



THE ULTIMATE LIST OF PUBLIC SPEAKING TIPS

44 TIPS TO IMPROVE YOUR NEXT SPEECH

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In business, as well as in your personal life, it's important to be able to communicate effectively and get your point across. It is also likely that you will have to speak in public. Whether you are giving a formal presentation to an audience or simply asking your boss for a promotion, speaking skills are vital to getting ahead.

The truth is, in order for your presentation or speech to have its greatest effect, your goal should be to entertain, inform, inspire, and get the audience to take action.

I have a wonderful speaking career that spans over 30 years, and I'm going to give you 44 tips I've learned along the way to help you be more confident in your public speaking skills as well as find success in your own public speaking career.

Overcoming Your Fear Of Public Speaking

1. **Organize all your thoughts and materials.**

Doing this will help you become much more relaxed and calm because you can better focus on the one thing at hand — giving a great speech.

2. **Practice and prepare extensively.**

Write out a script of your key points, but don't read from the script word for word. You want to prepare so well that you could answer any possible question thrown at you.

3. **Eliminate fear of rejection.**

"What if my audience hates my speech? What if they boo me off stage?" Try to eliminate all of your fears of rejection. Remember, the audience is there to listen to you for a reason.

4. Don't overthink audience reactions.

There is always going to be someone in the audience on their phone or yawning. Keep in mind there will always be people who are tired or bored or preoccupied with their own thoughts. None of their reactions have anything to do with you personally.

5. Record yourself to learn your voice.

Use your phone or video camera to record yourself giving your speech, reading poetry, or parts of plays. Then look for ways to improve your pronunciation, delivery, and articulation. While you may not like the sound of your voice, it's important to get used to your own voice and speaking style.

6. Practice giving your speech to another person.

Whether it's your significant other, friends, parents, or your dog, speaking directly to another person will help relax you and give you experience with getting feedback from someone. If they have questions about your speech, it is likely your audience will have the same questions.

7. Work on your breathing.

Breathe calmly and focus on getting into a rhythm. Your voice will have more resonance, your stress will reduce, and you'll improve clarity in all areas of your life. Talking fast during a speech interferes with your breathing patterns. If you talk too fast you will breathe less. Feeling short of breath will make you panicked and more susceptible to fear. Practice slowing down when you speak, and you will be more calm and relaxed.

8. Find a great coach or mentor.

There are many groups that you can join to learn the art of public speaking. A group such as Toastmasters is a non-profit and helps people get over their fears by having them practice speaking on subjects over and over.

9. Make your nervous energy work for you.

Being nervous is a form of adrenaline. You can channel it to positive energy to help give an impassioned presentation during public speaking.

Creating Your Speech

10. Find the PTBS or “Problem To Be Solved.”

Every single speech is an opportunity to solve a problem that the listeners have. As always, clarity is the keyword here. You’ve got to be clear about what problem your speech is going to solve, what answers it’s going to give, and how it’s going to help them.

11. Connect with emotion.

People think emotionally, and justify logically. The subconscious mind and our emotions actually function at several thousand times the speed of logic.

12. Relate to your audience’s self-interests.

The best way to appeal to people and get them listening to you is speaking to their self-interest. When I ask how many people would like to double their income, they all raise their hands spontaneously. Then I tell them that I am going to give them several, proven ways they can double their income. They all say yes and I immediately have their total interest.

13. Entertain your audience with stories.

Whenever you start to tell a story, you have the audience’s full attention. You can tell very short stories, and they can be your stories or someone else’s stories. And if you design your talk around three stories, you’ll be amazed at the response.

This should be the basic structure of your talk:

1. Your opening
2. Your first key point + a story
3. Your second key point + a story
4. Your third key point + a story
5. Your close

Starting Your Speech

14. Thank the organizers and audience.

You can start by thanking the audience for coming and thanking the organization for inviting you to speak. This compliments them, makes them feel proud and happy about your presence, and connects you to the audience like an electrical plug in a socket.

15. Start with a positive statement.

You can begin by telling the audience members how much they will like and enjoy what you have to say.

For example, you might say:

“You’re really going to enjoy the time we spend together this evening. I’m going to share with you some of the most important ideas that have ever been discovered in this area.”

16. Refer to current or historical events.

Use a current event news story to transition into your subject and to illustrate or prove your point. Or refer to a powerful historical event as an opening story to set the tone of your speech.

17. Refer to a well-known person.

You can start by quoting a well-known person or publication that recently made an important statement or an iconic figure that shares your message.

18. Make a shocking statement.

You can start your talk by making a shocking statement of some kind.

For example, you might say something like:

“According to a recent study, there will be more change, more competition, and more opportunities in this industry in the next year than ever before. And 72 percent of the people in this room will be doing something different within two years if they do not rapidly adapt to these changes.”

19. Ask a question.

You can open by making a positive statement and then ask a question that requires a show of hands. Raise your hand to indicate what you want people to do, then compliment and affirm the answer. You can also start by making a strong statement and then asking a question. This gets people immediately involved and listening to your every word.

20. Open with a problem.

You can start with a problem that must be solved. If it is a problem that almost everyone has in common, you will immediately have the audience's complete and undivided attention.

21. Tell them about yourself.

When you tell your story, many people could immediately identify with you and be open to the rest of your talk. They'll feel everything you say is more valid and authentic.

22. Get your audience members talking to one another.

You can ask people to turn to the person next to them to discuss a particular point. Whatever you ask your audience members to do, within reason, they will do it for you. Your commands and your leadership will easily influence them, as long as you ask them with confidence.

Closing Your Speech

23. Always end a speech with a call to action.

It is especially important to tell the audience what you want them to do as a result of hearing you speak. A call to action is the best way to wrap up your talk with strength and power. Regardless of whether the audience participants agree with you or are willing to do what you ask, it should be perfectly clear to them what you are requesting.

24. End your speech with a summary

Audiences appreciate a linear repetition of what they just heard. This makes it clear that you are coming to the end of your talk.

There is a simple formula for any talk:

1. Tell them what you are going to tell them.
2. Tell them.
3. Then, tell them what you told them.

25. Close with a story.

Often you can close with a story that illustrates your key points and then clearly links to the key message that you are making with your speech. Your story should include a moral, but don't leave it to your audience to figure it out for themselves. Tell them what the moral is.

26. Make them laugh.

You can tell a joke that loops back into your subject and repeats the lesson or main point you are making with a story that makes everyone laugh.

27. Close with inspiration.

People love to be motivated and inspired to be or do something different and better in the future. Remember, everyone in your audience is dealing with problems, difficulties, challenges, disappointments, setbacks, and temporary failures. You can inspire your audience with a story or poem of encouragement that gives them strength and courage.

28. Make it clear that you're done.

When you say your final words, it should be clear to everyone that you have ended. There should be no ambiguity or confusion in the mind of your audience.

Resist the temptation to:

- Shuffle papers.
- Fidget with your clothes or microphone.
- Move forward, backward, or sideways.
- Do anything else except stand solidly, like a tree.

Preparing For Your Speech

29. Practice your speech in front of the mirror.

Talk as if you were speaking directly to someone. Pay attention to:

- Your facial expressions
- Your gestures
- Your body movements
- How welcoming you appear

30. Practice voice exercises.

The human voice is like a muscle that can be made stronger with exercise and use. Memorize a piece of poetry and recite it regularly as you drive or walk around as if you're making a dramatic presentation on a stage. Try changing the emphasis on each word to change the meaning of the line.

31. Eat and drink well.

Energy is essential for good speaking and voice projection. Before a short talk, eat lightly. Before a long talk, eat a solid, high-protein breakfast or lunch to give you energy to burn for four to five hours. Your voice will remain strong and your mind will stay clear.

32. Lightly exercise before speaking.

Exercising lightly before a presentation can get your blood circulating and send oxygen to your brain. Take a walk before a speech or do a few knee bends.

33. Sip warm or room temperature water.

Cold water can chill your vocal chords and decrease the amount of warmth in your voice. Sometimes squeezing some lemon into your water helps lubricate your throat. Try to avoid sugary beverages as these can dry out your mouth.

Delivering Your Speech

34. Speak slowly.

Give your listeners a chance to absorb and reflect on what you're saying. All powerful people speak slowly, enunciate clearly, and express themselves with confidence. Loud, confident speaking is powerful and moving.

35. Focus on the power of the pause.

The drama and power of a speech is contained in the silences that you create as you move from point to point. Practicing pauses and allowing silences when you speak will enable you to speak with power in any situation. There are four type of pauses you can use:

- Use the *sense pause* to allow people to absorb the new information and catch up with you.
- Use the *dramatic pause* to make a point stick in the listener's minds.
- Use an *emphatic pause* to emphasize an important point.
- Use the *sentence-completion pause* to make a statement or quote a line in which everyone is familiar, then let the audience finish it for you.

After Your Speech

36. Let your audience applaud.

When you have finished your talk, the audience members will want to applaud. When someone begins to applaud, look directly at that person, smile, and mouth the words *thank you*. As more and more people applaud, sweep slowly from person to person, nodding, smiling and saying, "Thank You."

37. Handle a standing ovation.

If you've moved your audience to stand up and applaud, encourage the others to stand by looking directly at the standing audience members and saying, "*Thank you*." A standing ovation is not only recognition of the quality of your presentation, but also a signal that this is a unique and memorable event. Cherish the moment when you get a standing ovation. You deserve it.

38. Stand comfortably and shake hands.

If the first row of audience members is close in front of you, step or lean forward and shake their hands when they stand up to applaud. When you shake hands with one person in the audience, many other people in the audience feel that you are shaking their hands and congratulating them as well. Whether you receive a standing ovation or not, if your introducer comes back on to thank you on behalf of the audience, smile and shake their hand warmly. Give a friendly wave to the audience, and then move aside and give the introducer the stage.

39. Develop a plan to improve your next speech.

Practice makes perfect. If there is a video of your speech, watch it and make notes on how you can improve on it for next time.

- How do you think you did?
- Are there areas you think you could have improved?
- Did you seem stiff or make any weird facial expressions?
- Did you use presentation slides to your advantage? Did it help?
- Did you use "um" often?
- How was your rhythm?

Write everything down. Keep practicing and improving. In time, you will banish all of your fears of public speaking and become a powerful, effective speaker that can entertain any audience.

Starting Your Public Speaking Career

40. You have to really want a public speaking career.

If you want to be a speaker for fame and make a lot of money, those are not good enough reasons. Your intentions will shine through to your audience and network of people, and will not get you far. The reason why people find success in speaking is because they have a burning desire to share a message and make an impact on as many people as they can.

41. Pick a subject you really care about

What are you good at? What do you love? You can speak about anything you want as long as you are passionate about it and you specialize in it. You've got to care about your subject to develop confidence and increase your effectiveness.

How to pick a subject that you really care about:

- The subject has an inordinate impact on you
- You want to share it with others
- You intensely feel others could benefit from your knowledge
- You can speak about it from the heart

42. Do whatever you have to do to speak well.

Make a decision right now that you want to learn to speak, and speak well. Be willing to pay any price and go to any lengths to achieve your goal.

43. Give 300 talks as hard and as fast as you can.

The rule in professional speaking is: if you want to start from scratch, go out and give 300 talks. There are between two and three million meetings a year in the US alone, including Rotary meetings, Lion's Club meetings, non-profit association meetings, automobile club meetings, and every other kind of business or industry meetings. Every single one of these groups is looking for a speaker for their next meeting.

44. Develop multiple ways to make money speaking

You can speak for free and offer a variety of products created by you such as books and audio programs. You can even place order forms on people's seats for them to fill out.

About The Author

Brian Tracy is Chairman and CEO of Brian Tracy International, a company specializing in the training and development of individuals and organizations.

Brian's goal is to help you achieve your personal and business goals faster and easier than you ever imagined.

Brian Tracy has consulted for more than 1,000 companies and addressed more than 5,000,000 people in 5,000 talks and seminars throughout the US, Canada and 56 other countries worldwide. As a Keynote speaker and seminar leader, he addresses more than 250,000 people each year.

He has studied, researched, written and spoken for 30 years in the fields of economics, history, business, philosophy and psychology. He is the top selling author of over 50 books that have been translated into dozens of languages.

He has written and produced more than 500 audio and video learning programs, including the worldwide, best-selling Psychology of Achievement, which has been translated into more than 20 languages.

He speaks to corporate and public audiences on the subjects of Personal and Professional Development, including the executives and staff of many of America's largest corporations. His exciting talks and seminars on Leadership, Selling, Self-Esteem, Goals, Strategy, Creativity and Success Psychology bring about immediate changes and longterm results.

He has traveled and worked in over 90 countries on six continents, and speaks four languages. Brian is happily married and has four children. He is active in community and national affairs, and is the President of three companies headquartered in San Diego, California.

Brian is the president of Brian Tracy International, a company that helps individuals and businesses of all sizes achieve personal and professional goals.

To learn more about Brian Tracy, please visit www.briantracy.com/AboutBrian.

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