

5 Ways to Improve Your Presentation Skills



1.) PAUSE

Do it before you speak, after you share an impactful story, or to take a breath. This lets the information you deliver resonate with the audience. Pausing also allows you to slow down, which can help relieve any pent-up anxiety.

2.) NEVER APOLOGIZE

Nervous? Have to cough? Caught a cold? Don't make this common mistake before speaking:

- "You'll have to forgive me, I'm not feeling my best today, apologies in advance."
- "I'm sorry, I have the sniffles, so be forewarned if it's difficult to hear me."
- "Sorry, I'm really nervous. But I'll try and get through it."

This does nothing for you but diminish your credibility. The audience wants to hear the information you have say and they want to hear it from a poised speaker. If you don't feel confident on the inside, PRETEND you are until you gain enough experience to make that pseudo confidence a reality.



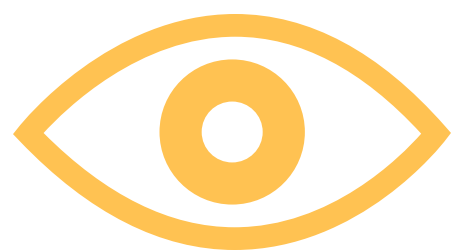
3.) DON'T WORRY ABOUT FORGETTING

Often, speakers fear they will forget what they're going to say. This hiccup is something that plagues many presenters and contributes to the reason public speaking sits at the top of the fear list.

Instead of worrying, take action. Practice what you're going to say. This doesn't necessarily mean memorizing a speech word-for-word. Instead, consider outlining your thoughts on paper or notecards. Then, give yourself enough time to get comfortable with the information, so you can share it with ease.

4.) LOOK UP

Eye contact is a key way to drive home your point and connect with people. It also amplifies your credibility, because when you look someone in the eye, it means you're serious about the information you're sharing. You're not looking at your hands or the floor, or shifting your eyes up to the ceiling. Make a concentrated effort to keep your focus on the audience. They'll thank you for it.



5.) SMILE

When you smile, it makes you more approachable, shows confidence and helps you feel better. Therefore, make a point to smile before you speak. Take a second to breathe, smile and then present. Put this simple tip into action today, and your likeability will instantly increase.