



Tips to Improve Speaking Skills

The Five “S”s – Principles of Speaking with Confidence

- 1) **Stance** – A firm stance is the basis for a great presentation. Stand naturally. Lower your shoulders to reduce stress. Keep your arms at a mutual position at your sides. You can use your arms to gesture during your speech whenever appropriate.
- 2) **Sound** – Your firm stance will allow you to speak from your diaphragm. Make sure you speak in a slow and clear pace. Have variations in your sound and tone to catch your audience’s attention.
- 3) **Smile** – People who are smiling while speaking likely sound better. As long as smiling is appropriate to your topic, it will make you look friendly and confident. The potential nervousness inside you won’t show when you smile!
- 4) **Sights** – Making good eye contact with your audience shows that you are a confident speaker. It helps to build rapport with your audience and enables them to get involved and engaged during your speech. Keep eye contact with people seated in all parts of the room.
- 5) **Silence** – Remember “less is more”. A confident speaker can pause and have silence after a sentence during a speech. Avoid to fill up the time between sentences with “and, um, uh, like, you know ...”

Three Tips to Overcome the Fear of Public Speaking

- 1) **Visualization**: picture your success from the moment you enter the room for your presentation. Believe in yourself that your ideas are unique and interesting and you will make a good impression to your audience.
- 2) **Relaxation techniques**: have a good night sleep the night before your presentation. Do not eat a large breakfast on the day. Bring a bottle of water with you. Think pleasant thoughts. Take a deep breath before you start talking or whenever you need it to calm down nervousness.
- 3) **Practice**: practice in front of a mirror or a webcam to actually see yourself succeed. Practice at least three times prior to your actual presentation. Present it in front of your prof during office hours if possible or get feedback from a friend or classmate. Remember – practice makes perfect!

