

Public Speaking

A leadership Presentation on behalf of SofemaOnline (www.sofemaonline.com)

Sofema Aviation Services looks at the challenges faced (and overcome) by successful public speakers.

As in all skill-based activities, practice makes if not perfect, for sure a better performance. We should therefore strive to connect with the audience in a personal way. If we can consider the audience as a collection of individuals rather than a group, we should generally feel more relaxed about speaking in public.

Connecting with the audience in such a way as you can demonstrate empathy and to address their specific needs, concerns and objections.

If you can win over the audience with your opening remarks the audience will be on your “side” and will be more attentive to your presentation. Directly connecting with the audience “goals and objectives” is the simplest and most effective manner of obtaining their attention at the beginning.

What are “our” Speaking Concerns?

It is not uncommon for people who are required to speak in public to be overwhelmed by feelings of anxiety or general nervousness and to experience mind blanks!

Saying or doing something that will in some way harm their standing or reputation.

People in general do not like to appear foolish, this can be expanded to our imagination of what happens when we “think” people are assessing us as such (not correct of course).

Speakers may have a fear of the audience losing interest in the subject matter, the speaker or both, even worse that the audience does not like the presentation.

Another concern is not having enough to say and running out of words (easy to address with practice)

Having a fear that they will not be able to answer an audience question.

Finally a fear of not connecting with people or actually appearing nervous to the audience.

How to Avoid Feeling Nervous

Firstly to reaffirm that there is no single answer to dealing with this issue and that it is totally natural to suffer bouts of feeling nervous.

The best preparations to help you overcome the feeling of nervousness is to fully prepare for your presentation both mentally and physically. There is no substitute for feeling well prepared in the subject matter.

Deal with the logistics by going to the venue, to check everything is correct and to allow yourself to become both familiar with the layout and comfortable in the environment.

Ensuring the Best Preparation

It is not at all usual to allow up to 6 hours per 1 hour of presentation material, thus ensuring a deep understanding and familiarity with the work.

Be especially familiar with the opening and closing of your presentation in this way the knowledge of your presentation becomes a crutch to support you in particular during the start when you are most nervous.

Preparation Quick Check List

- a) Lap top with presentation loaded (back up plan – presentation on a Flash) note also that emailing the presentation to your self is a good idea.
- b) Are you using a public address? What are the arrangements microphone PA speakers?
- c) Multimedia Projector
- d) Internet Access, password ? bandwidth ?
- e) Wireless mouse with wheel
- f) Lighting
- g) Sufficient seating for the delegates, how to arrange classroom or boardroom? U shape is the best
- h) Any other hardware required for example web cam
- i) Is everything working ok
- j) Power cable available and connected to the Lap Top adapter sockets if required.
- k) Do you have hard copy of the presentation – it is far better if the delegates have a copy of the material in front of them during your presentation.

Techniques for Effective Delivery

Always concentrate on the audience and not on the environment

If possible for smaller meetings make personal contact say hello (shake hands and make eye contact), effecting an introduction establishes a simple relationship before you start.

Build self-confidence - the more self-confidence you have, the less uncomfortable and nervous you will be.

Know as much as possible in advance about your audience as this helps us to both measure and engage effectively.



Be thoroughly familiar with the material and become the master of your presentation.
Dress appropriately for your presentation – Dress to Impress!
Bond with the audience
Pace your presentation – do not rush!

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