

They Don't Have to be Naked

A new approach to public speaking that will help you conquer your fears & deliver talks that get people talking.

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Special thanks to all those people who helped me with this book. This book was just an idea and a series of disjointed thoughts until I had the great fortune to meet you.

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WHY THIS BOOK?

I realize the market is saturated with public speaking resources that all make the same promise: to make you a better public speaker. What sets this book apart from the others is the fact that the techniques and strategies employed are:

Multifaceted: This book incorporates proven techniques and concepts from stand-up comedy, Toastmasters clubs, theatre and improv; it draws upon body language analysis used by police interrogators and poker players.

Practicable: I am not going to teach you to speak like me; my strategies are designed to assist you in developing your own unique speaking style. The techniques are concrete and achievable with practice.

Practical: There are no airy platitudes advising you to “speak with passion” or “exude confidence”. You already know that’s the goal – therefore, it’s also the problem! You may always get nervous when you speak in public. This book shows you secrets and tricks which make you appear passionate and confident irrespective of how you feel inside.

Unveiled in this guide are practical strategies, that have been successfully employed to capture and maintain the attention of a variety of audiences from elementary and university students, to business executives, to large, multicultural, all-age crowds numbering in the thousands. Drawing upon my unique and eclectic experiences as a presenter and informed by my interest in the psychology of effective communication, my methods aim to help you become a better, more confident speaker in all situations.

WARNING:

In this guide, I contradict a lot of “accepted principles” of good public speaking. Therefore, you may not agree with some of the things I say. However, I encourage you to maintain an open mind, challenge your beliefs and explore your boundaries as you work through the suggested strategies – you may like what you discover.

WHO IS THIS BOOK FOR?

Obviously in my mind it's for everyone, but let's get specific. This book will be a valuable tool if you are:

1. Looking to improve your presentation skills at work
2. Planning to MC an event
3. A teacher wanting to engage your students more
4. A sales representative wanting better results
5. A student wanting to nail the case competition or school presentation
6. Someone looking to be more confident in front of others

WARNING:

This book will ask you to do things that make you uncomfortable. It's necessary if you want to improve so... deal with it!

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book is short and to the point. You can read each section fully (and I recommend you do), but if you need help quickly, just jump to the highlighted STRATEGY sections. In other words you can either read this book linearly or as a quick reference guide (use the table of contents to skip to the STRATEGY sections and the case studies) as you work to become a more proficient public speaker.

WHAT I PROMISE

If you practice and apply the techniques I show you in this guide, you will become a more engaging public speaker than you are now.

I challenge you!

I challenge you to try something different.

I challenge you to stop making excuses.

I challenge you to stop thinking that you can't.

I challenge you to try!

If you have questions or would like to know more about yours truly, check out my website at <http://www.speakingandcommunication.com>.

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THE FIVE PERCENT

The underlying principle that applies to every aspect of this public speaking model is the 5% rule. Most people will only retain about 5% of a presentation. So the smart speaker decides what that will be in advance and repeatedly emphasizes it. Usually this consists of a general impression of you (the speaker) and one piece of information (i.e., a fact or number).

The trap so many of us fall into when we speak is information overload - we go into too much detail. Understand that a presentation is not given to make people experts in your topic of discussion, but rather it's given to leave people with an impression about a topic, whether positive or negative. In other words, your goal is to provide just enough information to generate interest, discussion, thought and/or action on the part of your audience that will ideally persist long after the presentation is given.

For this reason, you need to give considerable thought to what should go into your 5%. Here are three strategies that you can use to find and communicate your 5% effectively (note that these strategies can be used independently as well as in combination):

THE SUMMARY SENTENCE

This is best used when the purpose of your talk is to inform. An old business partner of mine used to challenge anyone trying to explain something to him by saying, “Give it to me in one sentence,” before they had a chance to continue with their sales pitch. If they couldn’t, they were disregarded for not knowing their topic well enough. By packaging your presentation into a (hopefully compelling) single sentence, you are generating interest and letting your audience know, right away, what they can expect. Because it is both informative and succinct, it can be used throughout the speech to reinforce the concept you want them to walk away with.

Think about it from a web surfing perspective. When you are searching for something online, how long do you spend on a web page before deciding it’s relevant? Three seconds? Four seconds? It’s probably no more than five seconds. In a speech, you might have at most 30 seconds to a minute before the audience members will start to pass judgment and potentially disengage. By using your summary sentence near the beginning of your speech, you can capture your audience right away with one simple-to-remember sentence. Your talk will have an instant feeling of relevance. This is where you can surpass other speakers and draw greater attention and retention. Let’s look at some examples.

STRATEGY | SUMMARY SENTENCE

A simple-to-remember sentence that can be reiterated throughout your presentation to INFORM the audience and remind them of your premise.

The future of security is online.

There are four ways you can achieve optimal health.

The exponential economic growth of China will make it a world super power.

All of these examples are clear, concise and easy to remember. They’re not necessarily catchy, and they don’t challenge the audience, but they do effectively communicate your main message.

The first example was taken from a speech explaining that due to the way viruses and Trojan horses get on your hard drive, the current security programs for detecting them will be a thing of the past. The speaker went on to inform the audience about how Google and other large Internet players are addressing the new form of cybercrime which involves furtive methods of accessing personal information online.

The second example is from a presentation by a 3rd year Kinesiology student. In it she discusses how sleep, diet, exercise and yoga can help you become a healthier person.

The last example was a Toastmaster speech in which the speaker showed how China is poised to become the next major world power in terms of its economic and social robustness.

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GOAL OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT

Your Goal Opportunity Statement (GOS) is a one or two sentence breakdown of the topic. It differs from the Summary Sentence in that it has an explicit call to action and is best suited for a speech aiming to convince or persuade. It always includes a number and/or rate of change. It's a question or statement that both challenges the audience and alludes to a solution or reward.

Sometimes the "Opportunity" in our GOS may be more appropriately labeled as an "Obstacle". I bring this up because some believe that everything in a presentation should have a positive focus. The idea is that you should only focus on positive aspects in a presentation. This may involve repackaging your presentation so that problems or obstacles are described solely in terms of opportunities. Although there is benefit in this approach, it also assumes that your audience is not sophisticated enough to recognize what you are doing. You will have to weigh this dilemma yourself, but do not shy away from the negative, or try to "sugar coat" everything. There is nothing wrong with explicitly stating that there is a problem, as long as you focus on how to achieve a solution. This will make you look both ambitious and competent. Remember an obstacle is something to identify AND THEN overcome. Let's look at few examples of a GOS.

STRATEGY | GOAL OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT

A one or two sentence statement that begs a question and alludes to an answer. It usually involves a number and/or rate of change.

Given the trend towards a more health-conscious society, how can [favorite donut maker] leverage its brand recognition to achieve a 10% increase in sales over 2 years?

The goal of this presentation is to show you the two best ways to tie your shoelaces and why you should care.

Given the high cost per unit, how can company A increase its production to accommodate growth without losing X amount per year?

Substitute your own information into these examples, or make-up similar statements to make them relevant to your topic. Notice that all of these statements beg a question and

allude to a direction for your presentation via an answer, so that right away everyone will know what you are going to talk about and what information they should walk away with.

In the first example, the group initially discussed industry trends to identify market gaps and then went on to propose a solution. The second example was derived from a TED Talk in which the speaker showed how seemingly trivial things can have a dramatic effect on our lives. The last example is simply a great formula for presenting a business case/problem quickly and concisely.

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THE CATCH PHRASE

Sometimes the goal of your presentation can best be explained by choosing a concise phrase or statement that evokes some sort of opinion or feeling. Think about it like a company slogan where the goal of the slogan is not so much to inform, but to create a strong and memorable impression. The beauty of this approach is that it provides the listener with a mind schema (mental short cut) which nicely encapsulates the point of your presentation.

By associating the catch phrase with a specific course of action, and then emphasizing the catch phrase, we make it easy for the audience to retain information. This can also be accomplished through the use of motivating expressions or colorful and inspirational language. Consider the following examples:

Go where no man has gone before

Just do it

Yes we can

I don't have to tell you where these phrases come from. Not only do you know them, you probably have certain images, opinions and values associated with them, which makes them not only relevant on a personal level, but also memorable. Moreover, you know the implied association of the statement; you know that what follows the "Yes we can" is an action or value-loaded statement such as "improve our country".

Comedians do this too when they refer back to a previous punch line or expression during a routine. By referencing a previous joke, they make the audience members feel like they have privileged information, which makes it personal and memorable. By creating a catch phrase that easily links to a value judgment, an impression and/or a course of action in the listener's mind, you are also doing this.

STRATEGY | CATCH PHRASE

An enticing and repeatable phrase that links easily to the main message or call to action that you're trying to convey.

Consider our donut example again. If our idea was that instead of trying to create an impression of health, the company should admit that donuts are not healthy and focus on the fun factor of donuts, the catch phrase could be:

Embrace The Irrational

Now let's revisit our shoelace example. If we want to promote a better way to tie laces because of the time it would save, we could use the phrase:

Life Is Short - Don't Waste It Tying

For the speech about how China will be the future superpower, the phrase could be:

China Is The Next Rome

Many public speaking pundits suggest that a good speech should always elicit an emotional response from the audience. This seems logical, but it's not so straightforward. For example, what if the speech deals with a business proposition or is of a purely technical nature? What if a speech is meant to be formal and will be delivered to work colleagues? Is it really appropriate to elicit an emotional response under these circumstances?

This conundrum (I have always wanted to use that word!) comes from how we interpret the word emotion. We tend to think of emotion as overt displays of sadness, joy or anger. However, the emotion elicited by a speech can be a lot more subtle and still have impact. Let's think less about creating an emotional connection and more about connecting speech content to an idea, opinion or perception. In other words, value-laden beliefs generally come with positive or negative connotations. "China is the next Rome" links all of our perceptions about the US, Russia, and other great nations and empires (positive or negative) with China. It is merely the connecting of two ideas or beliefs. "Embrace the irrational" connects eating donuts to the kind of thing we do just for fun. The linking of these two ideas can be considered an emotional connection because of the connotations associated with cutting loose and being a little zany at times. "Life is too short, don't waste it tying" connects efficiency with living life to the fullest. Once again, it is a simple act of connecting two ideas, yet it creates visceral appeal.

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CASE STUDY

The 5% in an pinch



Lisa is a nursing student who had to do a presentation about optimal patient care. She was the last presenter for the afternoon, and everyone before her had gone over their allotted time. Partway into her presentation, her instructor gave her the “two minutes left” sign. Lisa explains:

“For a second I totally panicked - I still had like five slides and ten more minutes to go. I thought, how the hell am I going to get through all of it, and then I realized that I didn’t have to! I thought about the 5% (I used a GOS). I basically finished the current slide and went to my closing slide and just stressed my GOS for the remainder of the time. No one even really noticed that I ran out of time. They thought that was the way I wanted to do the presentation! The next week in class everyone actually complimented me and jokingly repeated the 5%. The number of people that remembered, including my instructor, blew me away!”

LESSON = If you are running out of time, don’t rush through your presentation, skip ahead to your summary slide and reinforce your 5 %.

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ORGANIZATION

At this point, you have to ask yourself an important but often overlooked question: **What is the purpose of a speech?** For me, it is to provide a basic understanding of a topic, a teaser that will leave an impression. The goal is to make your audience curious enough to want more information. The trap most of us fall into is trying to present to our audience all of the details and reasoning that might be in an essay, when really **a speech should be a SUMMARY** of an essay. Instead of providing a comprehensive account of the details, it should highlight the conclusions, interesting points, numbers, facts, and most important, suggested ACTIONS of the essay - your 5%!

The organization of a speech is similar to the format for a standard essay with one important emphasis - REPETITION. Think of the adage:

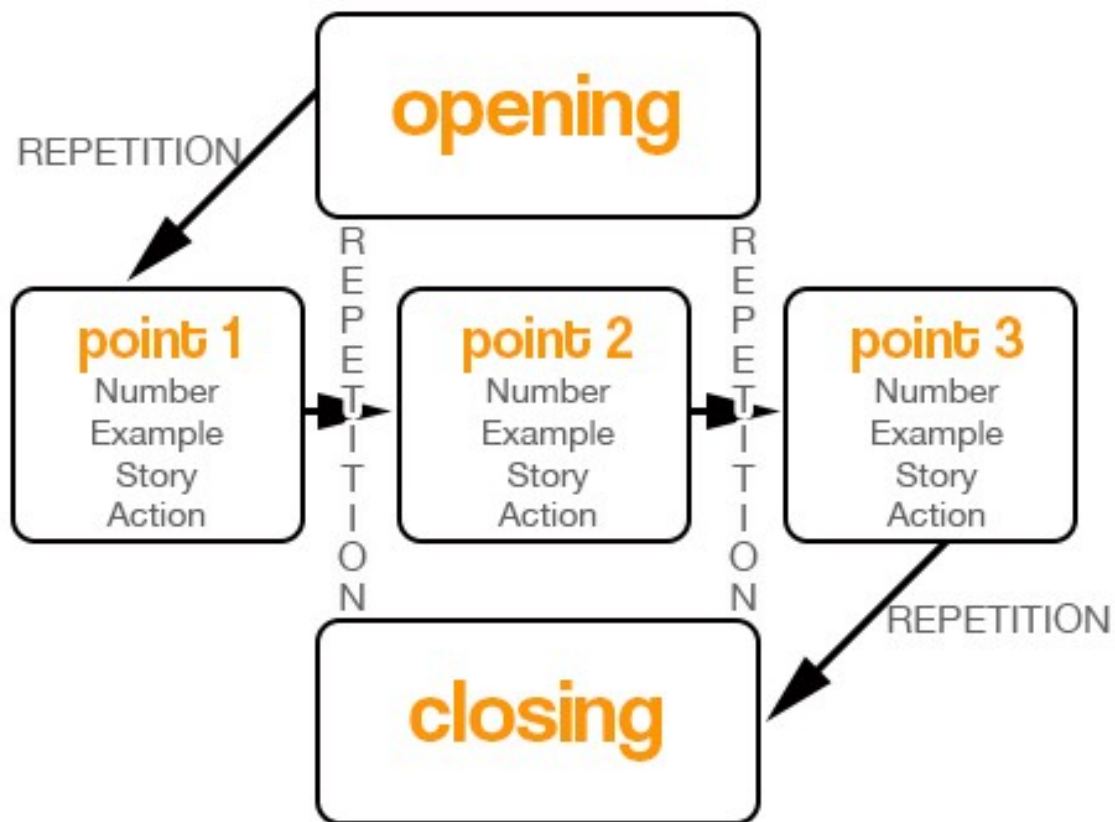
Tell them what you are going to tell them.

Tell them.

Tell them what you told them.

A speech is usually a one-time event and not a hard document that can be referenced and revisited by an audience easily in the future. Therefore repetition is crucial for ensuring your message is retained.

SPEECH STRUCTURE



If people are only going to walk away with 5% of what you say, then the smart speaker takes as many opportunities as possible to repeat and stress their 5%. Notice the above diagram. At each point of transition or review during your speech, think about using your 5%. Add it to the beginning and end of your speech as well, and you have a very high likelihood of audience retention.

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OPENINGS

The opening is where you make your first impression. Think about the phrase “read between the lines”. In a public speaking context, YOU are the “in between the lines”! In other words, your demeanor as the presenter makes-up the implicit piece of what’s being communicated. It falls under the ‘general impression’ portion of your 5%.

The real speech opening happens before you start speaking; it happens when you enter the speech area, room, etc. It happens when you interact with the audience members as they arrive, and when you talk to the person who will be introducing you. Therefore, you must start communicating that first general impression before you start speaking - while you are sitting, while you are setting up and while you are waiting. But how do you do this?

STRATEGY | STAND AND GREET

When you get to the venue, don’t just set up and sit down. Stand and talk to people as they are walking in. Introduce yourself. Ask them about their motivation for coming, the topic to be discussed or just engage in small talk. Essentially, work the room. Even in a boardroom meeting, there is a time when people are walking in and mingling. Most speakers use the time before a speech begins to practice by retreating into a corner, talking quietly to themselves, and/or walking around randomly to get rid of nervous energy. Why not practice and get rid of nervous energy? Give them previews of what they can expect. Empathize with fellow presenters by sharing similar stories of nervousness. This is your time to make an impression and get people on your side.

STRATEGY | TAKE THE PRAISE

If you are being introduced and the audience can see you, make eye contact with the person introducing you, and give them a, “You’re doing great” nod. Having someone say good things about you can be hard, and it’s at this time when most of us have a tendency to act shy. Radiate confidence by looking at the people in the room, smiling and just accepting the praise.

STRATEGY | TAKE YOUR TIME

Take your time walking to the speaking area. Most of us, because of nerves, tend to rush onto the stage and start talking before we fully face the audience. By forcing yourself to have a steady, moderate pace, your body language communicates that you are calm and confident.

Take a few seconds before you start speaking. We will touch on this more later ([see SILENCE section](#)), but looking comfortable with a few seconds of silence will command attention and convey an aura of confidence. When I am nervous, I achieve this by forcing myself to take one normal breath (deep breaths will make you look nervous). I inhale and start to speak with my exhale.

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INTRODUCTIONS

Now let's assume that you have mastered the walk-up, and the crowd is waiting in eager silence. It's time for the words to come out, which is part two of making a good first impression. There is no consistent formula, but there are tools you can use to make strong introductions. Here are the traditional examples:

Personal story

Anecdote

Joke

Strong statement

A number/stat

The main difficulty with the above examples is that they all require a certain level of charisma or charm to pull off, and if you are nervous, it may not work. They are still effective, but the question becomes how can you say your story, statement, etc., in a strong way if you're nervous? The solution is using or supplementing the above with:

An audience question

A show of hands

They work well separately, but are most powerful when used together. There are two advantages to this approach. First, it will engage the audience both physically and mentally by making them think and giving them something to do. Secondly, it allows you to make a strong opening without trying to be funny or charismatic. You will essentially make the audience do the work of getting the presentation started on the right note for you. The physical movement can serve to wake everyone up and get them focused (physical activity encourages brain activity). This is especially useful if you are speaking at the end of the day or after a dry presentation. A question with a show of hands can also work in conjunction with, and enhance, the more traditional methods listed above. There is one important caveat to this approach that you must follow if you are to be effective - insist on a response! Too often a speaker will stumble or let the point fade away because an audience didn't respond or because they didn't get the response they wanted. This could be due to audience shyness or an unclear question on the part of the speaker. Let's assume however, that you are awesome and they are not. You ask a question and for a show of hands, and no one responds. What do you do? Make it into a joke and insist on a response. The insistence will serve to create a bit of fun tension, which will increase the amount of engagement and energy in the room. Realize also, that with any audience question there is the possibility that you will

not get the response you wanted. Therefore, you must thoroughly test your question to make sure it is both clear and generates the desired response.

TYPES OF QUESTIONS

Depending on the type of speech you want and the tone you want to set, there are different strategies for asking questions and getting a response. Do you want a big show of hands or do you want no hands? Each can have an impact depending on your goal. There are four types of questions that you can utilize to compel an audience, and they are broken down below in the context of three different presentation scenarios.

AUDIENCE QUESTIONS

1	2	3	
China & their superior level of technology	Yoga and why it is awesome	Internet security and privacy	
STRAIGHT-FORWARD EXPERIENCE How many of you have ever been to China and seen the level of day-to-day technology? _____ How many of you, from a standing position, can actually touch your toes? _____ Raise your hand if you have ever gotten a virus on your computer?	STRAIGHT-FORWARD OPINION How many of you think China is the best place in the world to live? _____ By show of hands, how many of you think that flexibility is important? _____ How many of you think that computer security software is worth the price?	VAGUE EXPERIENCE How many people in this room can read and write in a foreign language? _____ Has anyone ever torn a pair of pants while you were wearing them? _____ How many of you have ever done something you shouldn't have online?	VAGUE OPINION If you could know the best place in the world to live in 20 years, would you move there? _____ What is more important, money or health? Who says money? Who says health? _____ If I were to look at your internet history, would I be surprised at what I saw? Raise your hands if the answer is yes/no.

STRATEGY | 4 QUESTIONS

To identify the best audience question for an opening, come up with a question using each of the four styles illustrated above, and see which best relates to your 5% and/or story, anecdote, etc.

How you start these questions will vary, and as you improve you will develop your own style, but in the meantime, here are three ways you can start an audience question:

By show of hands how many of you...

How many of you (have your hand in the air as you ask)...

Raise your hand if you agree with this statement...

The style of question you choose really depends on the type of speech you are giving and what your goal is. Are you trying to change the audience's mind? Are you trying to get them to follow a certain course of action? This is where a little preparation goes a long way. Be a keener and come up with one of each style of question for your speech. This will not only give you options, but it will also really force you to identify what response you want.

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TRANSITIONS

The smart speaker takes as many opportunities as possible to reiterate their 5%. The best time to do this is when you are transitioning between your different speaking points. You may be worried that the repetition will make you sound redundant. Redundancy is possible, but only if you repeat yourself word-for-word. As you get better you will find your own way, but for now the statements listed below are all you need to make strong, reinforcing transitions.

STRATEGY | NOW...LET'S...

A transitional statement that allows the speaker to introduce new points and reinforce their previous point and/or 5%.

NOW that we've discussed point A, **LET'S** discuss point B.

NOW that we have seen how to do it, **LET'S** discuss why we should.

NOW that we have seen how yoga can help you to maintain mobility as you age,

LET'S see how it can also help you become stronger.

NOW that we have seen how market indicators support making tasty donuts,

LET'S see what the financial justification is for doing so.

STRATEGY | THE NEXT QUESTION IS...

A transitional question that allows the speaker to introduce new points and reinforce their previous point and/or 5%.

Now that we know A,

THE NEXT QUESTION IS B.

Now that we know the problem,

THE NEXT QUESTION IS how to achieve the solution.

Now that we know the solution,

THE NEXT QUESTION IS how do we implement it.

Now that we know that tying your shoes with this method can save you 10 seconds per day,

THE NEXT QUESTION IS why should you care?

Now that we know that most of us are increasingly saving our data and personal information online,

THE NEXT QUESTION IS is it secure?

Now that we know that people still want tasty/unhealthy treats,

THE NEXT QUESTION IS how can we capitalize on it?

The idea is that we can use our 5% as a transitional phrase as we move the audience's attention from one topic to another. We can reiterate our main message and introduce new concepts into the scope of the talk effectively reinforcing our 5% as we also delve further into new territory.

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CLOSINGS

This is where most of us will summarize and ask for questions. This is also where we have an opportunity to once again push our 5%. In a standard closing you wrap up by reinforcing your 5% and reiterating your main thesis. This is customary and is often introduced with the phrase “So in summary,” or “So in closing,” followed by a recap. There is nothing wrong with this approach, but we are here to learn how to be better public speakers, not standard ones. So let’s explore some other options.

STRATEGY | QUESTION CLOSING

An impactful closing that repeats the audience question from the beginning of the speech.

If you used an opinion question with a show of hands at the beginning of your speech, then do the same thing at the end. This can be risky, especially if you’ve opened with an audience question, but it is always impactful. It should be the last thing you say, and here is how it works:

ASK THE QUESTION & FOR A SHOW OF HANDS

This is the same question that you asked at the beginning of your speech. You can sometimes preface it by saying something like “at the beginning of this speech I asked you X and you thought Y...now I ask you again...” Remember that as you do this you should lift your hand up as well to indicate that you want a show of hands.

PAUSE FOR 2-3 SECONDS

Many people will ask their question and not really wait for a response, which is a wasted opportunity. We pause here for three reasons. One, because it compels the audience to actually put their hands up and two, it gives them an opportunity to put their hands up. Thirdly, it has a great dramatic effect. Generally, as people decide how to respond, they will look around the room to see how others are responding. If your talk was successful in changing people’s point of view, it will be recognized and create that lingering impact.

PASS IT BACK

The other great benefit of using that pause is that it makes you look confident, and at a crucial moment – at the end of your talk. Many people fizzle out at the end of their presentation, or (sometimes literally) run off stage. They are either afraid of audience feedback, or extremely glad to be finished and anxious to be out of the limelight. By waiting and being comfortable in the silence, and then passing control back to the host or asking for questions, you finish with an impression of strength. As a side note, there are three ways that you can transition smoothly out of your speech.

...and with that I will pass it back to [name of host].

...and now I will take any questions you might have.

...and that [my friends, ladies and gentlemen, etc.] is the end.

STRATEGY | RHETORICAL CLOSING

An impactful closing that challenges the audience and compels them to act.

This form of closing involves the use of a rhetorical question that compels action. Finish your talk by asking the audience a question that generates inner reflection and encourages them to take action. I sometimes use this when getting a show of hands might be too sensitive or uncomfortable depending on the topic. To employ the action closing you need to:

CREATE A SCENARIO

If we return to our example talk on the benefits of yoga, the closing question could be prefaced by the following statement, “Most of us fear that as we get older, we may not be able to dance, play sports or continue to do the things we love to do. Yoga can keep you mobile and strong while placing little or no stress on your joints.” Then, ask them a:

COMPELLING RHETORICAL QUESTION

The question should be one that challenges them to act: “If you knew an easy method of maintaining your mobility and quality of life as you age, wouldn’t you want to give it a try?”

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CASE STUDY

Repetition & Rhetorical Questions



Daniel was giving a presentation for a student leadership conference. He had started a student run department at his university, which paid for itself by contracting out its services internally to departments non-fluent in social media. Daniel explains:

“I was basically trying to get everyone to try and do the same thing in his or her school. The idea was that a lot of students already have the skill set to do good social media just from their day-to-day lives, so why not use it to benefit other students and also to help the school? The students get something to put on their resume and a sort of job, and the school gets really cheap social media work that they don’t have to hire from outside. So I just kept saying, ‘You’re already doing it for fun, so why not benefit from it?’ It worked really well! I had all these people coming up to me afterward basically telling me that I convinced them to try it.”

LESSON = By reiterating a call to action throughout your speech you can increase both audience acceptance, initiation and retention of a proposition.

I AM CURRENTLY WORKING ON A SECOND BOOK ENTITLED
“HACKING THE BRAIN: SECRETS TO MAKING MEMORABLE
PRESENTATIONS.” BE THE FIRST TO KNOW WHEN IT’S OUT
AND MAYBE GET A FREE COPY BY CLICKING [THIS LINK](#).

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YOUR BODY

The first thing we need to understand is that most communication is non-verbal. This is nothing new. Some estimates suggest as much as 60, 70, even 90% of communication is non-verbal. What this means, for our purposes, is that public speaking is less an auditory form of communication than a visual one. You are the primary, and in some cases, only visual people will have. If you are not visually interesting, then your presentation or speech will likewise not be interesting. The value of information, its perceived validity and importance, is influenced by the physical communication of the person giving the information. There are several strategies you can employ to become a more visually appealing communicator.

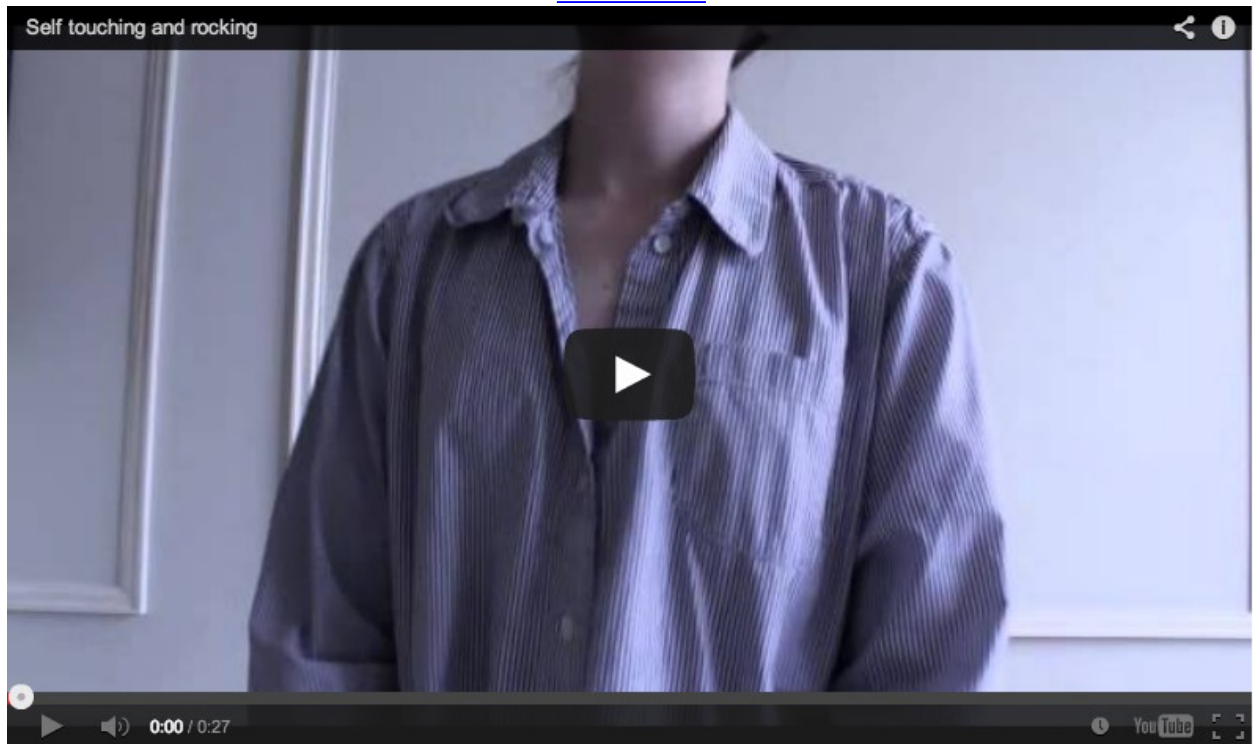
MOVING WITH PURPOSE

This is all about how you use the space given, the speaking area, to enhance the speech. When you are speaking you can use movement and stillness to accentuate points and draw attention. Even in a small cramped space, there is room for some movement. Do not be afraid to adjust furniture so the audience is situated to suit your needs. If possible, before the talk stand where you will be speaking. Take some time to see where you can move and adjust things, as permitted, to facilitate your movements.

NON-SPECIFIC MOVEMENT



[ROCKING](#)



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FINDING YOUR SPEAKING AREA

Frequently, when I am invited to run a workshop, people are filtering in while I am setting up or are already present. This facilitates the first strategy of becoming comfortable in your space. I use this time while I am setting up to start talking to people in different parts of the room. I make casual conversation as I move around my speaking area. By doing this I identify where I can move to and still have a good command of the room. I then make a mental note to hit those spots during the speech.

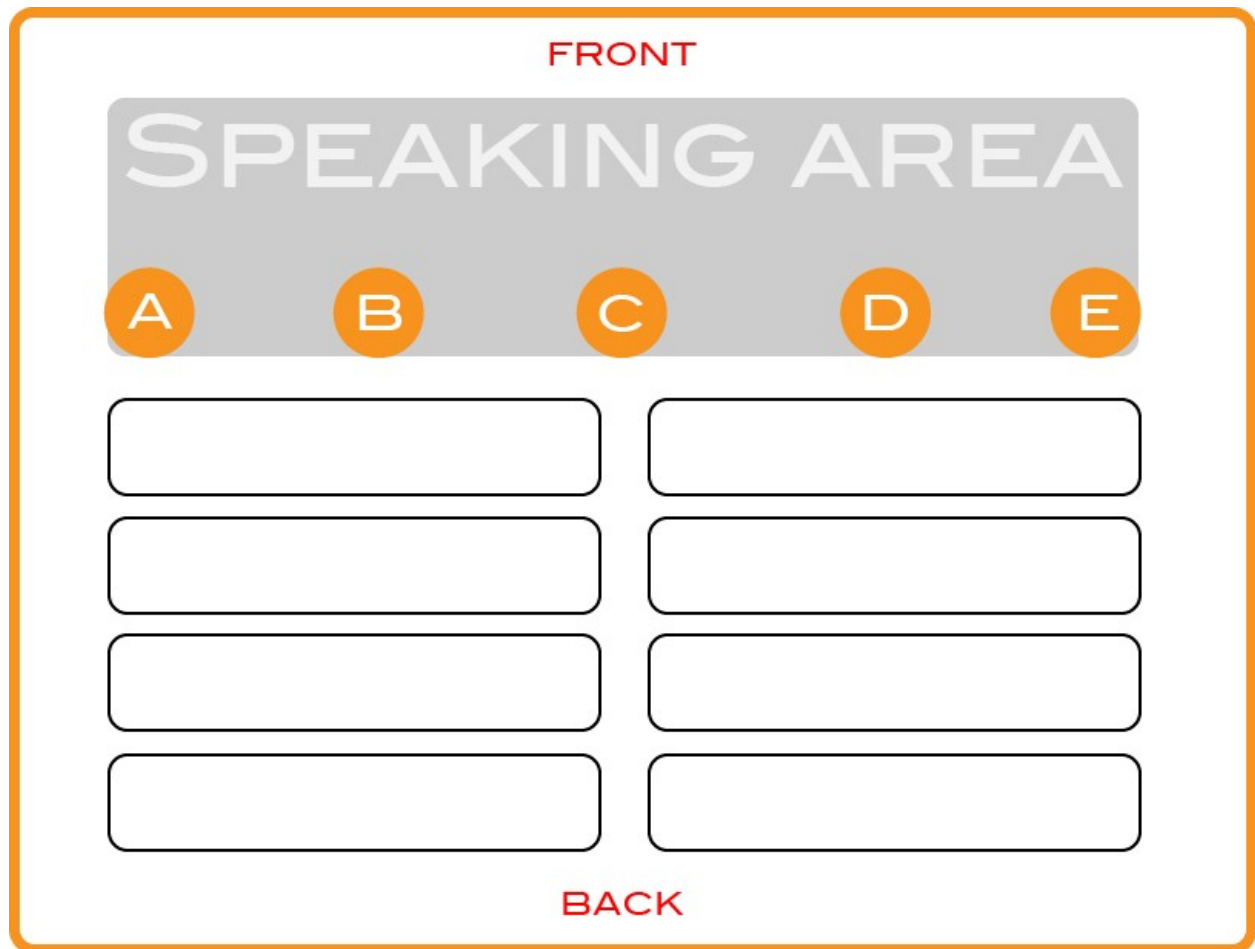
This strategy provides two more added benefits: First, it breaks the ice with audience members, which will make the atmosphere more comfortable and help with audience participation when the speech begins. Secondly, it gets me talking and allows me to get rid of a lot of nervous energy. As you chat with people, you can give them little previews of what you are going to be talking about to make sure your words are clear and ready to go.

You can take the time to listen to what they want to learn, and then tweak your presentation to make sure you address that topic. Let them know too, that you will be addressing that topic, as it will build anticipation and interest. You can then use that information to encourage audience participation. Repeat the question to the audience, or have the person who asked it share it with the group. Find out how many others were wondering the same thing. Doing so will add an interactive dimension to your presentation before it even begins!

You may have noticed that this strategy of familiarizing yourself with the speaking area (though really effective), has one obvious flaw - it involves access to the speaking area before you speak, and this is not always possible. This is where the [Angle Strategy](#) (see below) comes into play. Before we get there however, let's make sure we try to take full advantage of the first strategy and look at a few common scenarios.

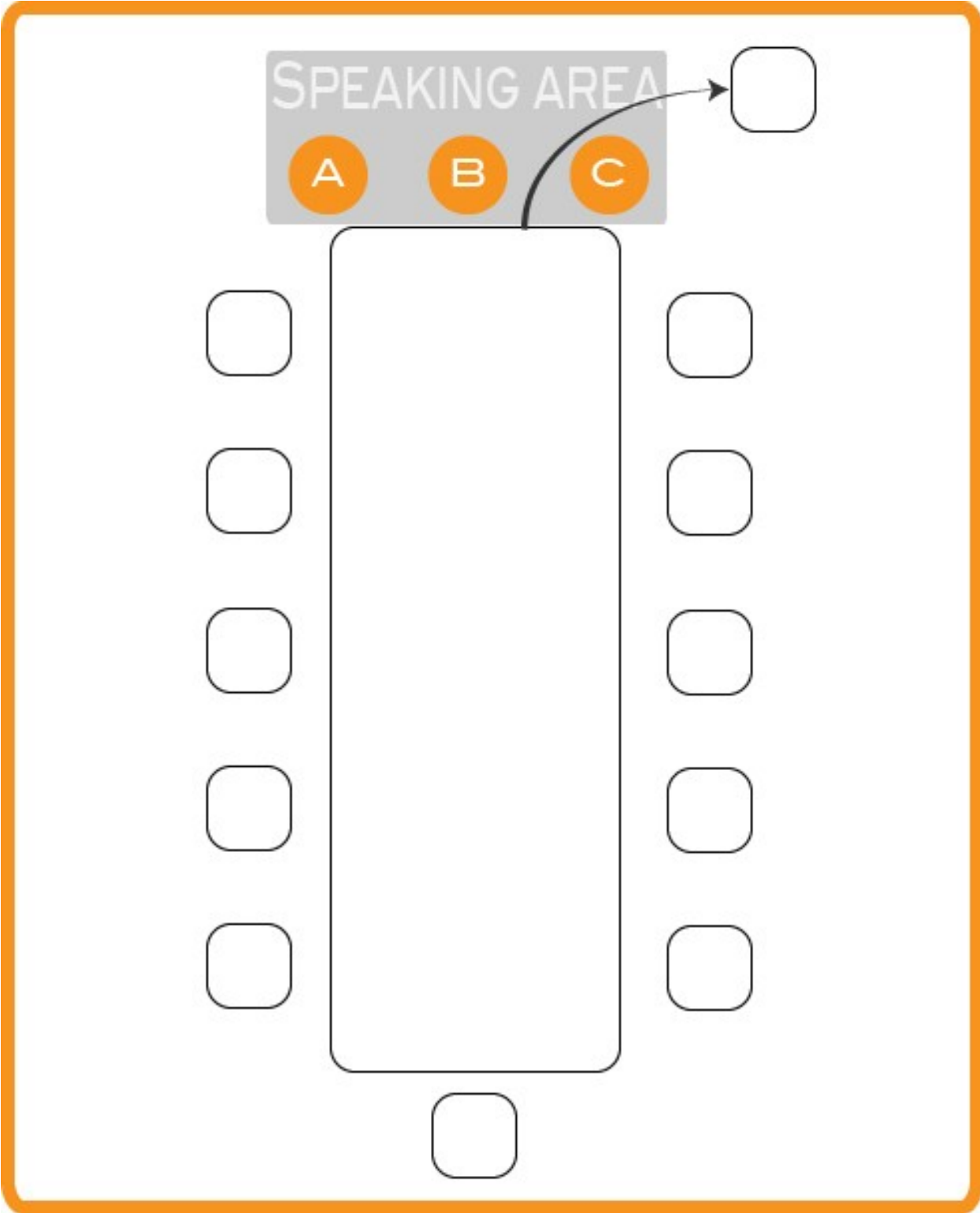
THE CLASSROOM

If you're giving a speech for school, it's probably going to be in a classroom, and it's probably the same one you go to all semester. It will generally be easy for you to access the room. Another great strategy is to just stand at the front of the room in the few minutes before class starts (not necessarily on your speech day), and chat people up as they come in from different parts of the speaking area. Be aware that in a classroom (as depicted in the diagram below), you will usually have at least five locations from which to speak (A, B, C, D and E). By limiting yourself to location C, or the centre of the speaking area, you will also limit your ability to engage the audience visually.



THE BOARDROOM

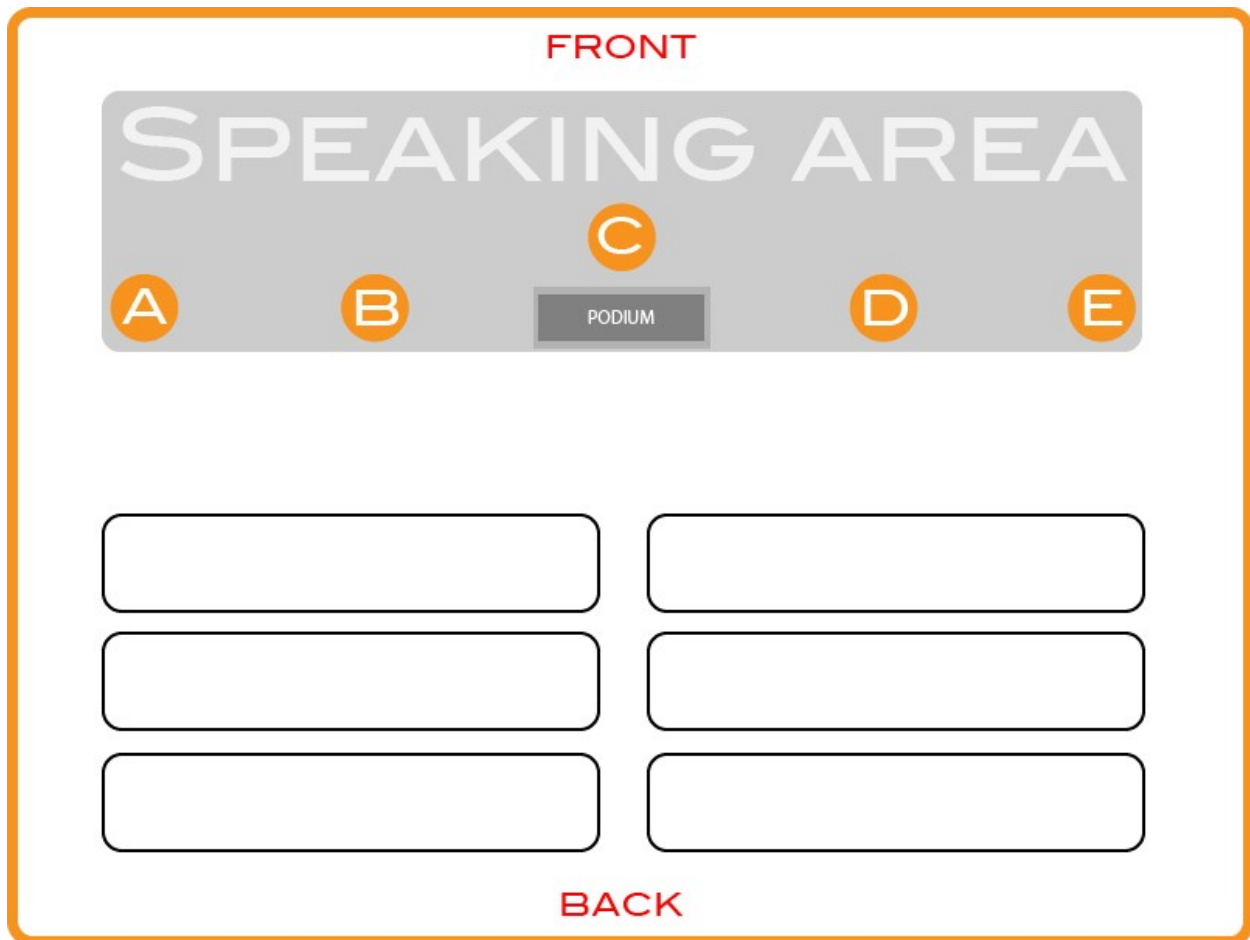
In the boardroom scenario, the room will likely be fixed and will be dominated by a large table. Once again, you can probably access the room either the day of or the day before you give your talk. Your speaking locations will generally be more limited than they are in the classroom or on a stage (as indicated by A, B and C in the visual). I actually try to slide the table as far away from me as possible, so that I have more room to move around. If there is a chair immediately in front of the location in which you will be speaking, get it out of your way. I also adjust chairs so that they are facing me and not the table (or I ask everyone to do that before I start). Furthermore, I use this opportunity to explore the space and ascertain the best possible speaking locations for my purposes.



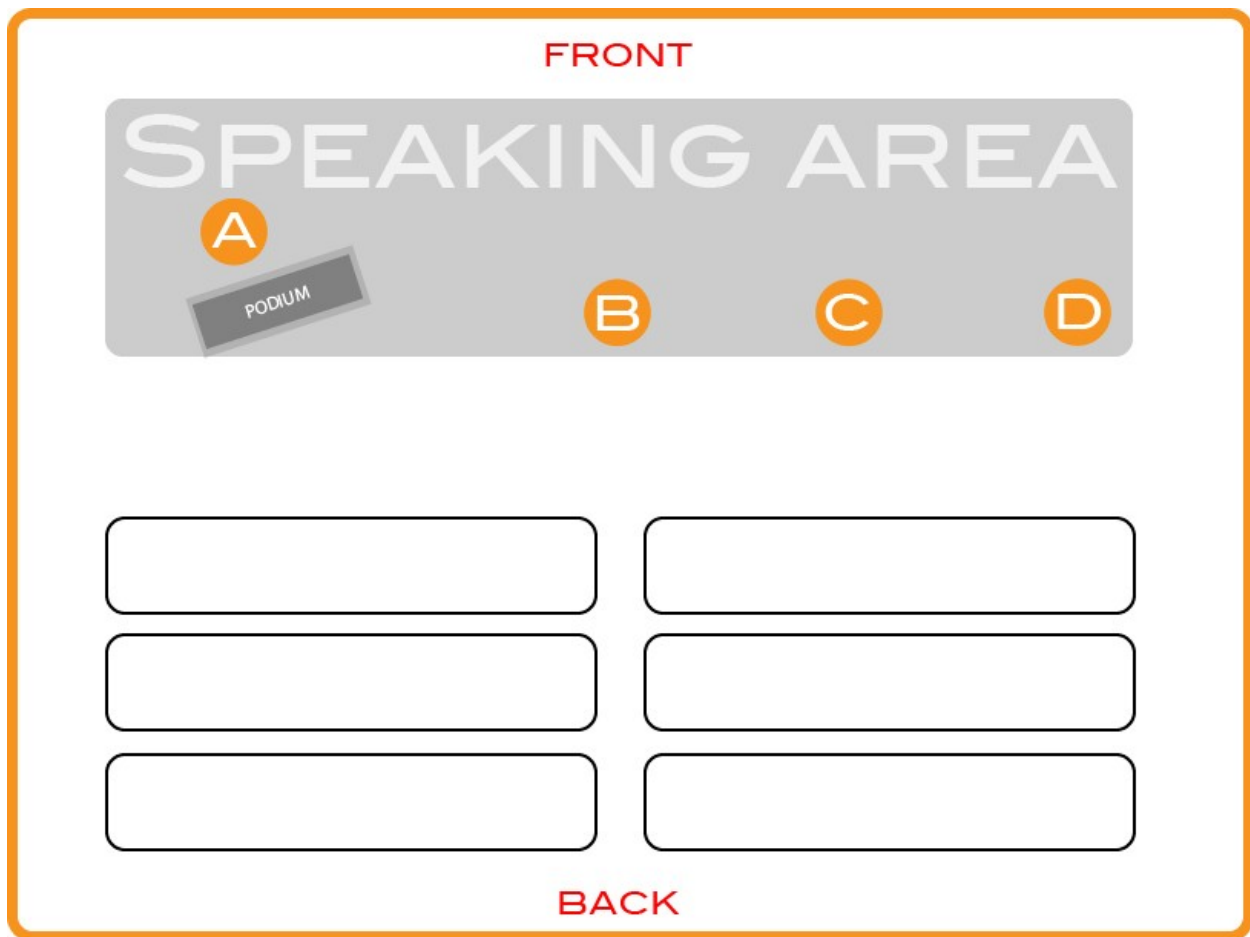
THE STAGE

Most stages, whether big or small, will have one of two general setups. In the first, there will be a podium in a corner with the central area taken up by a screen. Alternatively, there will be a podium in the center of the stage or speaking area, possibly with a screen on either side of you. Like the classroom, you will likely have the full spectrum of locations from which to speak (A, B, C, D, and possibly E). The rule for either setup is: Do not get stuck behind the podium! In either of these setups, if you limit yourself to a single boring visual, people will spend more time staring blankly than listening to you.

STAGE A



STAGE B



STRATEGY | HIT THE EXTREMES

Movement to the far edges of the speaking area, which draws attention and removes the barrier between the speaker and audience members.

During “crowd work”, where they engage members of the audience, stand-up comics will regularly walk to the edges of the stage. If you ever see this you will notice that it instantly gets the attention of the whole audience and accentuates what is being said. It creates a nervous energy in the audience because it’s a departure from the norm and breaks the invisible barrier between the speaker and the audience. In other words, it permits the presenter to get closer to and deliver a certain level of personal attention to audience members otherwise removed from the “action”. Although it’s especially powerful on a stage, try this technique in any context. In the classroom, for example, I walk right up to the desks in the front row; in the boardroom I approach the closest individuals as if we were having a conversation. No one ever walks to the extreme corners and thus, by doing so, you will draw greater attention to yourself and what you are saying. I also use this strategy when I feel like the audience is losing interest or if the topic is especially dry.

STRATEGY | PATTERNS & BREAKS

An advanced strategy of movement that captures the audience's attention by breaking a pre-established pattern.

People have evolved to detect patterns and notice change. To facilitate visual appeal while speaking, we need to both create patterns, so people can follow our process, and jump out of the established patterns to draw attention. By changing up the pattern, we use the element of surprise to keep the audience interested and curious about what we are going to do next. Therefore, by moving slowly for a while I will establish a pattern of movement with the audience. Then simply by changing my direction and walking quickly to an underused part of my speaking area, I am being unpredictable and consequently, boosting audience attention, which is ultimately my desired goal. When a move to the corner coincides with a key speaking point - checkmate!

SET UP THE PATTERN

As your first goal, try to set up this pattern for your whole speech. Once again, visualize your speech in written format. As you begin a new paragraph, start moving to a new location within the speaking area. Take a sentence to get there. Once there, take one or two sentences of your paragraph to speak to that part of the room. Use another sentence to get to the next part of the room, and then repeat the process. This establishes a pattern. By doing this you are already a step ahead of the game, in terms of your effectiveness as a speaker.

BREAK THE PATTERN

Now let's take it to another level. Let's break the pattern to draw attention. Whenever you want to communicate excitement (a new development, an achievement, big outcome or anything where you want to communicate importance) speed up your movement across the room, or make a quick direction change. That will make you look excited and passionate and will instantly draw more attention because of the change in the established pattern.

STOP THE PATTERN

Let's go back to our baseline and imagine our written speech. Wherever we have a sentence that ends with an exclamation point, stop. Don't wait to get to the next part of the room; stop immediately where you are, face the audience and say that sentence. This is ideal for emphasizing your big point, your new idea, your key benefit or your dramatic number because stopping is a visual exclamation point.

If you are interested to know more about how the brain has evolved and how it applies to learning, check out Brain Rules by John Medina.

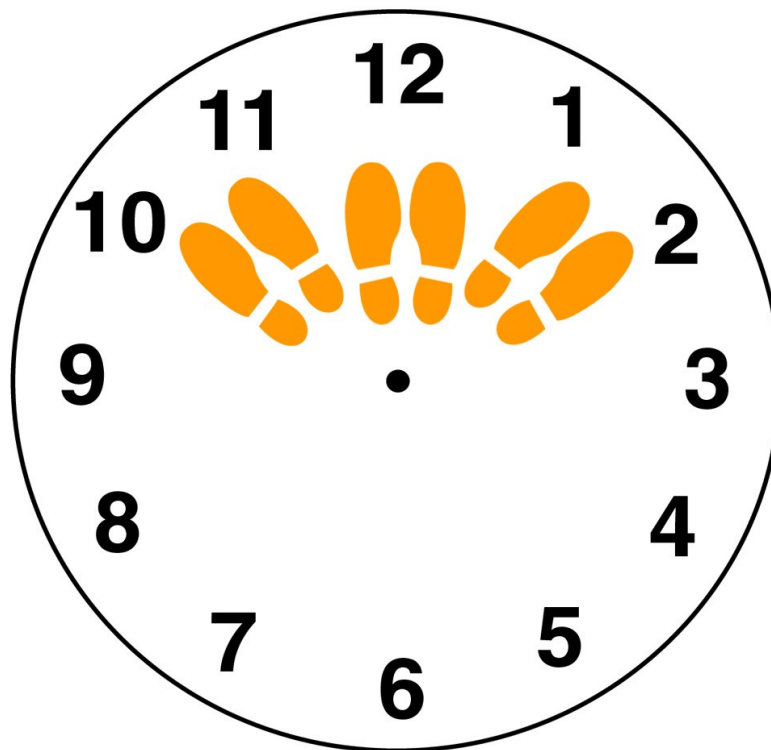
STRATEGY | USING ANGLES

Applying body angles when it is not feasible to move around the speaking area.

At the beginning of this chapter, I mentioned that we would need a strategy for when you are unable to access the room ahead of time and therefore, do not know what you're speaking area will look like. In a situation where you are required to stay in one place, you can still use angles to express movement. Imagine a clock on the floor (see diagram).

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AUDIENCE



When you are looking directly at the audience, it is 12:00. In cramped situations where movement is difficult, you can angle your body to 10:00 and 11:00 on one side or 1:00 and 2:00 on the other side to create the feeling of movement. The key to the angling approach is to rotate your whole body, rather than just twisting at the hip. The next section will talk about why this is important.

BONUS POINTS if you can complement this strategy with the [Patterns and Breaks](#) strategy above.

[Kevin Spacey Using Angles](#)



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THE 3 POINTS (AKA THE NAKED EFFECT)

There is a parallel that can be drawn between people who are nervous and people who are lying (hence the reason we tend to not trust information from nervous people). When police interrogate suspects, they focus on specific expressions of nervousness and discomfort to determine truthfulness. When we are lying, we instinctively cover up parts of our body. This is also true when we are nervous, and it becomes amplified when we are speaking in front of others. Once you see this, it is impossible to “unsee” it. Nervous speakers will instinctively cover three specific points on the body, namely the:

Neck

Belly button

Groin

Another way to think of it is The Naked Effect. When someone catches us naked, we instinctively cover up these same three points because we feel vulnerable. From an evolutionary perspective, this makes sense as we can interpret the behavior as a fear response (i.e., covering up our vital parts to protect ourselves from predators). The act of speaking in front of others also induces a fear response. It makes us feel vulnerable (under attack) and so we unconsciously express that feeling through the same defensive body language.

[THE THREE POINTS](#)



This goes hand-in-hand with other stereotypical defensive behaviors such as rocking or the angling of one's body away from the audience. You will also see people "shielding" by crossing their arms (hugging themselves) or keeping their notes rigidly in front of their body. One, two or all of these body parts are always covered or shielded when we are nervous, unsure about what we are saying or don't want to be in the situation we're in. Think about your body position when you don't want to be in a conversation with someone - you angle it away from the person to whom you're speaking. Notice that these are all physical expressions of fear and nervousness; therefore, by stopping these physical actions (irrespective of how you feel inside), you will conceal your nervousness from the audience and thus, look confident. Let's explore some strategies for expressing confidence.

If you would like to know more about the three points and lie detection, check out *You Can't Lie to Me* by Janine Driver.

STRATEGY | EXPOSING YOURSELF

Physically exposing the neck, belly button and groin to communicate confidence irrespective of how you feel.

How can you use the three points on the body to enhance your speech or presentation? The key thing to remember is that you don't have to feel confident to look confident. The simple act of opening your body to the audience is enough to convey confidence. Moving in front of the podium or table is another method. Therefore, avoid the Naked Effect by trying to direct the front of your body (your belly button and groin) to whomever you are speaking. If you are standing at the front of the room, make sure you are facing

the audience directly. If you are moving towards another part of your speaking area, angle your body so that you expose as much of the front of your body (i.e., those three points) as possible.

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CASE STUDY

Using your body instead of words



Nadia is a fitness instructor working on creating choreography and taking command of the class. She explains:

“So I had just gotten my certification and I was making choreography for a class. I asked Ivan to give me some feedback. What we noticed was that I was using lots of words to describe actions. In the heat of the moment and with the music in the background, I would stumble over what I was saying and couldn’t be heard. We worked on body language a lot. The first thing we did was role-play starting the class. He made me go through how I introduced myself and how I got everyone on the floor. We focused on just being still and open and on making people come to me (rather than me trying to go and collect everyone). It was really interesting to discover that if I walked out slowly and just stood in the front of the room, people would notice. He also made me use actions instead of words to get people do what I wanted them to do. The more I did it the easier it got, and it was awesome when I started getting compliments about my class and how engaging and confident I was!”

LESSON = An open stance will command attention and communicate confidence as it demonstrates comfort when “all eyes” are on you.

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HANDS & GESTURES

Similar to the approach used by police interrogators, very good poker players try to recognize deviations in physical expressions to gain an advantage over their opponents. “The tell” is the physical demeanor that someone instinctively adopts when they feel stressed or emotional. The difference is that at the poker table, it’s hard to get a feel for full body language, and as such, poker players focus on the hands. The most obvious nervous tendency is fidgeting, which is characterized by:

Self-touching gestures

Repetitive actions

When I was first grappling with nerves while presenting, my “tell” could be found in the constant buttoning and unbuttoning of my suit jacket. Other nervous actions include grabbing one wrist or one finger, rubbing one’s hands together, playing with one’s hair, etc. Some of the most common examples are:

Rubbing the fingers and thumb of the same hand

Squeezing ourselves

Clasping/rubbing our hands

What makes these behaviors so distracting is that the action does not change- it is repetitive. Recall the discussion on patterns and change! People are naturally efficient pattern detectors.

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[SELF-TOUCHING REPETITIVE GESTURES](#)



[SELF-GRABBING GESTURES](#)



Why is this important? You have probably heard people advise against putting your hands in your pockets or crossing your arms while giving a speech. This advice, although helpful, isn't necessarily zeroing in on what's important. In fact, depending on

the type of talk you are doing, the above actions might actually be appropriate. Think of your favourite talk show personality and/or stand-up comic. They break every rule of good public speaking, yet they are among the best speakers in the world. So even though there may not be hard and fast rules about where to place your hands, there are exercises that can help prevent fidgeting. With practice, you can reprogram your body's response to nervousness, creating new muscle memories to make you appear more natural.

STRATEGY | NO TOUCHING

Creating natural hand gestures by not allowing your hands to touch your body, the other hand or other objects.

The first step in controlling nervous hand gestures involves creating muscle memory that avoids fidgeting. But how can you do this if you are nervous? The trick is not to let your hands come together or touch anything. This means pens, paper, the desk, the podium and your own body are all off limits. This will be amazingly difficult at first and will feel very unnatural, but it will take away about 90% of all the possible fidgeting movements. However, because you still have pent-up nervous energy, your body will compensate by making your arm and body movements bigger and more dynamic. Once we create a muscle memory for not touching, we can slowly reintroduce touching but with variation. This means 50% of the time your hands can be in contact with objects or your body, and 50% of the time your hands should be free. Mastering this will take you to that elite stage of “naturalness” where you can cross your arms without squeezing yourself and clasp your hands without clinging.

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CASE STUDY

Nervous Gestures



Nancy is pursuing a law degree. As part of her program she had to participate in mock litigation to prepare her for actual courtroom trials. Nancy explains:

“I was working with Ivan and he recorded me doing my opening statements. When we watched the video afterward, I noticed that I kept clutching my left thumb with my right hand, and it made me look really uncomfortable. We worked on doing my opening statement without letting my hands touch. The first few times were really frustrating because I just couldn’t figure out what to do with my hands and I kept fudging my words. After about the 4th time however, I noticed that my hands and arms were sort of moving more naturally in the video playback. I was actually surprised because I was still feeling nervous, but not having the obvious nervous “tells” masked the anxiety I felt.”

LESSON = Create muscle memory for your hands by not letting them cling and grab repetitively to another part of your body.

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EYES

Eye contact is important. You may have expected me to discredit this popular public speaking rule...alas I cannot. It is important. BUT (!) as much as I understand the value of good eye contact, it can be distracting when you are trying to focus. Moreover, how is one supposed to make eye contact with 50 or a 100 people at a time?

[THE PROBLEM WITH EYE CONTACT](#)



If you are really comfortable speaking in front of others, then yes, by all means, making eye contact should be the goal to strive for. (Then again, if you are already at this stage, then you probably wouldn't be reading this book.). For those still struggling to implement this technique, there are other practical questions that rarely get addressed, such as:

Why do I need to make eye contact anyway?

What if I am too nervous to make eye contact?

How can I make eye contact without being distracted?

Can I connect with an audience without eye contact?

For me, making eye contact was always frustrating and embarrassing. Think about the last time you accidentally made eye contact with someone on the bus, or in another car, or walking down the street. Instant awkwardness! Here is why:

From an evolutionary perspective, uninterrupted eye contact means one of two things:

I want to make love to you.

I want to fight you.

Either way, **there is an implicit challenge that comes with eye contact.** That's why it always feels uncomfortable to look someone in the eyes for more than a few seconds. It is distracting when speaking because the intensity of the connection can make you focus on the eye contact itself, rather than on what you are doing. How often have you forgotten what you were saying or stumbled on your words because you were making eye contact with someone?

What we need to understand is that it's not the physical eye contact itself that is important, but rather what it communicates. We learn to look into someone's eyes when having a conversation to communicate that we are listening and are confident in what we are saying. It usually doesn't last longer than a few seconds, but if we want to assert confidence, we try to sustain it a bit longer. Beyond this, it gets awkward and tends to feel like a challenge. So when giving a speech, eye contact with the audience will convey confidence in your material. However, due to feelings of intense nervousness, it can also lead to freezing. Imagine, for example, that you are giving a speech (and are understandably nervous). You suddenly make eye contact with someone in the audience and subsequently stumble on your words, ultimately losing your place in the speech. So what should you do?

STRATEGY | VISUAL SECTORS

Superimposing a mental grid over the room to create sections to direct eye/head movement.

Rather than eye contact, what we should be striving for is eye and head movement. This will allow you to connect with the audience without getting distracted. It is easy to do even if you're nervous. Once again, it relates to the concept of patterns and change. What you need to do before the presentation starts (during the time people are coming in, or at some point before the session begins) is visually break the room up into sectors. The number and orientation of sectors and how they are placed depends on the room itself, and you can experiment with what works best.

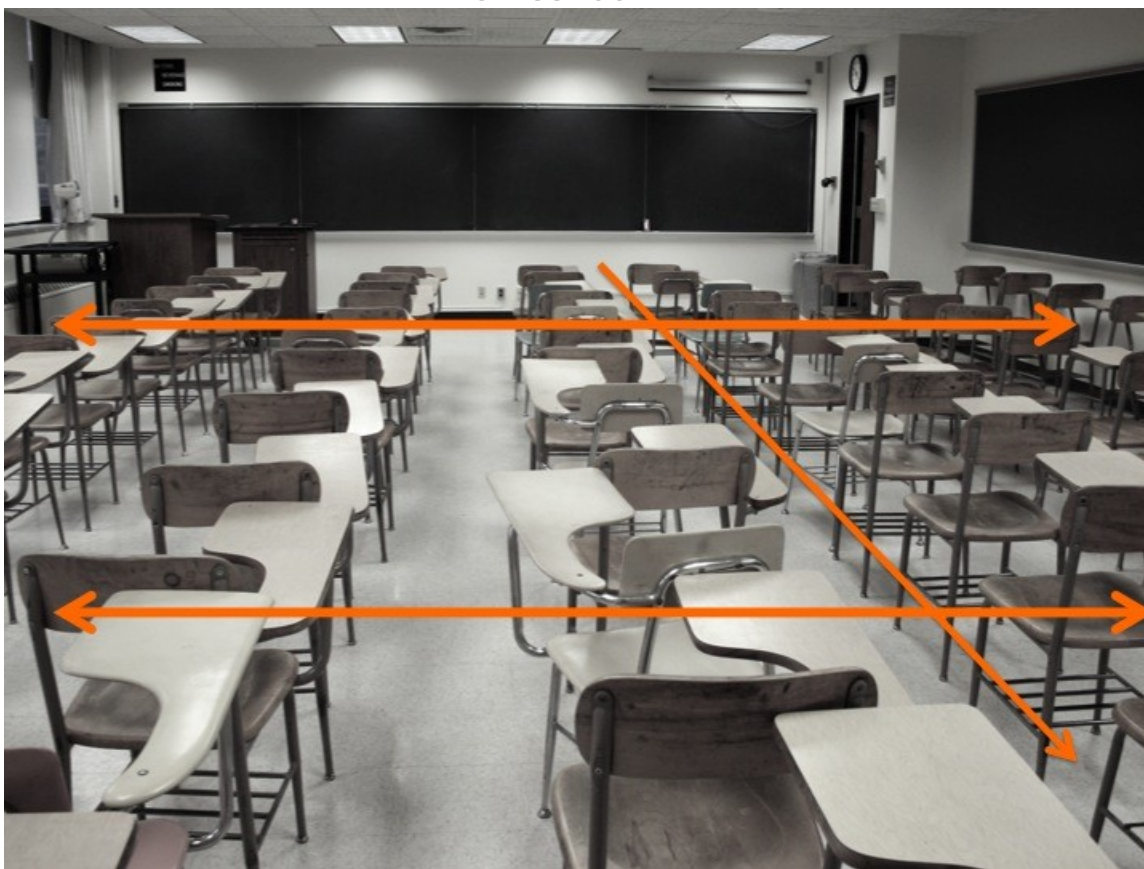
In my experience, a grid pattern works best. I have never needed to go beyond nine sectors. If the room is really big, instead of making several little sectors, increase the size of each sector. The rule is, the bigger the room the bigger the head/eye movements. So even in a large room, it's best to limit yourself to about eight sectors. Once you establish those sectors, all you have to do is try to move your head about every two seconds. By constantly moving your head and eyes you will give the impression that you are talking to everyone in the room without necessarily making eye

contact. As you get better with public speaking, you will find that you can make actual eye contact with more frequency. Even then, however, the use of sectors will help ensure you connect with the entire audience, rather than inadvertently focusing on one area or a few people.

CLASSROOM A

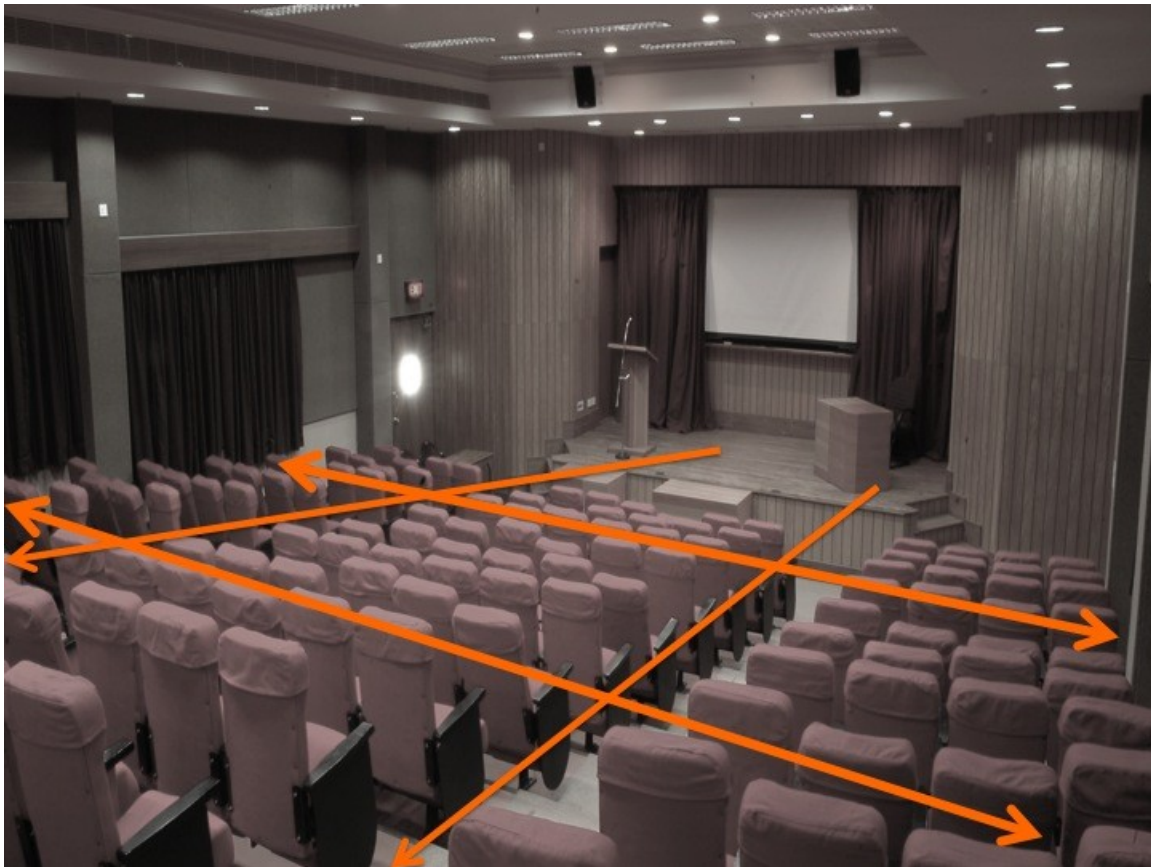


CLASSROOM B

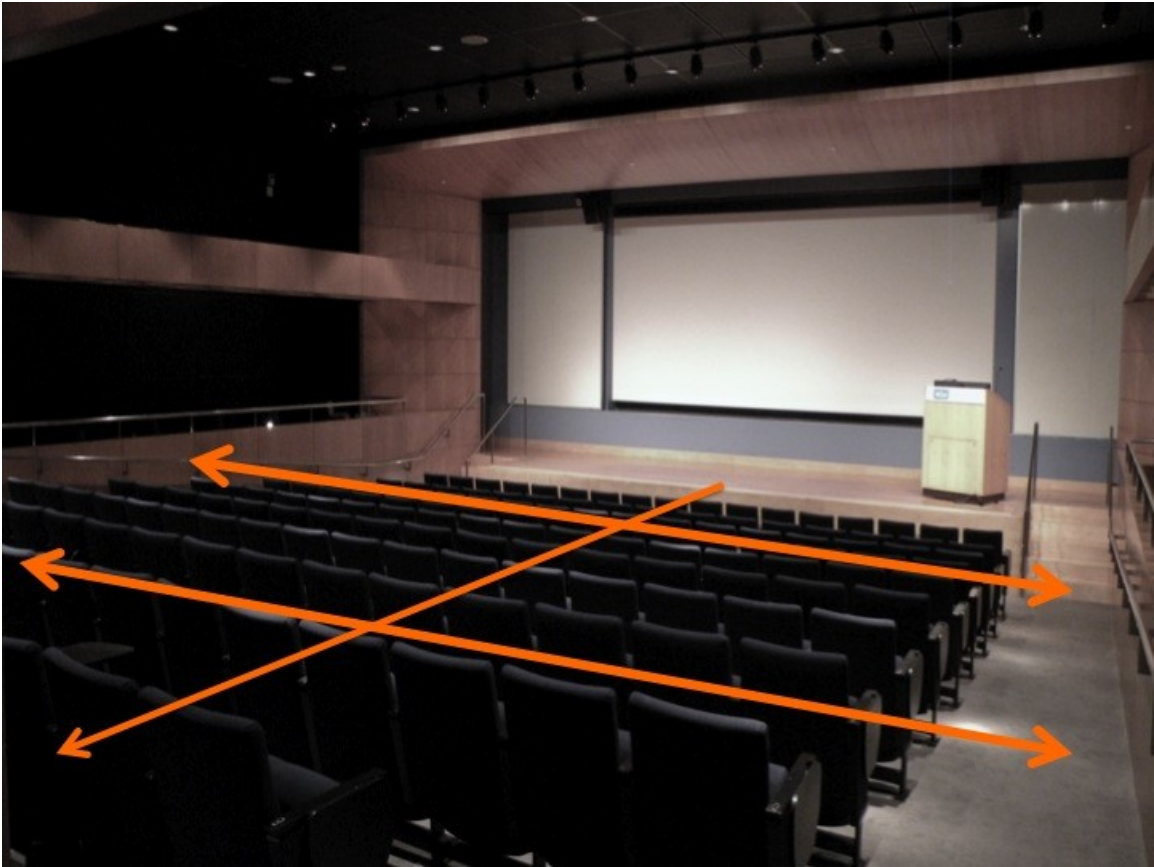


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AUDITORIUM A

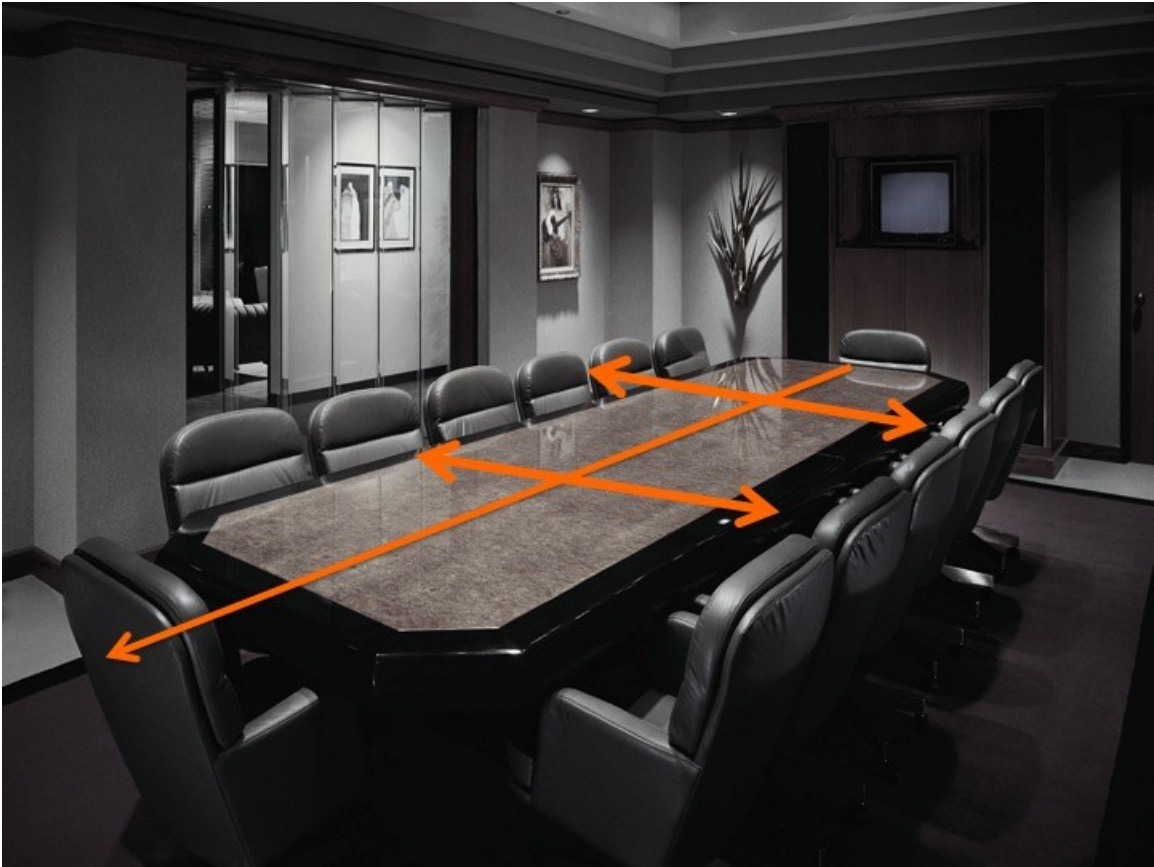


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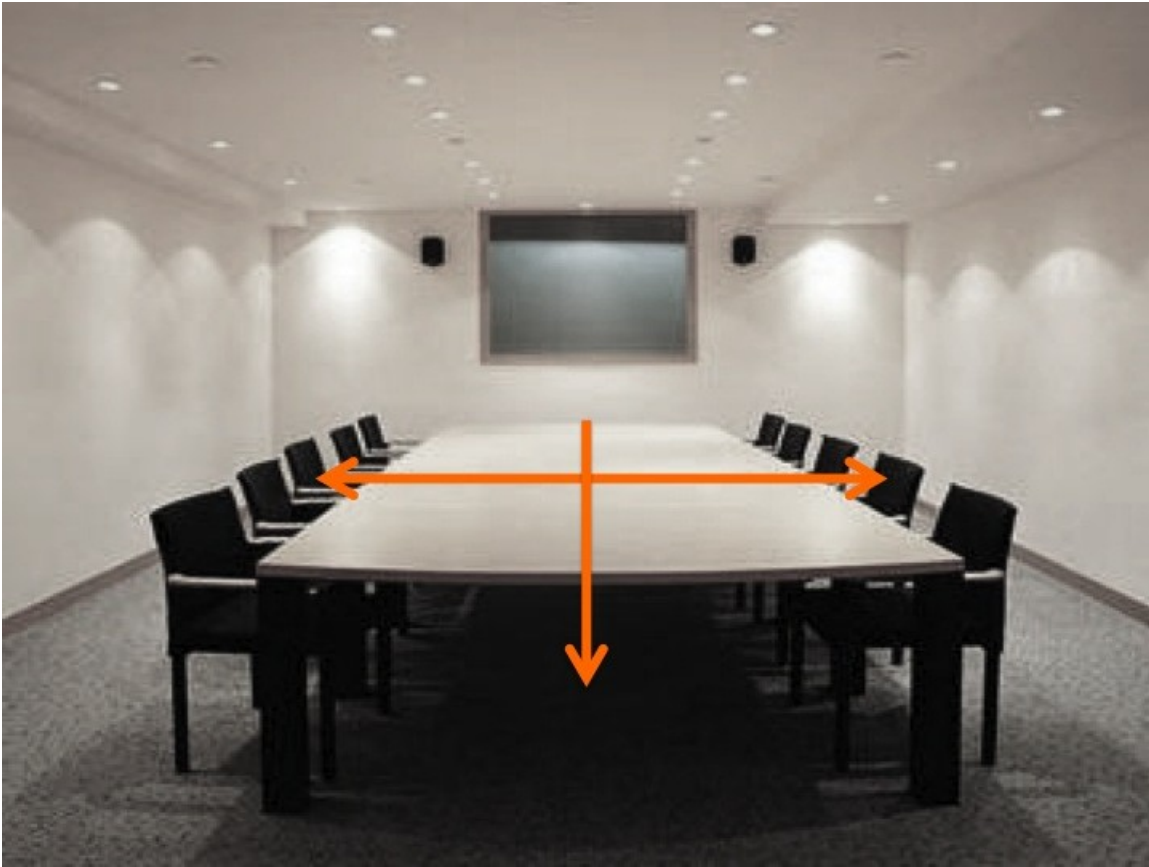


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BOARDROOM A



BOARDROOM B



STRATEGY | NO BLINKING

A physical trick to exude confidence that involves not blinking while saying important parts of your speech.

In theater, film and television strong characters rarely blink. Once you see it you will never “unsee” it. The actor Michael Cain [wrote a book and filmed a BBC special](#) on how to act, and in it he said that he always spoke his lines without blinking to make himself look strong. Watch any film and you will notice that strong characters rarely blink when they speak, but weak characters blink often. Police officers also look at this when they are interrogating suspects. They will ask a series of general non-event specific questions (name, birthday, likes, interests, etc.) and then switch to event specific questions (where were they on the night of the offense, etc.). They will look for differences in a suspect’s physical behavior when responding to these two types of questions. Blinking is one of those behaviors that indicates nervousness. Therefore, with any sentence that is important, with any sentence that references your 5%, say it without blinking and you will look strong and passionate. **Bonus points for saying it and doing a standing exclamation point at the same time.** [Back to the top](#)

SILENCE

This is your strongest yet least utilized tool. It relates to several concepts that we have already discussed: movement, pauses, rhythm, and a show of hands. All of these involve, and are enhanced, by the use of silence. Essentially, silence is used in two ways:

To get attention

As an exclamation point

When we are speaking, gaps of silence make us nervous. If you have ever forgotten what you were going to say in a speech, you have experienced this fear. Three seconds can seem like an eternity when everybody is watching you. We need to learn how to embrace silence and use it to our advantage. Silence, when skillfully employed, can magnetize an unengaged audience - those looking down will look up, and those looking away will turn toward you. It is an excellent tool for ensuring that you have everyone's attention.

STRATEGY | WAIT FOR IT

Drawing attention by dragging out the silence as you walk to the speaking area and before you speak.

The very first time you'll want to use silence is actually before you start speaking. When it's time to give your speech, command attention by walking calmly towards the podium or your designated speaking location. Once there, pause for a second or two. Or, if you are being introduced, wait until the applause finishes and then pause. Use the full two seconds to notice how quiet and attentive everyone gets. Relish this brief stillness. I usually take a good breath in and out, breathe in again and then start talking. If you can do this calmly before you even speak, you will communicate confidence as the first impression. Remember the 5%. What is the impression you will leave them with?

STRATEGY | MID STOP

A mid-sentence pause used to distract an unruly crowd and bring the attention back to you.

If audience members are talking and being disruptive, start to say something, and then just stop mid-word or mid-sentence. People might not hear what you are saying, but they will notice the break in the pattern. If you accompany this with a physical pause (stop moving and stand still) it will be even more of a pattern break and thus stronger. Once you have regained command of the room, carry on with your presentation.

STRATEGY | EXCLAMATION POINT

An end-of-sentence pause used for dramatic effect when emphasizing an important statement.

Silence is an auditory exclamation point in the same way that not moving is a visual exclamation point. Take the written version of your speech, and underline the most important sentences (i.e., the thesis, key number/fact) - in other words, your 5%. Put an exclamation point at the end of each underlined segment. Adding a 1.5 second pause (one breath) to the end of a sentence will serve to emphasize that statement.

Bonus points for combining silence with our other strategies. At the moment of truth (i.e., when you're about to make your most important statement), stop moving, turn to face the audience fully, make your statement (without blinking or fidgeting) and pause for two-to-three seconds to let it sink in. The audience won't know what hit them!

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CASE STUDY

Using Silence



Edward is an elementary school teacher. One of his major problems in class was drawing attention to what he was saying. Edward explains:

“I would think something was really interesting, and when I turned around, I would see a room of glazed over faces. It really started affecting my enthusiasm for the job. Also, a lot of the time most of the kids didn’t even remember what I had just said. The first thing I fixed was how I started and ended writing on the board. Before starting to write, I would tell everyone to “Look at this”. I’d then walk to the board, which took about two seconds, and in that time the room got so quiet it actually perked everyone up. I started playing around with this and would wait two to three seconds after I wrote something before I’d speak. It was kind of funny to see the students’ reactions. Some of them would look up suddenly, and others would stare at me and/or the board. It was really nice because when I chose to speak, I had so much more attention.”

LESSON = Use silence to focus people’s attention before delivering an important message.

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OVERCOMING NERVES

Here is the harsh reality: There is no easy fix for nervousness. I still get nervous when I speak. The key is not to stop feeling nervous, but rather to prepare in such a way that the nerves will not affect the presentation.

To a large extent, a lot of what we have already talked about will help you with nerves. Knowing your 5% will always provide you with a talking point to fall back on. Not being afraid of silence will give you a few seconds to remember something you may have forgotten without panicking. There are however, other techniques you can use during the preparation stage that will help you manage nerves.

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MEMORIZATION

The possibility of forgetting what you are going to say is one of the major factors contributing to nervousness. The question then becomes: What should you memorize?

If you've spent time preparing and rehearsing your speech, then you already know the key information well. Where you might stumble is in expressing that information. During the preparation stage, many people try to memorize their speech word-for-word and then panic if they slip-up or forget a word. They have created a muscle memory for the exact words to use and as a result, if even one word is off, they lose their place in the speech and stumble. But memorizing a speech verbatim is not where you need to invest your energy. What you need to memorize is the information you want people to walk away with - your 5%! In other words the:

Thesis statement

Key number(s) or statistic(s)

Key facts

Key examples

This approach is borrowed from stand-up comedy. Many stand-up routines contain a series of jokes or bits, often with no obvious connections between them. The comedian knows what information is integral to the joke, and that becomes the focus. Aspects of the delivery may change each time the joke is told, but as long as the key elements are present, it will have the intended effect, and the joke will be a success. This strategy adds an off-the-cuff spontaneity that makes the joke appear less rehearsed and the delivery more conversational.

The comedian knows the points they want to hit, and they do just that (sometimes with transitions, sometimes without) not focusing too much on the exact wording. The way they do this then, is by memorizing just the key idea (i.e., the critical word, number, example, etc.). The first goal then, is to identify the key information.

STRATEGY | THE REDUCTION APPROACH

A method to identify the core message that needs to be communicated.

This strategy is best when you are using slides in conjunction with your speech. Take a look at your slide and insert a phrase or sentence from your speech. The reason we are using slides as an illustration is that many of us will make our slides first and use that as the framework on which to build the oral part of the presentation.

The goal is to cut away the unessential words, and turn that phrase or sentence into a bullet point. Then take that bullet point, and cut it down further to one or two words. This is what you memorize!

EBAY CASE STUDY

BUSINESS MODEL

- Creating and maintaining a person-to-person trading community
- Function as a value added facilitator
- Provide a supportive infrastructure
- Zero inventory & without having traditional sales force
- Profit centers:
 - Domestic business
 - International business and
 - Payment

Original
Slide

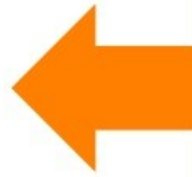


The original slide is crowded and is written as if it's being said out loud. Ask yourself: What can I delete and say instead AND does all this have to be on the same slide?

Business Model

Person-to-person trading community
Value added facilitator
Supportive infrastructure
Zero inventory

Profit centers:
Domestic business
International business and
Payment



These are two
separate ideas.
Profit centres
should be its
own slide.



It is much clearer to separate ideas that are loosely connected than to put them all on one slide. Aim to have words rather than phrases and a single idea per slide.

Business Model



Remove
everything that
makes this
unessential

~~Creating and maintaining a person-to-person
trading community~~

~~Function as a value added facilitator~~

~~Provide a supportive infrastructure~~

~~Zero inventory & without having traditional
sales force~~



If the slide is written as if it's being spoken, you will be tempted to just read the slide. Therefore, we have to take away that temptation. When there are long phrases or full sentences to read, the audience can't absorb the information by just glancing at the slide quickly. They must also choose whether to read or listen to you - probably doing neither well. The slide show is not meant to function as a complete presentation in itself. It is meant to support and enhance what the speaker is communicating.

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Success Factors

P2P trading community

Value added facilitator

Supportive Infrastructure

Zero Inventory



We cut out the clutter, and get down to the core message of the slide. What we are left with are key words to remind us of what to say (in case we need to look at the slides because we didn't have enough time to practice or, let's be honest, because we were a bit lazy). The audience, of course, will not know what it all means, but luckily they don't have to – that's what you're there for! It is your job to fill-in the details.

[IF YOU WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT SLIDE STRUCTURE AND HOW TO USE SLIDES EFFECTIVELY CHECK OUT MY OTHER BOOK.](#)

STRATEGY | THE BULLET APPROACH

A method for identifying what to memorize when transitioning information from a written to oral format.

This strategy works best if you are transitioning from a written format to an oral presentation. Take the first paragraph that you'd like to speak about. Take away nonessential, background information, and remove all transition words. Now you have a series of independent words and phrases that you can formulate into bullet points. Count those points and start the section by stating, "There are [insert number of points here] things that we need to know/consider/think about, etc." Then go ahead and state those points. This is the bullet approach.

HEINEKEN CASE STUDY

Heineken began as a family business in the 1800's after a decline of beer drinking in the Netherlands and has been in the brewing business without much change to the closely guarded recipe for over 251 years. The company developed Europe's favorite beer and has become the most international brewer in the world. In June 2000, Heineken received King William I's prize for Dutch Entrepreneurship. They have expanded operations to China, Nigeria, Sweden, Belgium, Slovakia and Spain. In 2009 their revenue was 14.7B with an operating profit of 1B.

CUT AWAY

Heineken began as a family business in the 1800's after a decline of beer drinking in the Netherlands. Over 251 years in the brewing business without much change to the closely guarded recipe. The company developed Europe's favorite beer and has become the most international brewer in the world. In June 2000, Heineken received King William I's prize for Dutch Entrepreneurship. They have expanded operations to China, Nigeria, Sweden, Belgium, Slovakia and Spain.—In 2009 their revenue was 14.7B with an operating profit of 1B.

SORT

There are three things we need to know about Heineken:

1. Family business from Netherlands for over 250 years
2. International brewer with worldwide operations
3. 2009 revenue was 14.7B with operating profit of 1B

Notice that the bullet approach leaves you with slides that can still be further reduced (via our Reduction Approach). The reason we are not reducing more is that for some, jumping into the Reduction Approach and relying on just a few words might take time, and the bullet approach is a great middle ground.

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USING NOTES

Sometimes we just need notes, either because we have not had enough time to prepare, or because having them just makes us feel better. To begin with, make sure you aren't using them as a shield to cover up your three points (see [Your Body](#) section). Also, when preparing notes, try not to fall into the trap of writing out your entire speech word-for-word and then reading it verbatim. We do this for security - if we forget something, we feel safe knowing it's there in our notes, and we can simply read it aloud. No one will pay attention to someone who is reading. Also, if you lose your spot, you'll have to search through pages of text to find out exactly where you left off. That is a silence we can and should avoid.

Notes are only useful if you can glance at them and instantly know what to say. Therefore notes must:

Be in a large font

Only contain key information (see [Memorization](#))

Be written on one piece of paper

This last point also applies when using cue cards. Cue cards are good, but if you are going to use them, you have to limit yourself to one card. Another option is a folded piece of paper with writing on each side. If you need more, you don't know your presentation well enough.

Let's look at an example (see below) of notes for a presentation on why computers should be banned from classrooms. This was for a Toastmasters meeting from a few years ago. When you read the notes below, can you tell immediately what the presentation is about? Can you identify the main points and examples? If so, then theoretically, could you not give the presentation yourself right now using these notes? These are the criteria for effective notes. Without a solid yes to each of these questions, your notes (and thus your information) are not clear enough.

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Laptops - not allow in classroom

1. Noise

2. Heat

3. Distraction

} SHOW OF
HANDS

1) Noise

↳ typing

↳ humming

} DEMO

2) Heat

↳ HD

↳ lap top coolers

} 100 ppl → closed row

3) Distraction

↳ internet

↳ games

} how often check
facebook?

Summary

1. Noise

2. Heat

3. Distraction

} show of
hands

In my experience, even speakers who have prepared well and know the key information to be communicated, carry notes simply because of nervousness. The notes are meant to be a safety net, but they become more of a crutch; the speaker knows what to say, but looks at their notes anyway to confirm. They do this simply because the notes are there. How can we remove this crutch?

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HOW TO PRACTICE

For most of us, practicing for a speech makes up the smallest portion of our preparation. You probably practice in your car or mumbling to yourself on the bus, or you might run through your presentation slides quickly on the computer the morning of the presentation. Obviously, this is not the best way to practice. To be effective, rehearsal should mimic the presentation environment, and in doing so, elicit the same emotional response that you'll experience when speaking publicly. In other words, the best form of practice has to make you nervous.

STRATEGY | WITHOUT SLIDES OR NOTES

A strategy to identify which parts of your speech you know well, and which parts need more work.

If you are using PowerPoint, turn so that your back is to the slide and then talk about it. The same applies with notes or cue cards – try to give your speech without looking at them. Do this for each section or topic individually. Look at your slides or notes only after you think you have covered the whole slide. Then try to go through multiple sections at a time. Practice incrementally in this way until you can go through your whole speech without any visual cues. Every time you stumble make a note because that is where you need to know your information better. The goal is to be able to go through your whole speech without using notes or looking at your slides.

STRATEGY | BY DISTRACTING YOURSELF

A practice technique that will allow the speaker to get accustomed to speaking in the face of distraction.

Practice your speech while doing another activity. One reason we stumble in a speech is because we find ourselves doing things that we didn't account for during practice. We could be revisiting a slide, responding to an audience member, walking around an object or moving something. These are all distractions. By practicing your speech with distractions, you are solidifying the information in your speech and making its retrieval almost automatic. I like to practice while I am washing dishes, driving, shopping or getting dressed. If you recite your speech while doing another action, you'll have confidence knowing that you can perform well even when faced with unexpected distractions.

STRATEGY | IN YOUR CONVERSATIONS

A practice technique that allows the speaker to run through their material in an informal setting.

This is the BEST way to practice, and there are two ways to do it: covertly or overtly. Both involve practicing in front of other people (i.e., your friends). In doing so, you are inducing the nervous energy that comes with being watched and/or judged and experiencing the fear of making a mistake. You don't have to present your full speech - just one section or one point. And don't just try it with one friend; try it with several

different friends if you can or with a group of friends at the same time. You can also do it over the phone, Skype, etc. As a last resort, a video camera will also work. The reason this technique is so effective is because there are no “redos”; if you stumble and start over you still stumbled in front of someone who noticed it, who might remember it, who you feel you now have to try harder to convince...Just like when giving the real speech.

COVERTLY

This can be done over the phone, when you are out for drinks with a group or simply when hanging out with a friend. At some point in the conversation find an excuse to bring up a topic from your speech. Start off by classifying your speech under a general term such as: fitness, finance, food, drink, life, job, future, etc. Give your speech a few of these labels in your head, and then whenever someone brings up one of the topics, say:

“Hey did you know...?”, or

“You know what’s interesting about that...?”

Then segue into that part of your speech. The beauty of this approach is that if your friends are bored, uninterested or don’t understand what you’re saying, they will usually let you know in no uncertain terms. This will force you to revise the way you articulate your material or your information. This is also an opportunity to restate your speech in an informal way (i.e., paraphrase yourself), which allows you to focus on the key information rather than the exact wording. You can also test out those rhetorical questions and jokes you’re thinking about including in your speech. You will get an honest reaction and know immediately whether or not it works.

OVERTLY

This has all the same advantages of doing it covertly; it will allow you to run through the content of your speech in a casual and informal way, but with the added stress of being purposefully watched and assessed. Start off by asking a friend in person, or on the phone:

“Hey does this make sense...?”

“Hey can I try running this by you...?”

Using this strategy, the people you are speaking with will be looking at you and judging you in the same way as an audience would. Having someone look at you and judge you, will replicate to almost the same degree, the anxiety you will feel when actually giving your speech. With practice, you can get used to the anxiety, and it won’t be so overwhelming on the actual day. The more people you do this with, the less anxiety you

will feel and the more natural you will sound. This is because you will have developed a way of communicating that has been refined based on people's reactions. Also, if you don't use notes, this is a great way to play around with different ways of expressing yourself and your material. You may stumble, or have a few false starts, or you may want to say something differently once you actually hear it out loud. Don't worry about being succinct or clear. This is your time to figure out what works best. Do this a few times. Devote an hour to calling a few friends. As you are speaking, you will naturally find your own words to explain the point, and your message will get clearer the more you do it. Try this at least three times before the day of your speech.

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CASE STUDY

Overt Friend Practice



Mary is an account executive in a major accounting firm who rarely has time to practice her speeches:

“Basically I work more than I sleep. Quite often I am awake at 4 a.m. and work from home until 7 or 8 a.m. Then, I’m off to work till usually 9 p.m. or so. I am constantly doing presentations to clients, and often I am making these presentations hours before. Whenever someone at work asks me how it’s going or what I am doing, I respond by saying “Oh I am working on this presentation for [client name]. They have...”, and then I get into whatever slide I am working on or the subject of the presentation. After that, most people (especially at the office) will engage me in a brief conversation about what I just said (everyone has an opinion). What follows is a conversation about the speech topic. I get to clarify what I want to say, practice what I want to say and how I want to say it. I get to test if what I am saying is clear and/or relevant. It’s great actually because I never know when I am going to be engaged in a brief chat, and it always makes me a little anxious. But after doing this a few times, the words just flow. Even when my slides are not up to par, my speech always comes across pretty natural. I once did this to a taxi driver on the way to a client meeting. I just chatted him up about tax reporting rules. As a side note, as I do my sneaky practice I also refine my slides to fit what I am saying, rather than the other way around... Sometimes this is even done in the taxi on the way to a client!”

LESSON = By running through your speech in front of other people, you will experience and get used to being nervous while finding a way to say things in your own words.

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CLOSING THOUGHTS

So what are you going to do now? Reading this book is the easy part, but using it is another story altogether. This is what I want you to do the next time you have to give a speech: First, prepare the speech to the best of your abilities. Second, refer to each STRATEGY section of this book and ask yourself if you are applying the ideas. If not, make the necessary revisions to improve the end result. Do this for each part of your presentation, and make yourself a more engaging speaker.

REMEMBER

I challenge you!

I challenge you to try something different.

I challenge you to stop making excuses.

I challenge you to stop thinking that you can't.

I challenge you to try!

For more information about Ivan, and to be the first to know about his other upcoming books, check out his website: speakingandcommunication.com.

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About the Author

I know what you are thinking. What makes me (and this book) unique? In a word - diversity! There are great public speaking resources and coaches that can help you deliver a successful presentation at work. But in life, the ability to effectively communicate an idea happens in many situations. My name is Ivan Wanis Ruiz and I love public speaking.



Public speaking is a huge fear for many people, but it doesn't have to be. Speaking with confidence is actually something you can practice; it involves subtle physical actions and NOT some innate, natural charisma. I have had the great fortune to develop effective public speaking skills in the field through the myriad of my professional and educational experiences. Having worked the stage as an educator, actor, entertainer, master of ceremonies and business professional, I have identified and developed expedient techniques that comprise the artistry of public speaking, be it on the theatre stage, in the classroom or in the boardroom. In developing this practical approach, I have borrowed techniques from non-traditional sources such as gambling analysis, police interrogation, theatre and improv and adapted them to help you become a better speaker in all situations. Aristotle summed it up best:

We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.

I wrote this book because even though there are hundreds of books on public speaking, I felt there was something missing - a practical approach.

If you would like to connect with me here are a few ways. I would love to hear your thoughts, comments and most importantly how this book has helped you!

My website: www.speakingandcommunication.com

Linkedin Profile: linkedin.com/ivanwanisruiz

My Google+ Page: [google+/ivanwr](https://plus.google.com/+ivanwr)

My Youtube Channel: <http://www.youtube.com/user/publicspeakingstar>

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