

STANFORD GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

5 Tips to Become a Confident Public Speaker

In a recent Stanford GSB Mastery in Communication Initiative workshop, Lecturer Matt Abrahams offered advice on how to feel more comfortable in any public speaking situation, from introducing someone to answering a question on the spot during a meeting:

1. Manage your anxiety

When you start feeling your heart pound and hands sweat, acknowledge the nerves. Saying, “This is me being nervous,” won’t take the anxiety away, but it’ll prevent the nervousness from increasing.

2. Get out of your own way

We tend to set very lofty standards for ourselves when speaking in front of others; we want to say really inspiring, poetic things all the time. Try setting your speaking goals at a reasonable level so you can overachieve.

3. Focus on the audience

Too often people are afraid of speaking spontaneously because they think the spotlight is all on them, noted Abrahams. But your job as the speaker is to help your audience achieve some goal. It’s not all about you. Understanding that the attention is partly on your listeners can help you feel less nervous.

4. Prioritize

Really think about your audience so you can tailor what you are saying to them. Consider their needs so you can prioritize what you share and take away the anxiety of missing something.

5. Respond concisely

To avoid rambling when answering a question, follow a simple response “structure.” One example of a three-step road map to give your answer some direction: 1) Answer the question; 2) Detail an example; 3) Describe the benefits.

Read the full Tumblr blog post: <http://stnfd.biz/qGiKE>