

Presentation Skills - Getting Around Nervousness

Presentations provide an opportunity to provide leverage to one's career. Improving presentation skills increases the growth prospects mainly because it is an avenue for an individual to provide clarity and thought to ideas and present them in a manner that is appealing to the audience. However the main enemy of a presenter is the tension that arises from the fear/nervousness of speaking aloud in front of an audience.

Nervousness while delivering presentations ruins the non verbal communication and spontaneity of the presenter. The tone and pitch becomes higher as the throat tenses. Shoulders tighten up and palms get sweaty. Legs start to quiver, and many individuals experience, what is known as the 'fight or flight' syndrome. At this instance, for many, the presentation becomes automated as the speaker depends upon his/her notes to get out of the difficult situation.



The thumb rule here is to realize that nervousness is a normal human reaction. You would make yourself more nervous if you keep thinking of how nervous you are. There are a variety of presentations techniques available to get around the nervousness you experience. You may keep the following 3 simple methods in mind to make your presentation a memorable experience for your audience and yourself:

Do not attempt to fight nervousness

Nervousness can value add to your presentation only if you recognize your anxiety. When you sense the adrenaline rush, you need to acknowledge the fact that you are nervous. See the presentation as a challenge that can be overcome only by you. The truth is that only you know what you would be speaking about. This gives you the power to change and alter your presentation for the better, according to your stress level and audience perception.

Have a mental picture of your presentation

Before the presentation, visualize the room, audience, and yourself giving the presentation. Mentally go over what you are going to do from the moment you start to the end of the presentation. This helps in reducing the fear that arises out of uncertainty. During the presentation, take a moment to drink a sip of water and take a deep breath before you resume. This short break also gives the audience some breathing space. It is also important to realize that anxiety and tension is not as noticeable to the audience as you perceive. So you could actually be doing a better job than you think. Have a clear picture of this in your mind while you prepare on strengthening your **presentation skills**, and while you present in front of your audience.

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The 4 Ws

Remember these 4Ws before and during the preparation and presentation of your subject:

- ❖ What is the purpose of my presentation?
- ❖ Who will be attending my presentation?
- ❖ What does my audience already know about my presentation topic?
- ❖ What would the audience's initial attitude towards me?



As a closing note, understand and accept the fact that everyone makes mistakes - including the best presenters. The key is to continue on gracefully after committing the error. If it is something that you need to apologize, do so. Else it is unnecessary to incessantly apologize. Discussion with colleagues and friends before the presentation will give you an idea as to when you need to apologize for errors and when you don't. Pick up from where you left and continue, taking the audience forward along with you. Do not give up at any point during the course of your preparation. Your hard work on the preparation and practise will be vividly visible, and be appreciated. So do not let nervousness pull you back, let it surge you ahead.

MMM Training Solutions provides a number of alternative options to have **effective presentation skills** and deliver **persuasive presentations**, namely through **Presentation Skills Training** and **Communication Skills Training, Public Speaking Training** and **Public Speaking courses**.

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