

Presenting with Poise

10 Ways to Overcome Anxiety in Public Speaking

1. KNOW YOUR MATERIAL

There is no substitute for proper preparation. You don't need to be the expert on the subject, but be clear. Organize the content in a way that is easy to understand.

2. ARRIVE EARLY

Don't add to your stress by having last minute technology or room set-up issues. Greet people as they arrive.

3. START STRONG AND FINISH WELL

Have the opening down cold. The first few minutes are the hardest. Develop a compelling opening that will give the audience a reason to listen. End strong with a challenge to apply what was presented.

4. MAKE NERVOUSNESS WORK FOR YOU

Tell yourself that anxiety is normal and channel it into positive energy.

5. PRACTICE POSITIVE VISUALIZATION

Picture yourself walking the room with confidence, commanding the audience's attention. Visualize yourself nailing it!

6. FOCUS ON THE MESSAGE, NOT YOURSELF

Don't make the presentation about you. Focus on helping the audience. You are not there to impress the audience, but impact them.

7. TALK TO YOURSELF RATHER THAN LISTEN TO YOURSELF

You can only hold one thought at a time, make it constructive and encouraging. Focus on simply doing your best not comparing yourself to other speakers.

8. THINK OF YOUR PRESENTATION AS A CONVERSATION, NOT A PERFORMANCE

Have a natural, authentic style. Be yourself, but turn your energy up a few notches. Audiences want a speaker with enthusiasm and passion.

9. KEEP THINGS IN PERSPECTIVE

Don't think the world or your career success revolves around the success of your presentation. It is important, but not that important.

10. THINK THRIVE, NOT SURVIVE

You can't thrive tentatively. Go beyond just wanting to 'get it over with'. Play offense, not defense.