

Quick Guide: Overcoming Public Speaking Fears

Do your knees tremble and hands shake when you have to make a speech in public? Would you rather do your filing than speak in front of a group? But public speaking, DOES NOT HAVE TO BE STRESSFUL! Even the best speakers have their critics and they too can make mistakes, get tongue-tied, or forget whole segments of their talk. So here are the **top ten tips** to help you overcome some of those fears:

- 1. You are no more or less human than the best speakers.** If they can conquer the fear of public speaking, so can you!
- 2. No matter how good a job you do . . .** someone is going to disapprove of either you, or your topic's content. You can't odds this. You simply need to remember that you are doing the very best you can.
- 3. Give your audience something of value.** If your audience walks away with something (anything!) of value, they will consider you a success. If they walk away feeling happy or entertained, feeling better about themselves or knowing more about something, they will consider you a success.
- 4. All you need is two or three main points.** You don't have to deliver mountains of facts or details to give your audience what they truly want.
- 5. Your audience truly wants you to succeed.** Most of them are scared to death of public speaking, just like you. They know the risks, they will feel for you and they will be on your side.
- 6. When you have a choice,** choose a topic that you you are passionate about, feel confident with and are knowledgeable about.
- 7. Be yourself.** Be natural, funny, honest and create your own style. It is hard to imitate another speaker and difficult to maintain an image that isn't you. So just let your passion come through and keep focused on the great ideas and points you want to share with your audience.
- 8. Get support.** Work with a coach to overcome your fear; have someone you know and trust in the audience; practise with a friend who has the same fear.
- 9. Practise, practise, practise!** Talk in front of a mirror or record yourself on tape to be able to say "that wasn't so bad." Seize every opportunity to speak in public; at your child's school; or in small groups at work. Better yet, offer to teach a course about something you know very well.
- 10. People are waiting** to hear what you have to say! Don't keep them waiting!

Compiled by Des Whitehorn