

Five Methods for Improving Your Speaking Abilities

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This last week I was most fortunate to be able to speak in front of several High School classes from freshmen to seniors during career day. Beyond the challenge of engaging as well as getting and holding their attention, there was a large gap in those that were excited to stand and give their name, grade level and what career they were

interested in to those who either refused to stand or spoke so softly that no one could hear them.

It can be very hard for people of all ages to work on their self-worth and how your career can be affected. Speaking abilities are something that comes along with the territory of most jobs; however, many people just can't deal with it. There are a lot of people who feel the need to run and hide when it comes to making a speech, if you are able to face this fear you'll be able to do anything. When you do get the courage to overcome your speaking fears, you will want to think about how you can improve your abilities and improve the way that you feel about yourself. From experience, repetition and preparation are the keys to succeed in public speaking.

Here are some steps to think about when having to speak publicly:

First, you need to think about the speech itself and who your audience is. The first step to making any speech is that you need to write one (I know that

sounds simple). You don't want to write a speech and then read it, but you do want to think about the way that you approach the speech in the writing aspect. Write the speech completely. Then you will want to take the speech and highlight all the important (key) points. Take the key points and then write them on note cards. This way you'll be able to make all of your points, but yet not read a speech to someone. This point is very important because many folks are not even comfortable reading in front of an audience and may even get lost in the speech and lose the audience.

Secondly, you will want to think about improving your abilities by the ways that you deliver the speech. You will need to think about the way that you carry and animate yourself (body language) as well as the ways that you speak. You need to learn how to articulate all of the words. In addition, you will want to think about the tone of your voice and the way that you deliver a speech is just as important as the speech.

Thirdly, you will want to think about the way that you use body language (I have spoken about this subject in prior newsletters). If you carry yourself with confidence you'll be able to deliver a great speech, however, you'll find that if you just take your time to gather your nerves together and really work on the way that you feel about yourself, you should have no problem with the confidence area.

Fourth, you will want to think about the way that you begin and end a speech. You need to first get their attention, but you can't just let your speech end. You need to come up with a conclusion so that you are able to keep your audience captive clear up to the end. There are many people who will start off great and get better and better, but then they leave the group empty handed. You need to have an introduction, middle and an end (that encapsulates your speech or brings a conclusion) for you to have a good speech.

Finally, leave time for Q&A time (if your intention is to have a Q&A session) so that your audience can get its final closure. You will want to make sure that your audience has time to question your ideas, so that you in return will be able to make any points that were missed in communicating to your audience.

There are many other ideas and thoughts that you may want to think about when it comes to becoming a good speaker; however, it's important to make sure that you take in some tips from others and work on your own self-esteem,

style, and triggers in your personal life that will help in your confidence level. Interestingly enough when speaking with the high school students we delved into what triggers, coping mechanisms and core pain were and the attention level went through the roof.

You will want to make sure that you spend some time thinking about the areas that you are weak in and some of the areas that you are strong in. Becoming a good speaker does not just happen overnight, but it is something that you have to work for and can achieve.

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Sincerely,

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