

Reduce Speaking Anxiety Tip Card Sheet

REDUCE SPEAKING ANXIETY



1 – Prepare and Practice Your Talk

Stand up and review a new presentation at least two times. The opener and key sections should be reviewed up to ten times.

2 – Memorize Your Opening Words

Memorize your opener so that you don't stumble at the beginning. The smoother your opener, the smoother the rest of the presentation will be.

3 – Mentally Prepare to be Great

As many great athletes have learned, if with the best skills, you can still lose the game if you aren't mentally prepared to win. Two techniques help:

- Write down positive thoughts about your talk
- Create a positive mantra that you will repeat to yourself in the minutes before your talk begins.

#4 – Arrive Early

Being late or having technology issues are two big sources of nerves. Arrive early so that you are on top of both.

5 – Stand Where You Will Be Presenting

When you arrive early, take the time to go up to the podium or other place where you will be standing and visualize yourself in front of the group. Visualize yourself coming across as confident and relaxed.

6 – Make the Audience Your Friend

- Visit with audience members before presenting
- Imagine welcoming individuals into your home
- Imagine group hug – they want you to succeed

7 - Hydrate

Drink lots of room temperature water before talking

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8 – Watch What You Eat and Drink

The wrong food and drink causes two problems for speakers: Dry mouth and increased nervousness. In general, eat light before speaking. Avoid:

- Alcoholic drinks
- Coffee, tea or caffeinated sodas
- Milk-based products: milk & ice cream
- Salty foods – chips, Chinese

9 – Carry a “security blanket”

Find that small symbolic item that you can carry and that will remind you that you are “ok.”

10 – Block / Fight Negative Thoughts

- Replace negative thoughts by saying to yourself: “Cancel, cancel, cancel....”
 - Tell the negative voice to go away

11 – Use Relaxation Techniques

- Take three deep breaths
- Flex toes and fingers, roll neck
- Visualize an activity you enjoy
- Put your hands in warm water

12 – Choose a Relaxing Opener

- Humor – break the ice
- Engagement – get focus off you
 - Take a survey
 - Conduct audience activity
 - Have a demonstration
 - Do introductions
 - Show a video

13 – Bring Notes

Bring notes, even if you know your material. Add visual clues that you can more easily recognize.

14 – You Don't Look Nervous

Based on research with hundreds of clients we can assure you – You don't look as nervous as you feel.

15 – Practice Speaking Often

One of the best ways to overcome a fear, according to psychologists, is to create a numbness through familiarity. So speak often – at least 3X a month.

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