortable speaking to your topic.

# **Speak to Groups as Individuals**

While you may be speaking to a group of people, speak to them as though they are just one to make the speech feel more intimate and personal.

# **Learn about your personal leadership style**

Everyone has a different leadership style. What's yours? Learn about your leadership style and embrace the positive attributes and make an action plan to change the negative.

# **Find Your Strengths**

Strengths include, voice volume and timbre, expert knowledge, comfort level and ability to think on the fly. Find those strengths and look for a way to capitalize on them.

# Be Passionate

Find topics that mean a lot to you. If you are asked to speak to a topic that you don't feel connected with, look for a connection that interests you. Find something that you can take away from the message.

# **Have a Positive Attitude**

The best way to fail at something is to think you will. Go into every public speaking situation thinking that it's an opportunity to grow and engage.

# **Practice Impromptu Speaking**

Test your skills in business meetings, speaking with a bank teller, or social events.



# **Encourage Honest Evaluation**

The best speakers learn from each experience. Encourage your audience or interviewer to give you their honest critique of your presentation.

# Use quotes, stories and anecdotes

They will help reinforce your message and entertain the audience.

# **Use “You” and “We”**

While your speech may require personal stories or anecdotes, be sure to connect the topic with the audience as well. Circle around to explain why it's important to them.

# **Don't Take Things Personally**

Your audience may have strong opinions about a topic, especially if it's controversial. Consider their responses educational.

# **Trust Your Instincts**

With leadership and public speaking, it's always important to trust your instincts. If your gut tells you to steer into another direction or bring up a certain topic, listen to what it says.

# **Learn from Your Mistakes**

It's important to know the goal of your message and WHY you are speaking to it. The best way to bomb a speech is to not understand the purpose.

# **Learn from Your Mistakes**

Everyone makes mistakes. The important thing is to appreciate the lesson you learned, and keep moving forward.

# Know When to Lose Your Script

Gauge your audience's response to your message and know when to change or lose the script. If your audience seems bored or uninterested, move onto to something else.



# **Know The Dress Code**

Research the culture of the audience and how they dress. Dress one level higher than the audience – typically business or business casual.

# **Use Slang With Caution**

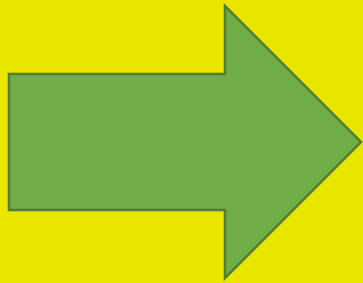
Slang words don't translate well across different cultures and ethnicities. Be careful to make sure that the meaning behind your words is interpreted as intended.

# **Breathe Out**

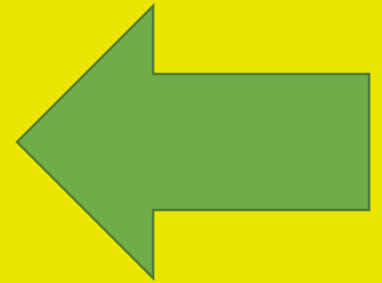
Take slow deep breaths in and then release your breathe from the bottom of your abdomen to get the maximum benefits of release and relaxation.

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