

## To Study the Anxiety Level between Fresher & Senior College - Going Girls Students



### Communication

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### ABSTRACT

*Any speech that is spiced up with proper ingredients has the power to convince, inspire and influence the listeners. You might have to talk about your organization, welcome the guests at a conference or teach a group of people. Every opportunity to speak helps you to enhance your reputation, create new opportunities and open up exciting paths. On the contrary, poor speaking skills might close the doors of opportunities and tarnish your reputation. Many professionals lag behind their colleagues due to poor communication and presentation skills. Poor communication causes a lot of problems at all levels. Hence, every individual must make sure to learn the art of communication and public speaking skills for personal and professional growth. Public Speaking fear may trigger physical symptoms such as shaking, blushing, pounding heart, quivering voice, and shortness of breath and shut down the confidence levels of individuals. This paper presents some effective techniques used by experts around the world for making powerful presentations.*

### Introduction

**Glossophobia** or **speech anxiety** is the fear of public speaking or of speaking in general. According to the Wall Street Journal, public speaking is the number one fear in America. The fear of death is ranked number two. According to Wikipedia, symptoms of glossophobia include:

- intense anxiety prior to, or simply at the thought of having to verbally communicate with any group,
- avoidance of events which focus the group's attention on individuals in attendance,
- physical distress, nausea, or feelings of panic in such circumstances.

Dr. Mardy Grothe has rightly identified that words have incredible power. They can make people's hearts soar, or they can make people's hearts sore. Survey after survey reports that oral communication skills are considered even more important than writing and math skills, as well as a number of other job-related qualities, such as initiative, technical competence, and organizational abilities (Adler & Towne, 1996; Hagge-Greenberg, 1979; Waner, 1995). In any presentation, it is not what you speak, but how you speak. An effective communicator consumes less time and delivers more whereas an unproductive communicator consumes more time and delivers nothing. The great philosopher Plato rightly pointed out "**A wise man speaks because he has something to say, a fool speaks because he has to say something.**" We need to be careful about what we speak and add zing to our speech by adopting the right techniques of public speaking. According to [speechmastery.com](http://speechmastery.com), public speaking is defined as "The process of speaking to a few or many people with the purpose of informing, motivating, persuading, educating or entertaining the listeners."

### 1. Audience-focused Perspective

The following questions will pop up in your mind whenever you are required to make a presentation:

"Will they like my speech?"

"What if they ask questions and my mind goes blank?" and "Will they evaluate me?"

Cynthia Zhai, founder and master trainer of Connecting2Success International says that the major impediment in public speaking is the "all-about-me" approach — my fear, lack of confidence, doubts, inability and imperfection. The reason for you to speak in public is always about what your audience can get from your speech, why they listen to you and what they want or need. The critical strategy of overcoming your fear of public speaking is to shift your focus from "all about me" to "all about them, the audience".

Never dare to deliver a speech because you want to satisfy your

ego or to flaunt your knowledge in front of people because presentations are meant for the listeners. A speaker should be aware of the kind of audience he is going to deal with. He may have to address different types of audience like children, teenagers, young men, married men and old men. Therefore, your content and techniques must be altered according to the expectations and needs of the listeners. If an orator knows this art of changing the approach as per the needs, he will be able to transfer the information successfully.

The questions you ask yourself reflect where your focus is. Asking yourself the right questions will help you shift your focus and become a more relevant and engaging speaker.

### Before you give a speech next time, ask yourself:

- Who is the audience?
- What is most important to them?
- What is their current level of knowledge?
- What do they want or need to know about this topic?

Present your subject according to time, occasion and the mood of the audience. Don't overstep your time limit or you will lose the attention of the audience. You must understand that mere talking will surely induce sleep. Involve the audience in some activities and discussions. Don't forget the power of energizers which will help them shed the sluggish feeling.

### 2. Don't Expect Perfect Delivery

Well-known American speaker Patricia Fripp once said: "There are three types of speakers: those who have bombed; those who will bomb; and those who will bomb again." Every successful speaker has made and will make mistakes and no speech is a flawless speech. Perfection is not the goal of public speaking. No one expects the speaker to be the perfect man but to be someone who will not waste their time. If we understand this fact, we need not fret more before we appear on stage. Though mistakes do occur, we must learn from our mistakes and make our presentations better in future. The more you try to be Mr. Perfect, you will lose your rapport with your audience. Have you made a mistake by mispronouncing a word or name? Then learn to laugh at yourself along with your audience or you will be left alone while your audiences are laughing at you.

### 3. Sense of humor

Research indicates that a good sense of humor has been associated with higher levels of cheerfulness (Martin, Puhlik-Doris, Larsen, Gray, & Weir, 2003) and positive affect (Celso, Ebener, & Burkhead, 2003) and lower levels of negative affect and depression (Anderson & Arnould, 1989; Overholser, 1992). Michael G. Lovorn pointed out that what is known is that when it is employed as a conversation starter, tension-breaker or therapeutic intervention, laughter is a highly effective way to stimulate communication. No person, in the whole world, hates humor and most of us don't want to sit through a session which is

more serious and grim. Sense of humor is a supreme gift because it adds flavor to our speeches. However, not all are bestowed this gift and if it is not your strong area, don't give up. You can try to be more pleasant in your tone. It is a fact that people pay extra attention to humorous speakers. Though we are not expected to be comedians, people enjoy subtle humor during your talk. If a speaker wants to be effective, sense of humor is a unique tool to be used irrespective of the topic. There are some speakers who open their talks with funny anecdotes and facts to arrest the attention of the audience. This clears the stiffness in the air and opens the minds of the audience.

#### 4. Culture and habits

The Free Dictionary defines culture as the totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought. Culture and belief systems vary from person to person. A speaker should pay extra attention not to hurt any member of the audience. If the personal beliefs are hurt, then nobody will respect the speaker in spite of all the efforts. Steven A. Beebe and Susan J. Beebe indicate that an effective speaker adapts to differences in culture, race, and ethnicity. They also warn that ethnocentrism is an assumption that your culture is superior to those of other cultures. If the audiences identify your ethnocentrism, they will build walls against you. Moreover, it is better to avoid sensitive issues like religion and politics. When you address international audience, it is always wise to know the customs and body language of the people as some of the gestures which are common in our country are actually offensive in many other countries.

#### 5. Body language

Research has shown that when we communicate with others, only 7% of our feelings are conveyed with words, 38% of what we communicate is through our tone of voice and an amazing 55% is by using body language. Body language is equally important to verbal language. Verbal language doesn't carry any meaning without efficient body language. Body language has the power to attract the attention of the listeners and the message is conveyed more effectively. People are mesmerized by the positive and effective use of hand gestures, body postures, eye contact and facial expressions. Hand gestures do play a vital role in deciding the success of the speech. If a speaker doesn't pay attention to it, he fails his audience. A warm, welcoming smile is an essential ingredient of a pleasant personality

#### 6. Stress and Pause

An effective communicator delivers his speech with necessary pause and stress. Speech, without stress and pause, will have no effect on audience. To demonstrate the fluency of language, some speakers speak so fast without realizing the truth that the listeners will find it hard to follow the message. Therefore, you must make sure, every now and then, whether the audience follow your speech. It is always good to ask some questions to make sure that your words are understood and appreciated. Sometimes a pause conveys better message than 100 words. Jerry Weissman conveys that whenever effective public speakers end a sentence or phrase, they usually pause. This gives listeners time to absorb their words. Nervous presenters often do the opposite: The stress of being in front of an audience causes them to speak faster and faster, rushing past the pauses. Wheth-

er you're speaking to a large group of strangers or a small room full of colleagues, give your audience a moment to take in your information.

#### 7. Read, Memorise or Use notes?

Memorizing or reading your speech is never a great idea to follow in your presentations. It is crucial that you have some notes but don't let your notes distract your attention from the audience. You must explicitly show your interest to the audience by maintaining eye contact with them. Audience feel neglected when the speaker pays more attention to the PowerPoint slides. Don't try to present everything you have noted down. There is nothing wrong if you miss some and give your audience the gist. Practice frequently as you are preparing your speech and practice loudly the day before as it gives you time to digest the concepts of your speech.

#### 8. Tone of Voice

Stephen Boyd points out "We tell an audience by our tone of voice whether we are in fun or are passionate about our topic. The tone of voice shows our concern for the audience and determines in the minds of the audience whether or not we are sincere. The audience may say a speaker is boring even though the content is very stimulating. It's the monotone voice that makes them think the presentation is dull." Some speakers assume that yelling makes a speech more effective which is absolutely not true. The level of your tone should be attractive. Make sure that the volume of your mike is not nauseating to the audience's ears. It is always better to check the volume before you start.

#### 9. Research Your Topic

The content is the meat of your speech or presentation. Research your topic thoroughly. Decide on how much to say about each subject ( Lenny Laskowski ). You may have great ideas about a particular topic but you need to read a lot in order to make it more effective. Newspapers, websites, magazines, relevant books, research articles are the some of the best resource from which you can dig out great information to support your speech. However, you need to be careful about paralyzing your audience with heavy input. Andrew Dlugan advises "Your speech should be *supported by* your research; it should not *be* the research." Moreover, don't present irrelevant information and statistics which are not relevant to your presentation.

#### 10. Know your strengths and weaknesses

Knowing yourself is the best remedy to steer clear of any embarrassment before the audience. Each speaking opportunity provides you more insight into your speaking skills and you can fine-tune your performance as you move forward. Learn from your experiences and overcome your audience.

#### Conclusion

Public speaking consists of many skills. The more you rehearse and refine, the better you become. However, there is no perfect speaker on this earth and every speaker has his or her limitations. A good speaker realizes that every opportunity to speak is unique and he has to adopt his delivery according to the audience and requirements. In addition, there is no 'fit-for-all' solution in public speaking and you are unique. You must be ready for critical feedback and analyze your strengths and weaknesses.

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