“Public Speaking”

35 Tools You Can Use to Become a Brilliant Public Speaker
About Akash Karia

Akash Karia is an award-winning speaker, trainer and presentation skills coach. He has conducted presentation skills courses for employees and members of organizations such as HSBC, Polytechnic University, Life Underwriters Association of Hong Kong and many, many more...

Akash is also champion speaker and has won over 40 public speaking championships, including the prestigious titles of: JCI 2012 Hong Kong Champion of Public Speaking, Toastmasters International Division K Impromptu Speaking Champion and has been ranked as one of the Top 10 Speakers in Asia Pacific.

He is available to conduct public speaking and persuasion skills training. Contact him on akash.speaker@gmail.com or visit his website for more details: www.CommunicationSkillsTips.com
What is “Public Speaking?”

I use the term “public speaking” broadly to refer to any situation where you have to speak to a group of 2 or more people.

Many of the techniques you will pick up in this public speaking guide can be used in meetings, interviews and even social situations.

**WARNING:** This is not a “magical guide” which will transform you into a better speaker overnight. However, the application of these techniques will make you two times the speaker that you are today.
2 Pause: Don’t Start Until You’re Ready

Don’t be afraid to pause. Pausing allows you to calm down your nerves.

Before you start your presentation or speech, take in a couple of deep belly-breaths to calm yourself down.

Pausing allows everyone to get on the same vibration/energy-level. If you’re facing a noisy audience, wait until the room is silent and focusing on you. Don’t start speaking until you’re ready and everyone’s focused on you.
Get into the Right Mindset

When you get nervous, shift your mindset.

The speech is not about you. It’s about your audience.

Don’t focus on yourself, focus on your audience.

Realize that you have the opportunity to change someone’s life every time you speak. You have a message that someone in your audience needs to hear!

Once you tap into that positive, value-giving mindset, you’ll find it easier to speak without being self-conscious.
What Story Are You Telling Yourself?

It’s okay to be nervous. Everyone experiences butterflies before an important event.

However, scientifically, there is no difference between nervousness and excitement. It’s what you choose to label it.

Are you telling yourself, “I’m excited” or are you telling yourself, “I’m nervous”?

Either way, you’re right…because it’s a self-fulfilling prophecy.
Use the Confidence Posture

If you’re nervous, stand in the confidence posture.

What’s the confidence posture?

Simply, stand with your back straight, your shoulders held back, your chest front and your head up.

Your physiology (how you stand and sit) affects how you feel, so if you want to feel confident make sure you stand in a posture that conveys confidence.
Starting Your Presentation

- Start with a Personal Story
- Start with Question to create a Knowledge Gap
- Start with a Quote
- Start with an Interesting/Startling Statement
- Start with a Shocking Statistic

For more tools and techniques on how to open your presentation with power and impact, grab the free e-book, “Brilliant Openings: How to Capture the full Attention of Your Audience in 30 seconds or less” from www.CommunicationSkillsTips.com
Don’t ever Admit You’re Nervous

Don’t apologize or admit you’re nervous at the start of a session.

Don’t say, “I’m sorry, I haven’t prepared…”

Don’t say, “I’m sorry, I’m so nervous…I’ve had a terrible day”

Once you admit you’re nervous, it’s a self-fulfilling prophecy…your mind and your body will act in congruence with what you say.

Moreover, if you admit you’re nervous, your audience will start looking for signs of your nervousness…
Soften Your Commands with “Let’s”

Use the word “Let’s” to soften your commands.

For example, instead of saying “Keep quiet”, say “Let’s keep quiet” or “Let’s focus on this please.”
Don’t Dilute the Power of Your Words with “Try to…”

Don’t say: “Try to imagine yourself…” Instead say “Imagine yourself…”

Don’t say: “Try to feel…” Instead say, “Feel…”
The Sweetest Sound in Any Language

The sweetest sound in any language is the person’s name.

Try and meet some of your audience members before your speech or presentation.

Use the audience’s names during the presentation. For example, you can say, “I was talking to Ted before the presentation, and he told me that…”

Incorporate what Ted (or another audience member) told you into your presentation. This will make your audience feel that you’ve customized this speech specifically for them.
11 Use Imagery & Visual Language

Use visual words to paint pictures in your audience’s mind.

For example, don’t say: “You will learn three strategies”.

Instead, say “You will pick up three tools” or “You will pick up three keys”

Visual words and imagery make your message memorable because your audience doesn’t just hear your message, they also see it in their mind’s eye.
Laughter is the Best Medicine

Incorporate humor into your sessions

- “For those of you who do know me, my name is Akash. And for those of you who do not know me, my name is *still* Akash” (laughter)

Use self-deprecating humor:

- “I know you were expecting a handsome man…I’m so sorry to disappoint you!” (laughter)

Exaggerated facial expressions also make people laugh, so make sure that your facial expressions match your humor.
13 Stand with Your Feet Shoulder-width Apart

When you’re standing, stand with your feet shoulder-width apart…it conveys confidence.

Don’t stand with your feet too close together because it conveys lack of security.

Having your feet too far apart conveys aggressiveness.

Swaying back and forth gives your audience the impression that you’re unsure of yourself and as a result they won’t buy into your message.
Don’t Walk Back and Forth without a Purpose

When you take a step forward towards your audience, it creates intimacy...so step forward when you have an important point to make.

Taking a step backwards creates a negative feeling in your audience members…almost like you’re lying or trying to hide something.

Avoid rocking back and forth on your feet…it’s distracting.

Check out this video for more information on walking backwards and forwards and the psychological impact it has on your audience.
Don’t pace back and forth like a caged tiger.

It’s distracting because it’s movement without a purpose.

Feel free to move on stage, but only as long as your movement serves a purpose.

For example, you can use the stage as a timeline so that the left side of the stage indicates the past, the center = the present, the right side = the future.
Scan and Stop Technique for Eye Contact

Make eye contact with all sides of the room

Be sure not to isolate any side of the room by not making eye contact with that section.

Use the “Scan and Stop” technique for eye contact. Scan the room when you speak, making eye contact with students for about a second or so.

When you come to a very important or poignant point, stop and make eye contact with one person and deliver your line to that person.
17 If You Forget What You Were Saying…

If you forget what you were saying, simply ask your students: “Where was I?” or “What was I saying?”

Your students (audience members) do NOT want to see you fail…

If you forget where you were, don’t worry…it’s no big deal…

You can recover simply by asking your students where you were.
"Public speaking" is simply having a conversation with one person…with 99 other people listening in.

Focus on having a conversation with the audience…one person at a time…

Once you realize that public speaking is simply an enlarged conversation with many people, you’ll become much more relaxed during your next “public speaking” event.
19 Shorter Sentences = Greater Clarity

Keep your sentences short, simple and conversational

Avoid using multiple conjunctions in one sentence (i.e. “and….and…and”)

Shorter sentences aid comprehension

Also, remember to pause between your sentences – this sounds like such an obvious thing to say, but as speakers we sometimes forget this simple rule and speak too quickly because we’re nervous. Pause and allow your audience members to digest the information you’ve just given them.
Pause After You Ask a Question

During my workshops, I find that too many speakers forget to pause after they ask a question.

After you ask a question, pause to give audience members time to respond…or, if you’re not expecting a response, pause and give them time to think!

- “What do you think is the number one mistake most speakers make when giving presentations?” (Pause, make eye contact and wait for a response)

- “What questions do you have?” (Pause and wait for your students to think about what questions they have)
Use Your Hands to Show What You’re Saying

Don’t keep your hands glued to your sides or behind your back.

Use your hands naturally to show what you’re saying.

You can start off speaking with your hands mid-way up (not down by your sides) and your hands will automatically move naturally once as gain confidence during your presentation.
22 The “Err…” Error

Work on decreasing your um’s and errs…

Slow down your speaking rate and don’t be afraid to pause

Instead of erring, PAUSE!

This technique will take a lot of practice…

You’ll have to overcome the power of habit…

But if you keep reminding yourself to pause, you will eventually be “um”-free!
23 Share Your Personal Story

Stories are POWERFUL!

The essence of public speaking is to “tell a story and make a point”.

“People can resist a sales message… but no one can resist a well told story”
– Patricia Fripp
The Five C’s of Storytelling

- Characters
- Conflict
- Cure
- Change
- Carryout Message

Check out [this video](#) for more information about the 5C’s of Storytelling
Part 2:
How to Handle Difficult Situations & Audience Members
Tools to Help You Take Control of Your Audience when Your Audience is Getting Out of Control
25 Difficult Situations You May Face:

- Audience members leaving during your speech/presentation/workshop
- Audience members chatting while you’re speaking
- Mobile phones ringing during your speech
Set Expectations at the Beginning of Your Workshop

At the beginning of presentation/speech/workshop, set the expectations (if appropriate).

For example, you could say:

“If you need to leave presentation, please do so quietly…To avoid any disturbance during workshop, please let’s turn off our mobile phones”
“If Looks Could Kill…”

If an audience member is laughing/talking during your speech or presentation, make eye contact with him or her.

This will indirectly send the message that you want them to keep quiet. Most likely, that person will stop talking.
28 Proximity

If an audience member is talking during your presentation, subtly move closer to him/her. The proximity will alert the “offender” that you want them to stop talking.
Talk to the Disruptive Audience Member Privately

If a particular audience member keeps chatting during the presentation, talk the person privately during the break.

Don’t humiliate the person publicly because it’s likely that he/she will feel very insulted.
30 Address the Behavior Early Before It Gets Out of Control

Don’t wait until a behavior gets out of control

Address it early on and it’ll be much easier to change it
Why before What

When asking people to change their behavior, always give the why before the what.

Give a reason as to why you want the student to change their behavior.
Don’t Get into a Heated Debate During Class

If an audience member challenges during your presentation, don’t go into a heated discussion.

Simply tell the audience member why you believe what you believe…

Tell them that they are welcome to continue this discussion after class.

Finish off with, “From my experience, I’ve found it to be true that…”

Handle the discussion calmly and the rest of your audience members will respect you. Most likely, they will accept your point of view as being the correct one because they see you as the “expert” because you’re the one who’s speaking.
33 Speak Louder:

If your audience members are getting chatty and the presentation is getting out of hand then…speak louder to grab your audience’s attention.
Speak Softer

If your presentation is getting out of hand (e.g. the audience is beginning to chat) then…

Speak softer to grab your audience’s attention

Lowering your volume causes your listeners to lean in to hear what you’re saying – they have to work harder to listen to what you have to say.

So, should you speak louder or speak softer?

Depends on the situation.

Try out both strategies to see what works for you.
35 Silence is Powerful

One of the mistakes I’ve seen speakers make is that they continue talking even when the audience is chatting and not listening to them.

If your audience members begin chatting, be silent and make eye contact with a couple of the people who are paying attention to you.

Wait until everyone is listening to you before you go on speaking.
Recommended Resources

- For more free public speaking and communication tips, head over to www.CommunicationSkillsTips.com
- Recommended Book [Body Language]: Definitive Guide of Body Language
- Recommended Book [Persuasion]: Influence, by Dr. Robert Cialdini
- Recommended Book [Public Speaking]: Stand Like Churchill Speak Like Lincoln

Feel free to contact me on akash.speaker@gmail.com with any questions you may have.
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