



Confident Speaking at Meetings



What to say. How to say it.
How to feel good while you're saying it!

Surveys regularly reveal that public speaking is the most feared professional activity and is dreaded even more than death!

In your future career it is highly likely that you will be required to participate in meetings ranging from a very informal one-to-one with your manager to the more formal presentation of agenda items in formal committees or to your colleagues, even at conferences or in seminars.

During this workshop we will begin by exploring the basic components of a meeting, why we are present and the nature of our role. We will cover planning for your meeting, structuring the content and preparing to deal with questions. We will also look in detail at communication skills including the effective use of your voice and the power of body language. Many people experience stress or anxiety as they prepare for speaking so we will be covering strategies to reduce anxiety.

In this workshop we will explore how to:

- Prepare and structure your content
- Communicate confidently
- Manage anxiety and "presentation stress".

Confident Speaking at Meetings



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In this session we will explore:

- What you want to say
- How you want to say it...
- How to feel good while you're saying it!

By the end you'll know how to:

- Structure and deliver a presentation
- Communicate confidently
- Manage "presentation stress" and anxiety

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What is a presentation?

"A verbal report,
often with illustrative material"
Oxford Concise Dictionary

"Presentations combine factual information
with the personal touch of a real person
preparing the information
for a particular audience."
Jenny Eastwood, Presentation Skills



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What makes a good meeting?

Can you think of a memorable meeting?

What made it so good?

How did they do that?

Can you remember a poor meeting?

What made it weak?



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What makes a good meeting?

It helps to have:

- An effective/experienced Chair leading the meeting
- A relevant agenda that addresses problems
- The right people present
- People arriving in good time and well prepared
- People being fully present (no phones or external work)
- People willing to speak/share relevant information
- Speaking briefly, to the topic
- Disagreeing without being disagreeable
- Recorded action points, dates and responsible people...



How many of these things can you contribute to or influence?

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What meeting are you planning for?

As we go through the rest of the content, think of a meeting where you want to put what you learn today into practice...



What is it that you want to say?

What do I want to learn/to do?

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Essential questions

- What? What purpose?
- Who? • Purpose of the meeting?
- Where? • Your purpose in/for the meeting?
- How? • provide/share information
• gather information or opinion
• make decisions
• share responsibility
• vote on options
• be seen or noticed
• persuade or influence.



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Essential questions

- What?
- Who? Who is there?
- Where? • sources of information
• decision makers
- How? • natural allies
• potential allies
• interesting contacts
• people who need convincing
• people who need containing.



Answer these questions for your meeting(s).

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Structure your contribution

How do you organise your thoughts?

- Post-Its
- Mindmap
- Bullet points...

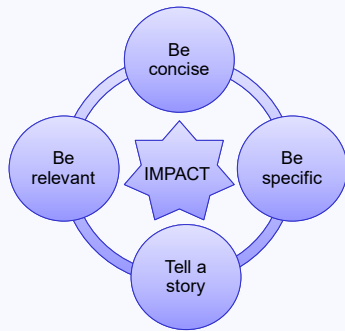


What do you want them to remember?

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Structure your contribution



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Structure your contribution

Classic structure: the 3 “tell-ums”

- Beginning – introduce the area
- Middle – provide the details
- End – summarise and conclude

Tell them what you're going to tell them,
tell them,
tell them what you told them.

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Speaking with intent

Make an impact with your introduction

- What's in it for them?
- Headline, statistics, surprising fact, engaging story...

Maintain interest in the middle

- Examples, applications, consequences...

Have a definite conclusion

- Summary
- What do you want them to remember?

End with a thank you!!

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Speaking with intent

Say what you mean simply with appropriate language:

- reduce jargon
- help your audience understand
- use metaphors or examples where helpful

Limit qualifiers which create uncertainty:

eg hopefully, probably, reasonably...

Remove excessive denials and negatives:

eg "I don't mean to criticize..."

"I don't mean to be difficult..."



It takes more thought - the benefits are worth it!

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Why we want questions

- Clarify
- Add to your information
- Ensure relevance
- Show your knowledge
- Uncover disagreement

How to handle questions

- Listen carefully – relax, smile & breathe!!
- Clarify ambiguity
- Treat all questions/questioners with respect
- Complement the questioner
- Don't get drawn into a debate.



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Speaking more confidently

What does confident speaking look like?

What does confident speaking sound like?

What do you
want to
communicate?



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Speaking more confidently

Words, voice and body work together
Look and sound like you mean it!

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Speaking more confidently

You still need to press!!

What is confidence?

The belief that I can do something?

- Yes, I can do this thing...
- I know what to do...
- I know how to do it...
- I believe that if I do this it will work for me.

Do you know what to do?
Do you know how to do it?!

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Speaking more confidently

Confidence grows when we go where we have none...

How can you create opportunities to:

- Learn
- Stretch yourself
- Take risks
- Commit to growth!

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Three steps to confidence

So if you want to change how you feel...

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Three steps to confidence

When you feel confident...

- what do you believe?
- what are you saying/thinking?
- what is happening in/with your body?

When things are not going well for you...
what do you need to change?

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Dealing with anxiety

I'll never remember...

Will they like it?

Is it good enough?

Why bother?

Do I talk too fast?

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Dealing with anxiety

Why does this happen?

Our amygdala works like radar...

Ever vigilant

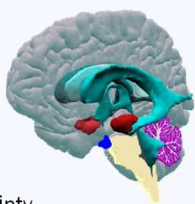
Registering novelty, ambiguity, uncertainty

Asking "How important is this for me?"

Activation of the amygdala changes our physiology

Heart rate, breathing, pulse rate...

This is what uncertainty feels like!



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Dealing with anxiety

Our thinking brain, our cerebral cortex, tries to make sense of these feelings.

What do they mean?

- Am I in danger, anxious or excited?
- Am I ready and determined to tackle this task?

We can choose how we give meaning to these feelings!



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Dealing with anxiety



The Learning Zone can feel less comfortable

My racing heart sends blood to my brain

The more I practice, the better I'll get

Smile, breathe, make eye contact

I have something worth saying

My most important point is...

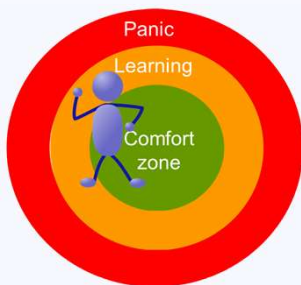
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Dealing with anxiety

- Accept it as normal
- Put it in perspective
- Name it – calm it
- Breathe and smile
- Prepare and practice
- Believe in your Best Self...



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What have we learned?

- Structure and deliver a presentation
 - Be clear about your purpose
 - Use the 3 tellums,
 - Craft your beginning, middle and end for impact
- Communicate confidently
 - Know what you want to communicate
 - Use your words, voice and body together
- Managing anxiety
 - Anticipate questions, clarify ambiguity
 - Manage anxiety by box breathing
 - "Name it – calm it" works
 - Believe in your best self and practice lots.

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It really does
get better with
deliberate
practice!



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Resources include:

Drop the Pink Elephant: 15 Ways to Say What You Mean...and Mean What You Say
by Bill McFarlan and Eamonn Holmes

Taming Your Gremlin by Rick Carson

How to Manage Meetings: Improve Problem Solving; Encourage Participation; Keep Control
(Creating Success) by Alan Barker

The Surprising Science of Meetings by Steven Rogelberg

Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion by Robert B. Cialdini

Influence: Science and Practice by Robert B. Cialdini

Assertiveness at Work: A Practical Guide to Handling Awkward Situations by Ken Back & Kate Back

How Confidence Works by Ian Robertson