

Become a Confident Speaker

Discover essential tools to elevate your speaking, overcome anxiety, and connect with your listeners.

Paul Andreas

Table Of Contents

About the Author	3
Introduction	5
Chap 1 Overcoming Fear and Anxiety	8
Chap 2 Prepare Well and Structure Your Speech	26
Chap 3: Use Vocal Variety	40
Chap 4 Avoid Filler Words	50
Chap 5 Slowing down speech	60
Chap 6: Tailor Your Message	68
Chapter 7: Using Slides in a Presentation	72
Chap 8: Use Good Body Language	84
Chap 9: Avoid Information Overload	92
Chap 10: Deliver a clear Message	98
Conclusion	103

About the Author



Hi, my name's Paul Andreas. I am a former member of Toastmasters International, an organisation which has clubs around the world for people who want to improve their public speaking skills. I attained the Competent Communicator Award and the Distinguished Toastmaster Award, which is the highest award obtainable from Toastmasters.

I am also a Certified World Class Speaking Coach, certified by Craig Valentine, a former World Champion of Public Speaking. I have coached people who want to improve their public speaking skills, including business people, students and parents who need to give a wedding speech.

In the course of coaching people I have discovered that there are some common obstacles that all new speakers face, such as fear and anxiety but the good news is that you can overcome all those obstacles. This book will show you how to overcome the obstacles faced by public speakers and you will become a more confident speaker.

Introduction

I have read lots of books about public speaking and found that many of them increased my head knowledge about speaking but did not necessarily help me to become a better speaker nor help me to become more confident.

This book is different. In it you will discover the ten biggest obstacles that you will face as a public speaker. You will learn the solutions to resolve each obstacle and you will receive worksheets and exercises so that you can practise your new skills.

For example, the first obstacle is Fear & Anxiety, which is a challenge that most new speakers face.. You will learn some techniques for overcoming them and a worksheet to help you to stay focussed. The other obstacles that you will learn about are:



- 
- Lack of preparation / structure
 - Monotone delivery
 - Overuse of filler words
 - Speaking too fast
 - Lack of audience awareness
 - Reading from the slides or notes
 - Poor body language
 - Information overload
 - Unclear message or takeaway

For each of these obstacles you will learn the solution and receive a worksheet, which will help you to stay on track and reach your goals. When you have finished working through the book and the worksheets you will definitely be a more confident speaker.

Chap 1

Overcoming Fear and Anxiety

Fear and anxiety affects many speakers but can easily be overcome. Here are three methods that you can use to overcome it and build your confidence.

Starting small is one of the most effective ways to build confidence in public speaking. Here are practical tips to ease into it gradually and grow your comfort level over time:



Tips for Starting Small and Building Confidence:

1. Start with Safe, Supportive Environments

- Speak up in small team meetings, classes, or family gatherings.
- Volunteer to give a short update, answer a question, or introduce someone.
- These low-pressure settings help you practice without fear of judgment.

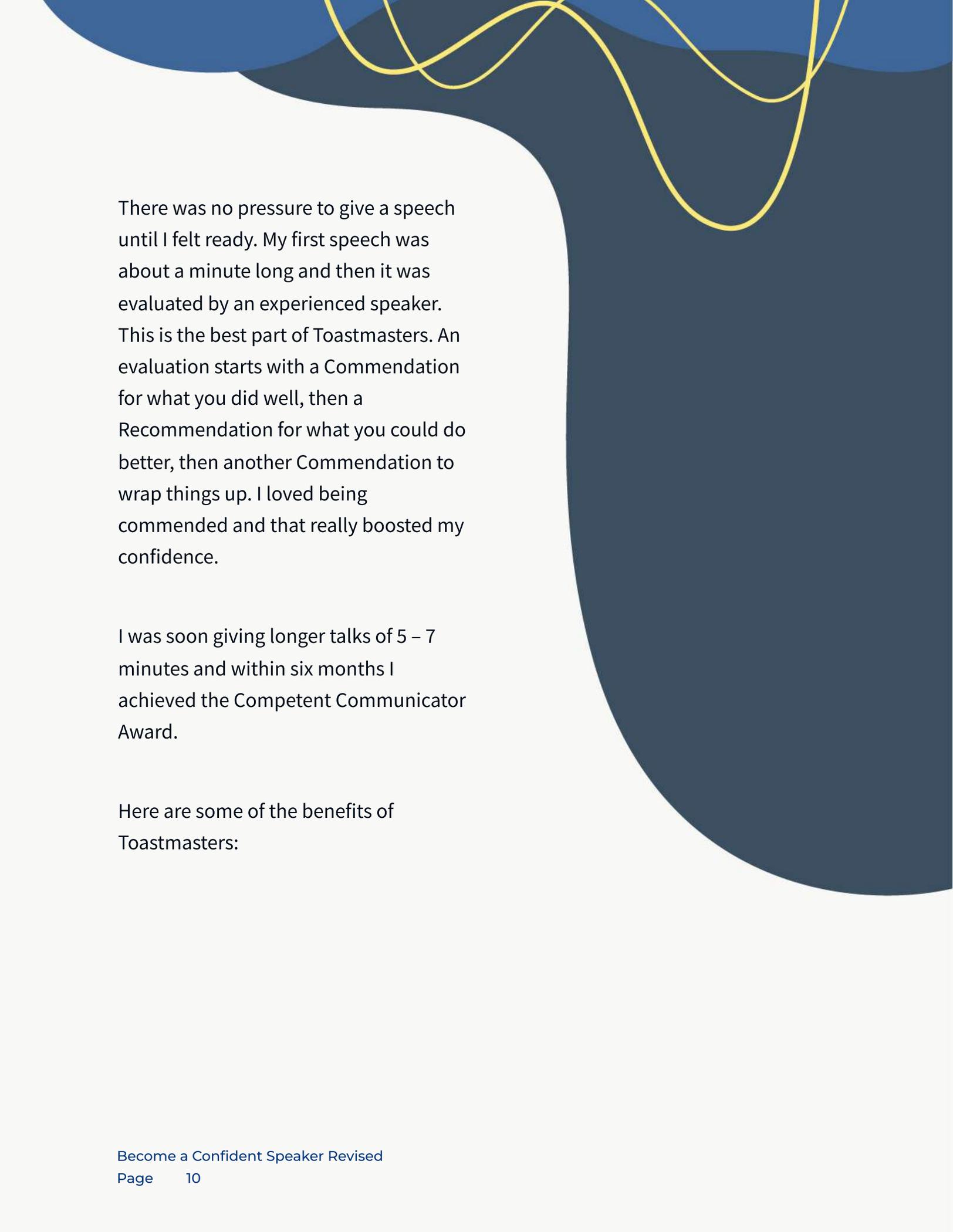
2. Practice with a Trusted Partner

- Rehearse your speech in front of a friend, colleague, or mirror.
- Ask for constructive feedback on tone, clarity, and body language.
- Repetition builds familiarity and reduces fear.

3. Join a Group Like Toastmasters

Many professional speakers and Coaches , myself included, started their speaking careers at Toastmasters. Before I joined I was nervous at public speaking. I thought it was a good idea to join but kept putting it off. Finally, I plucked up the courage and , on the way to my first meeting I was feeling apprehensive. However, when I arrived, I found that the atmosphere was welcoming and supportive.





There was no pressure to give a speech until I felt ready. My first speech was about a minute long and then it was evaluated by an experienced speaker. This is the best part of Toastmasters. An evaluation starts with a Commendation for what you did well, then a Recommendation for what you could do better, then another Commendation to wrap things up. I loved being commended and that really boosted my confidence.

I was soon giving longer talks of 5 – 7 minutes and within six months I achieved the Competent Communicator Award.

Here are some of the benefits of Toastmasters:

- It offers a supportive, structured space to practice short speeches and get feedback.
- You start with short, simple “icebreaker” talks and gradually take on more complex challenges.
- Toastmasters is an International organisation with clubs around the world so there is likely to be a group near you.

4. Record Yourself Speaking

- Use your phone to record short practice sessions or explain a concept aloud.
- Review your tone, pace, and posture — small improvements make a big difference.

5. Speak for Just 1–2 Minutes

- Start with short speaking segments: Introduce a topic, tell a story, or explain a concept in under 2 minutes.
- Gradually extend your speaking time as your confidence grows.

6. Prepare a Go-To Script or Story

- Have a few well-rehearsed personal stories or introductions you can deliver at short notice.
- Feeling prepared reduces anxiety and builds fluency.



7. Set a Weekly Speaking Goal

- Aim to speak up at least once in a meeting, class, or group each week.
- Keep track of progress in a confidence journal.

8. Celebrate Small Wins

- Acknowledge and reward yourself for every step forward, no matter how small.
- Confidence builds with positive reinforcement.



Bonus: Use Visualization + Breathing

Combine these tips with:

- Visualization: See yourself succeeding.
- Breathing techniques: Stay grounded and calm.

Visualization



Visualization is a powerful mental technique that can significantly improve your performance. Athletes use it by visualizing themselves winning a race. Speakers use it to visualize themselves giving a great speech.

What is Visualization in Public Speaking?

Visualization is the practice of mentally rehearsing your speech and the surrounding experience in vivid detail. It involves imagining yourself succeeding — confidently delivering your message, connecting with your audience, and feeling calm and in control.

Step-by-Step Guide to Visualization for Public Speaking

1. Find a Quiet Space



Sit comfortably in a distraction-free place. Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths to center yourself.

2. Visualize the Setting

- Picture the room or venue: Is it a small meeting room? A large auditorium?
- Imagine the audience: Friendly, engaged, nodding, and listening intently.
- See yourself walking to the stage or standing in front of the group.

3. See Yourself Speaking Confidently

- Imagine your posture: upright, grounded, open.
- Visualize your voice: clear, strong, calm.
- Picture yourself pausing naturally, using gestures, and maintaining eye contact.
- Imagine finishing your speech to applause or positive reactions.
- Sound: Hear your voice delivering key points smoothly.
- Sight: Visualize your slides, notes, or the audience's expressions.
- Feel: Feel calm, confident, and excited—not nervous.

5. Repeat Regularly

- 
- Practice visualization daily leading up to your speech.
 - Sessions can be 5–10 minutes — consistency builds familiarity and confidence.

Tip: Include body language

Why It Works: Vivid, detailed mental imagery boosts realism and confidence.

4. Engage All Your Senses

Helps create muscle memory for gestures and stance.

Rehearse Difficult Parts

Visualize overcoming challenges like stumbles or tough questions.

Combine with Mirror Practice

Reinforces visualization with physical cues.

Add Positive Self-Talk

E.g., “I’ve prepared well. I’m ready.”



Imagine handling a tech issue calmly.

Picture someone interrupting and how you'd smoothly respond.
This prepares your brain to remain calm under pressure.

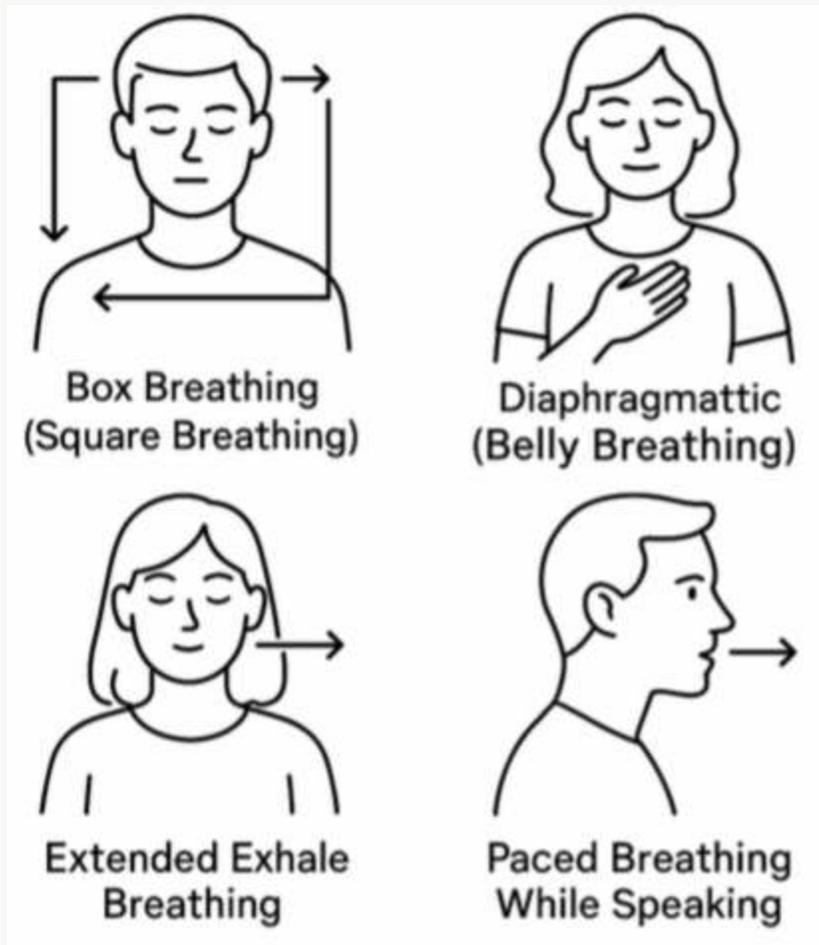
Breathing Techniques

Using breathing techniques can significantly improve your public speaking by helping you manage anxiety, control your voice, and project confidence. Here's a practical guide to using breathing techniques effectively:

Why Breathing Matters in Public Speaking

- Reduces nerves: Deep, controlled breathing calms your nervous system.
- Supports vocal strength: Breath gives power to your voice, helping it carry and stay steady.
- Improves pacing: Helps you pause and avoid rushing through your talk.

Key Breathing Techniques



Diaphragmatic (Belly) Breathing



- Purpose: Foundation for vocal control and relaxation.
- How to do it:
 1. Sit or stand straight.
 2. Place one hand on your chest, one on your belly.
 3. Inhale slowly through your nose for 4 counts – your belly (not chest) should rise.
 4. Exhale slowly through your mouth for 4–6 counts – belly falls.
 5. Repeat for a few minutes daily and before speaking.

Use before a presentation to reduce anxiety and ground yourself.

2. Box Breathing (Square Breathing)



- Purpose: Calms nerves and centers focus.
- How to do it:
 1. Inhale through your nose for 4 seconds.
 2. Hold the breath for 4 seconds.
 3. Exhale through your mouth for 4 seconds.
 4. Hold again for 4 seconds.
 5. Repeat the cycle 3–5 times.

Ideal for managing stage fright before going on stage.

3. Extended Exhale Breathing



- Purpose: Reduces heart rate and anxiety.
- How to do it:
 1. Inhale deeply for 4 seconds.
 2. Exhale slowly and steadily for 6–8 seconds.
 3. Focus on making your exhale longer than your inhale.

Use when you're feeling overwhelmed.

Breath Pausing (for Delivery)



- Purpose: Controls pace, adds emphasis, and gives you time to think.
- How to do it:
 - Practice pausing briefly after key points or between phrases.
 - Breathe naturally during those pauses to reset.
 - Avoid filler words like “um” or “uh.”

Use during your speech to appear confident and deliberate.

Daily Practice Plan (5–10 min)

1. 2 min: Diaphragmatic breathing
2. 3 rounds: Box breathing
3. Practice reading a short paragraph aloud using breath pauses
4. Use extended exhale to wind down

Chap 2 Prepare Well and Structure Your Speech



Prepare well for your speech and structure it well and you will feel confident when you step onto the stage. In this chapter we will look at how to create a clear outline, with a strong opening and closing and how to rehearse.

Structuring a speech well makes it easier for your audience to follow and remember your message. Here's a simple and effective speech structure that works for most types of talks—professional, academic, or social:



Classic Speech Structure (Introduction – Body – Conclusion)

1. Introduction (10–15%)



- **Grab attention:** Use a quote, question, story, or surprising fact.
- **Introduce your topic:** Be clear and concise.
- **State your purpose:** What do you want the audience to learn, feel, or do?
- **Preview your main points:** “Today, I’ll cover three key points...”

Example: “Imagine waking up every day with confidence. Today, I’m going to show you how public speaking can help unlock that confidence in three simple steps.”

2. Body (70–80%)

Break it into 2 to 4 clear main points, 3 works well, with supporting material:



- **Point 1:** Explain + give examples, data, stories
- **Transition:** Guide the listener to the next idea
- **Point 2:** Same structure
- **Point 3:** Round out your argument or message

Use tools like:

- “For example...”
- “This brings us to...”
- “Let’s consider another perspective...”



3. Conclusion (10–15%)

- **Summarize your main points:** Brief and clear.
- **Reinforce your key message:** What should they remember?
- **End powerfully:** Use a call to action, quote, vision, or emotional close.

Example closing line: “If you remember one thing from today: Your voice can change your life—and someone else’s.”

Bonus Tips

- **Use repetition** for emphasis (especially in conclusion).
- **Match tone and language to your audience.**
- **Practice transitions** between sections.
- **Time yourself** so you don't rush or go over time.

How to create a Strong Open and Close

A strong opening and close can make your speech memorable, impactful, and persuasive. Here are some tips to help you craft strong openings:



How to Create a Strong Opening

The goal is to grab attention, build curiosity, and set the tone. You want the audience to lean in and think, “I want to hear this.”

Opening Techniques:

1. Start with a Story

A personal, relatable, or emotional anecdote draws people in immediately. “When I was 12, I gave a speech to an audience of 3—and I froze.”



1. Ask a Thought-Provoking Question

Engage your audience mentally from the start.

“What if one moment on stage could change your life?”

1. Use a Surprising Statistic or Fact

Shock or intrigue your audience.

“75% of people fear public speaking more than death.”

1. Quote a Well-Known Figure

Adds credibility and resonance.

“As Maya Angelou said, ‘People will forget what you said, but they’ll never forget how you made them feel.’”

1. Paint a Vivid Scene

Use descriptive language to immerse the listener.

“Picture this: a crowded room, every eye on you, your heart racing...”



1. State a Bold Claim

Spark curiosity or challenge assumptions.

“Everything you think you know about confidence is wrong.”

1. Start With You

People love to hear about themselves and “What’s in it for me?” (WIIFM). So, instead of saying something like, “Today, I would like to speak to you about . . .” say, “Today, you are going to hear about . . .”

Bonus Tips for Openings:

- Keep it short and relevant.
- Use a strong, clear voice—your confidence sets the mood.
- Don’t apologize or ramble—start with intention.

How to Create a Powerful Close

A great close reinforces your message, leaves a lasting impression, and often includes a call to action or emotional pull.

And here are some tips to help you craft strong closes:

1. Call to Action (CTA)



Inspire your audience to do something—act, reflect, speak, change.
“So the next time fear holds you back, step up and speak anyway.”

1. Return to Your Opening

Full-circle closings create satisfaction and cohesion.
“Remember that 12-year-old who froze? He’s speaking to you now.”

1. End with a Quote or Proverb

Choose one that encapsulates your key message.
“Speak your mind—even if your voice shakes.”

1. Issue a Challenge

Make it personal and direct.
“I challenge you to say ‘yes’ to your next speaking opportunity.”

1. Use a Poignant Story

Stories are sticky—closing with one reinforces your message.
“That client who found their voice? They now lead a team of 500.”

1. Drop a Memorable One-Liner



Leave them with something they'll remember and repeat.

“Your voice isn't just sound—it's power.”

Bonus Tips for Closing:

- End with confidence and pause—let your final words land.
- Avoid weak endings like “That's it” or “I guess I'm done.”
- Smile, make eye contact, and exit with presence.

Rehearsing a speech well is one of the most effective ways to boost confidence and improve delivery. Here are practical tips to help you rehearse effectively and speak with clarity, control, and presence:

Tips for Rehearsing a Speech

1. Rehearse Out Loud—Every Time

- Don't just read it in your head—speak it aloud.
- It helps with memorization, timing, and vocal delivery.
- You'll catch awkward phrasing or unclear parts more easily.

2. Practice in Front of a Mirror



- 
- Watch your facial expressions, posture, and gestures.
 - Are you natural and confident? Or stiff and tense?
 - Adjust body language to be open, grounded, and expressive.

3. Record Yourself (Video or Audio)

- This gives objective feedback on your tone, speed, and clarity.
- Listen for filler words ("um," "like," "you know"), vocal variety, and volume.
- Watching the video helps improve eye contact, gestures, and pacing.

4. Practice Standing and Moving

- If you'll be standing when you speak, rehearse that way.
- Practice gestures and movement (but avoid pacing!).
- Simulate the real environment (podium, microphone, slides if using them).

5. Time Yourself

- Stay within your allotted time.
- Be aware of where to slow down for impact and where to trim if needed.
- Try rehearsing once at real speed, and once at half speed to focus on delivery.

6. Practice in Front of a Friend or Colleague

- 
- Ask for honest, constructive feedback.
 - Have them focus on body language, clarity, and engagement.
 - You can also do a “Q&A” practice if your speech includes audience interaction.

7. Chunk and Repeat

- Break your speech into sections or “chunks”.
- Rehearse each part until it feels natural, then connect the sections.
- Focus on transitions between points so they flow smoothly.

8. Include Pauses and Breathing

- Practice pausing for effect and to let key points land.
- Breathe deeply to control nerves and support your voice.
- Use rehearsal time to find where natural pauses should go.

9. Use Notes or a Key Point Outline

- Practice with a condensed version of your speech—not a full script.
- This helps you stay natural and conversational rather than reading.
- Rehearse gradually relying less on notes.

10. Rehearse Often, But Don't Over-Practice

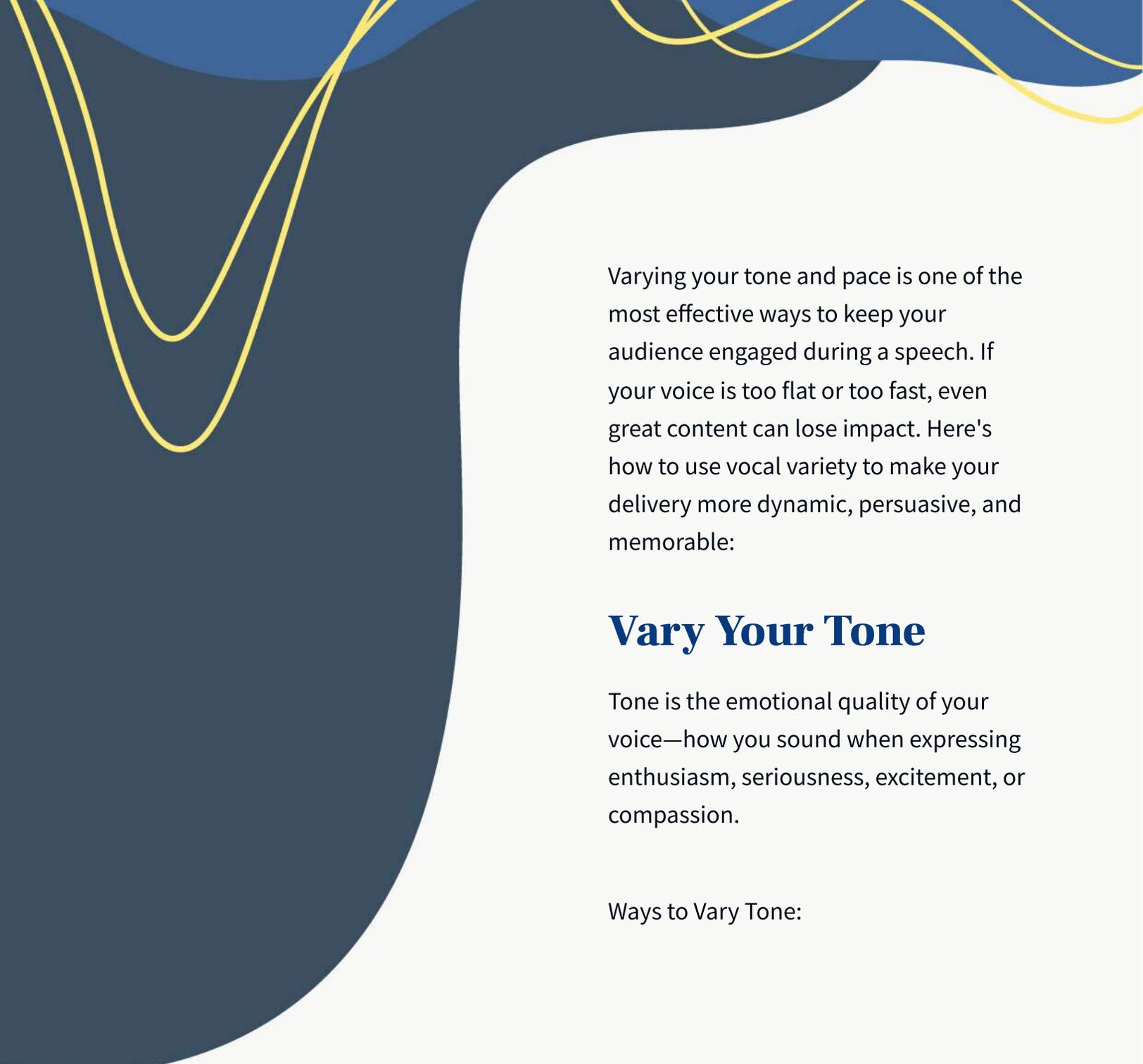
- Don't aim to memorize every word. Aim to internalize the structure and message.
- Over-rehearsing can lead to robotic delivery—stay flexible.

Bonus Tip: Simulate the Real Thing

If possible, rehearse in the actual space or a similar one—lighting, room size, acoustics, and even clothing can affect how you feel.



Chap 3: Use Vocal Variety



Varying your tone and pace is one of the most effective ways to keep your audience engaged during a speech. If your voice is too flat or too fast, even great content can lose impact. Here's how to use vocal variety to make your delivery more dynamic, persuasive, and memorable:

Vary Your Tone

Tone is the emotional quality of your voice—how you sound when expressing enthusiasm, seriousness, excitement, or compassion.

Ways to Vary Tone:

1. Match Emotion to Message

- Serious point → lower, steadier tone
- Inspiring moment → uplift your voice
- Light or humorous → brighter, relaxed tone



2. Emphasize Key Words

Change tone or volume to stress important words.

*“This is **not** just a speech—it’s a moment.”*

3. Use Warmth and Passion

- Speak with genuine feeling; your audience can hear the difference.
- Let your voice reflect your **interest, care, and excitement.**

4. Avoid a Monotone

A flat voice drains energy. Imagine you're **telling a story**, not reading a report.

5. Practice Expressive Reading

Try reading a dramatic passage aloud with emotion—it improves vocal flexibility.



Vary Your Pace

Pace is how quickly or slowly you speak. Varying it helps with clarity, tension, rhythm, and emphasis.

- When to Slow Down:
- To emphasize **important points**
- After asking a **rhetorical question**
- When delivering a **quote or call to action**
- During **emotional moments**

Example: “What would you do... if you had no fear?” (pause)

- When to Speed Up:
- During an **exciting story** or **list**
- To create a sense of **energy or urgency**
- To contrast with a slower section for dramatic effect

“She stood up, spoke out, and changed everything.”



Pro Tips for Tone & Pace Mastery

Mark Your Script

Add cues like (slow down), (pause), (emphasize), or underline key words.

- Use Pauses Effectively
- After a big idea
- Before a quote
- To let the audience think

Silence can be just as powerful as speech.

- Record and Listen Back
- Note where your tone feels flat or rushed.
- Practice adjusting it—experiment with different versions.
- Practice with Emotion
- Don't rehearse mechanically. Rehearse **as if it's real**—with energy, passion, and presence.

Tell Stories



Using stories in your speech is one of the most powerful ways to connect with your audience, make your message memorable, and bring your ideas to life. Stories spark emotion, build trust, and turn abstract concepts into something real.

Why Stories Work

- They activate the brain: People remember stories 22x more than facts alone.
- They build emotional connection: Audiences relate to people, not data.
- They create empathy: A good story lets listeners see through your eyes.

How to Use Stories to Enhance a Speech

1. Make It Personal (If Possible)

- Personal stories are the most engaging and authentic.
- Share your own experiences, challenges, or lessons learned.
- Be vulnerable but focused—only include what serves your message.

“I used to shake every time I had to speak. But then something changed...”

2. Connect the Story to the Message

- Ask yourself: *What's the point?*
- Tie every story to a clear lesson, value, or idea.
- Avoid “rambling anecdotes” that don’t lead anywhere.

Example: “That failure taught me something I carry into every presentation: preparation builds confidence.”

3. Use the 3-Part Structure (S-T-R)

S – Situation: Set the scene. Where and when?

T – Tension: What challenge or conflict happened?

R – Resolution: What changed or what did you learn?

Example: “Three years ago, I gave my first speech. I froze halfway through (TENSION). But I didn’t walk off stage (RESOLUTION). I learned to breathe and continue.”





4. Be Specific and Visual

- Use sensory details: What did you see, hear, feel?
- Describe people, places, and emotions vividly.
- Let your audience picture it like a movie.

Example: “The spotlight blinded me. My hands were damp. I looked up—and forgot my first line.”

5. Keep It Short and Focused

- A story doesn’t have to be long to be powerful.
- Keep it under 2–3 minutes unless it’s the centerpiece of your talk.
- Avoid unnecessary detail—stick to what moves the story forward.

6. Use Voice and Body to Act It Out

- Change your tone, pace, and expression for characters or moments.
- Use gesture and movement to enhance action or emotion.

7. Use Stories to Transition



- **Stories are great for:**

- Starting your speech with impact
- Bridging between major points
- Ending with emotional resonance

“That story brings me to my next point: why resilience matters more than skill.”

TIP: Where to Find Good Stories

- Moments of personal growth or failure
- Times when you helped someone—or were helped
- First experiences (job, speech, risk)
- Stories from clients, mentors, family (with permission)

Engage With the Audience by Asking Questions



How to Ask Questions to Stimulate Thinking

- Start with a Question: Hook attention with a thought-provoking or surprising question.
- Use Rhetorical Questions: Make the audience reflect without needing an answer.

- 
- Ask for a Show of Hands: Creates immediate interaction and makes people feel included.
 - Invite Short Responses: Use yes/no or 1-word answers if the setting allows.
 - Link Questions to Your Message: Each question should support the point you're about to make.
 - Pause After Asking: Give time for thinking—don't rush into your next sentence.
 - Be Warm and Respectful: Make sure no one feels put on the spot or judged.

Chap 4 Avoid Filler Words

Filler words like "um," and "er," can detract from the clarity and impact of your speech, making you appear unprepared, uncertain, or even unintelligent. These verbal crutches disrupt the flow of communication, can make it harder for your audience to understand your message, and ultimately weaken your credibility.



A filler word, sometimes known as a verbal filler or filler phrase, is a sound, word, or phrase that doesn't mean anything in the context of what someone is saying. It simply "fills" in the space while someone is talking, as the name implies.

Some examples of filler words include:

- Um
- Ah
- Er
- Cool
- Uh
- Okay
- So
- Like

And here are some examples of filler phrases:

- All right
- You know
- Okay, so
- And so on



What are filler words?

Here's an explanation of why not to use them:

Disrupts flow and clarity:

Filler words can interrupt the natural rhythm of your speech, making it harder for your audience to follow your train of thought.



Reduces impact:

When a speaker relies on filler words, the message can become diluted, and the audience may struggle to grasp the key points or feel the emotional weight of the speaker's words.

Damages credibility:

Frequent use of filler words can make you appear nervous, unprepared, or lacking confidence, which can undermine your authority and persuasiveness.

Causes disengagement:

Distracting filler words can cause your audience to lose focus and disengage from the message. Instead of listening to your message they start to wonder when you will next say “um.”

Subtly weakens meaning:

Some filler words, such as "like" or "sort of," can subtly alter the intended meaning of a sentence, making it sound less precise and impactful.



By consciously minimizing filler words, you can improve the clarity, impact, and credibility of your message, creating a more engaging and effective communication experience for your audience.

How to stop using filler words when public speaking:

1. Pause Instead of Filling the Silence





Why it works: Filler words often sneak in when you're thinking of what to say next. A short pause gives you time to gather your thoughts without cluttering your speech.

Try this: Practice pausing silently for 1–2 seconds whenever you feel a filler word coming. It sounds more confident and gives your audience space to absorb your message.

2. Slow Down Your Speaking Pace

Why it works: Speaking too fast can lead to brain-mouth disconnect — you run out of words before ideas.

Try this: Use deliberate pacing. Emphasize key words, and insert natural pauses between points. This not only reduces fillers but also makes your message clearer and more impactful.

3. Practice with Awareness and Feedback

Why it works: You can't fix what you don't notice. Recording yourself or getting live feedback helps identify your patterns.

Try this: Record a short talk. Play it back and mark every filler word. Repeat the talk, aiming to reduce or replace fillers with pauses. You can also ask a coach or friend to signal when you use one.

4. Prepare and Structure Your Speech Thoroughly



Why it helps: Uncertainty leads to filler words. When you know what comes next, you're less likely to stall.

How to apply: Use a clear outline with key points and transitions. Rehearse the flow until it feels natural.

5. Practice with Intentional Pauses

Why it helps: Deliberate pauses train your brain to stay calm and focused.

How to apply: In practice sessions, insert a short pause at commas, periods, or between sections. This builds a rhythm that reduces the need to fill gaps with “um.”

6. Replace Fillers with Transitional Phrases

Why it helps: Giving yourself a “verbal bridge” keeps the speech moving smoothly.

How to apply: Use phrases like:

- “Let’s move on to...”
- “What this means is...”
- “Here’s an example...”

These transitions give you thinking time while sounding intentional.

7. Use Note Cards or Visual Aids Wisely



Why it helps: Visual prompts keep you on track without over-scripting.

How to apply: Write down keywords, not full sentences. Glancing at them helps reduce panic and hesitation.

8 Train with Filler Word “Penalty Practice”

Why it helps: Raising your awareness with consequences builds discipline.

How to apply: During practice, have a friend tally every filler word, or wear a rubber band and snap it when you catch yourself using one. It’s silly—but it works.

9. Record and Analyze Your Speech Regularly

Why it helps: Hearing yourself helps you catch patterns you’re blind to in real time.

How to apply: After recording, note which filler words you use most. Work on reducing just one type (like “like” or “you know”) at a time.

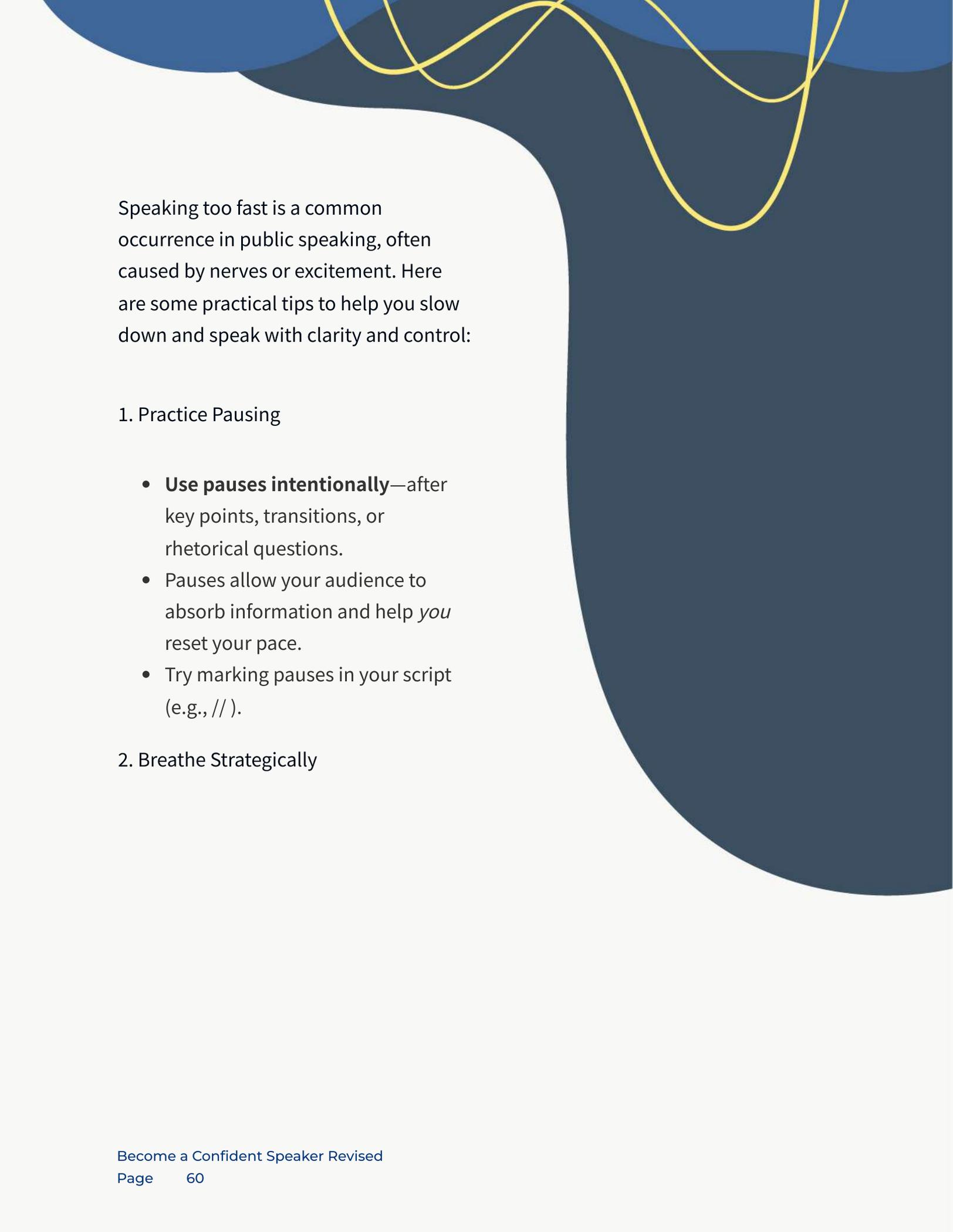
10. Practice Impromptu Speaking

Why it helps: Thinking on your feet builds fluency and sharpens your ability to stay composed.

How to apply: Join a group like Toastmasters, or do solo drills: pick a random topic and speak for 1–2 minutes without fillers. The challenge helps train your speaking muscles.



Chap 5 Slowing down speech

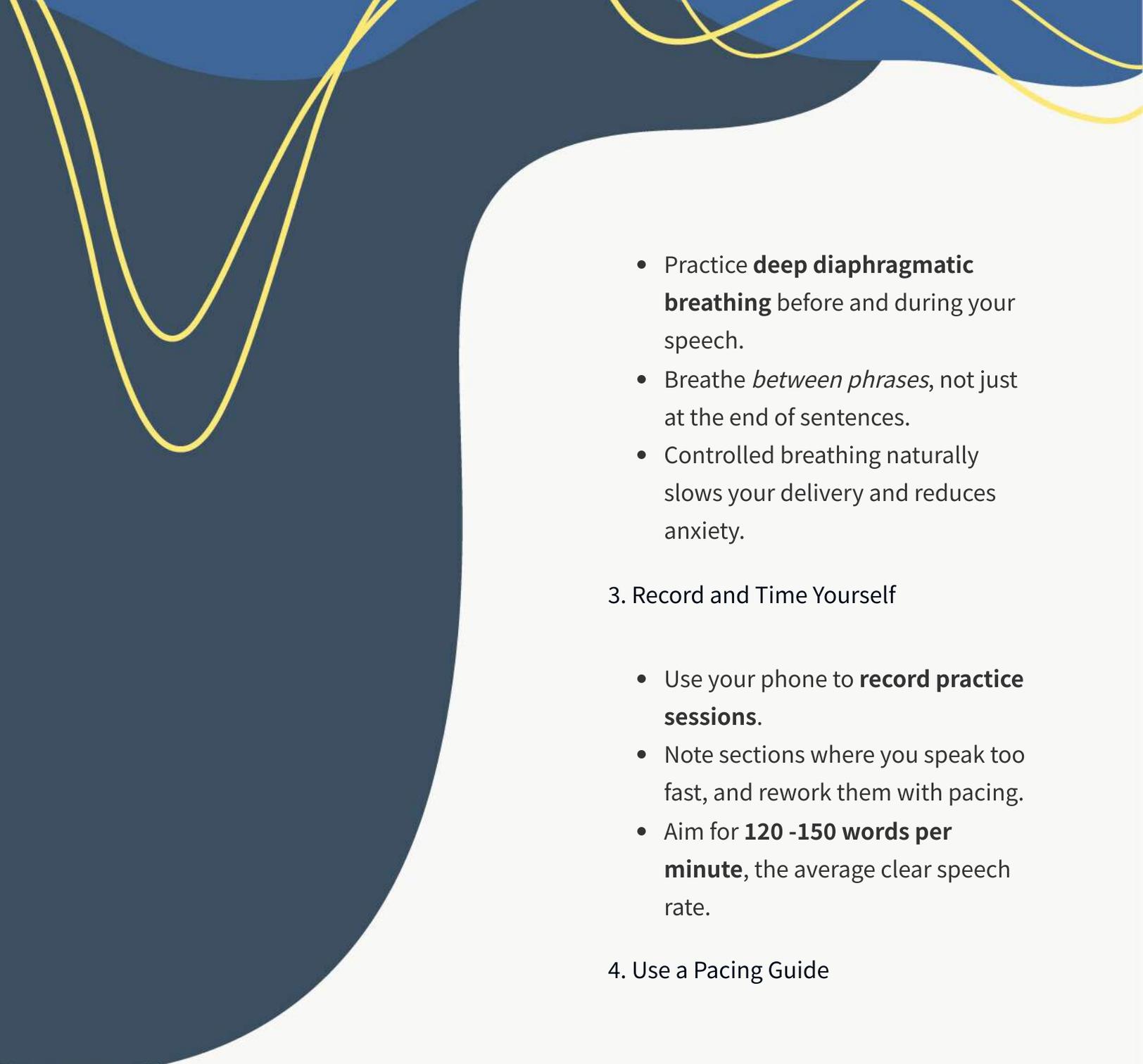


Speaking too fast is a common occurrence in public speaking, often caused by nerves or excitement. Here are some practical tips to help you slow down and speak with clarity and control:

1. Practice Pausing

- **Use pauses intentionally**—after key points, transitions, or rhetorical questions.
- Pauses allow your audience to absorb information and help *you* reset your pace.
- Try marking pauses in your script (e.g., //).

2. Breathe Strategically

- 
- Practice **deep diaphragmatic breathing** before and during your speech.
 - Breathe *between phrases*, not just at the end of sentences.
 - Controlled breathing naturally slows your delivery and reduces anxiety.

3. Record and Time Yourself

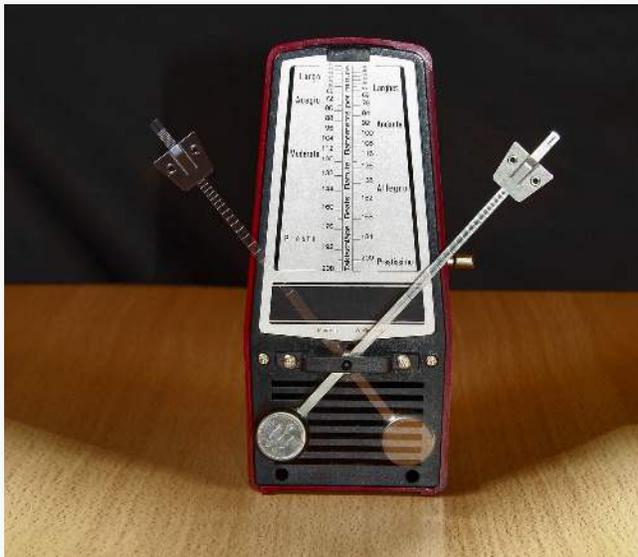
- Use your phone to **record practice sessions**.
- Note sections where you speak too fast, and rework them with pacing.
- Aim for **120 -150 words per minute**, the average clear speech rate.

4. Use a Pacing Guide

- **Write your speech in chunks** (short paragraphs or bullet points).
- Practice delivering each chunk with a specific rhythm and pace.
- Use a **metronome** to stay on tempo in early practice if needed.



A metronome is a device (or app) that produces a steady, consistent tick or beat at a set speed—measured in beats per minute (BPM). It’s commonly used by musicians to stay in rhythm, but it can also be a powerful tool for public speakers.



- Pacing Practice
- It trains you to **speak at a consistent rate**.
- You can set it to **match your ideal speaking speed** (e.g., 120 words per minute).
- Avoids Rushing
- By syncing your speech with the beat, you **reduce the tendency to speed up**, especially when nervous.
- Improves Rhythm and Flow
- Speaking with rhythm makes your delivery **more engaging and easier to follow**.
- It helps you find a natural cadence, like in storytelling or persuasive speaking.
- Reinforces Pauses
- You can **time pauses** using the beat—for example, pause for 2 beats between points.

How to Use a Metronome for Speaking Practice



How a Metronome Helps Improve Your Speech

- **Download a Metronome App** (e.g., “Pro Metronome”, “Soundbrenner”, or “Metronome Beats”).
- **Set the BPM** to your target speaking rate (try 60–70 BPM to start).
- **Read your speech aloud**, trying to align **phrases or words with the beats**.
- **Adjust the tempo** as needed to find a comfortable speaking speed.
- **Practice pausing** after punctuation marks or key phrases for 1–2 beats.

5. Enunciate Clearly

- **Over-articulate** during practice—it slows you down and improves clarity.
- Say tongue twisters to warm up your articulation muscles (e.g., “Red lorry, yellow lorry”).

6. Make Eye Contact

Connecting with your audience forces you to slow down.

Making effective eye contact is one of the best ways to connect with your audience and build trust. Eye contact forces you to pause and be present, which helps slow your pace. It shows confidence, engages listeners, and helps you control your speaking pace.



Here's how to do it well:

- Cover the Whole Room
- Make eye contact with people **in all areas**: front, back, left, right, center.
- This ensures the whole audience feels included and keeps you from focusing too much on one area.
- To do this survey the room in a W or M shape, pausing from time to time on one person for three seconds.
- Use the “3-Second Rule”
- Hold eye contact with one person for **about 3 seconds**—just long enough to complete a thought or sentence.
- Then move your gaze naturally to another person in a different area.
- Move with Purpose
- If you’re walking or using gestures, **align your movement with your gaze**.
- When you turn to a new section of the audience, pause and make eye contact there too.

What to Avoid:

- Don’t look **over their heads** or at the ceiling—it looks like you’re disengaged.
- Don’t dart your eyes too fast—it feels anxious and insincere.
- Don’t just **read your slides**—you lose the connection with your listeners.

7. Script Pacing Cues

- Use bold or underlined **emphasis markers** in your script for slow delivery.
- Include notes like “Pause here,” “Breathe,” or “Slow down.”

8. Rehearse with a Listener

- Ask a friend to raise their hand when you’re speaking too quickly.
- Practicing with feedback trains you to become more aware of your speed.



Chap 6: Tailor Your Message



1. Know Your Audience

Before you start writing or speaking, ask yourself: Who will be listening?

Think about:

- Their age group
- What they're interested in
- What they might already know (or not know) about your topic.

If you're talking to a group of students who love gaming, you can use analogies from games. If it's a more formal event, such as a business presentation, you might keep your tone more polished.

When you understand who your audience is, you can adjust your examples, language, and style to match them. That's what makes your message feel real and relatable.

The next challenge is lack of audience awareness and the solution is to find ways to connect with your audience. Public speaking can feel intimidating—but it becomes a lot easier (and way more effective) when you shape your message to fit your audience. Whether you're giving a presentation or pitching an idea, knowing how to connect with your listeners makes all the difference.

Here are some tips to help you tailor your speech so your audience really listens.

2. Start with What Matters to Them

Grab their attention by starting with something they care about. Ask a question, share a fun fact, or mention something relevant to their everyday life. If your topic sounds useful or exciting right from the beginning, they'll want to hear more.



3. Use Language That Clicks

Skip the fancy words and jargon unless you're sure your audience knows them. Keep your language clear, simple, and natural. Speaking like yourself makes it easier for others to connect with what you're saying.

4. Focus on Shared Goals or Values

Try to link your message to something you and your audience have in common—like a shared experience, a challenge, or a goal. This builds a sense of unity and makes your message stronger.



5. Give Examples They Can Relate To

Use examples, stories, or comparisons from school life, pop culture, or current trends. Relatable content sticks better than abstract ideas.

6. Match Your Energy

If your audience is energetic and excited, match that vibe! If they're quieter or more serious, slow down and be calm but warm. Matching your energy to the room helps you feel more in tune with your listeners.

7. End with a Message That Inspires



Leave your audience with something to think about—a challenge, a call to action, or a hopeful message. A strong ending gives your talk purpose and makes it memorable.

Final Thoughts

You don't need to be perfect. You just need to be real. When you speak with your audience in mind, you're not just giving a speech—you're starting a conversation that matters. And that's where the magic happens.

.

Chap 7: Using Slides in a Presentation



The next challenge is to use slides without reading from them. PowerPoint remains one of the most effective tools for delivering clear, professional messages—provided it's used thoughtfully and strategically.

Many presentations fall short due to cluttered slides or a lack of visual engagement. The good news is that enhancing the clarity and impact of your slides doesn't require complex design skills.



Below are ten key strategies to help you craft polished, focused, and visually compelling presentations, that resonate with your audience, so that you don't need to read from them.

Establish a Clear Structure

Begin your presentation with an introductory slide that outlines the agenda. This provides your audience with a roadmap of what to expect, how the session will progress, and the key takeaways they can anticipate.

However, effective structure goes beyond the introduction. It involves thoughtfully planning which content is best presented as text and which ideas are more impactful when visualized through graphics. Once these decisions are made, you can refine and reorganize your content to ensure a logical and engaging flow throughout the presentation.

Keep it Simple

While it may be tempting to include extensive information on each slide, doing so often results in cluttered visuals that are difficult to read and absorb.

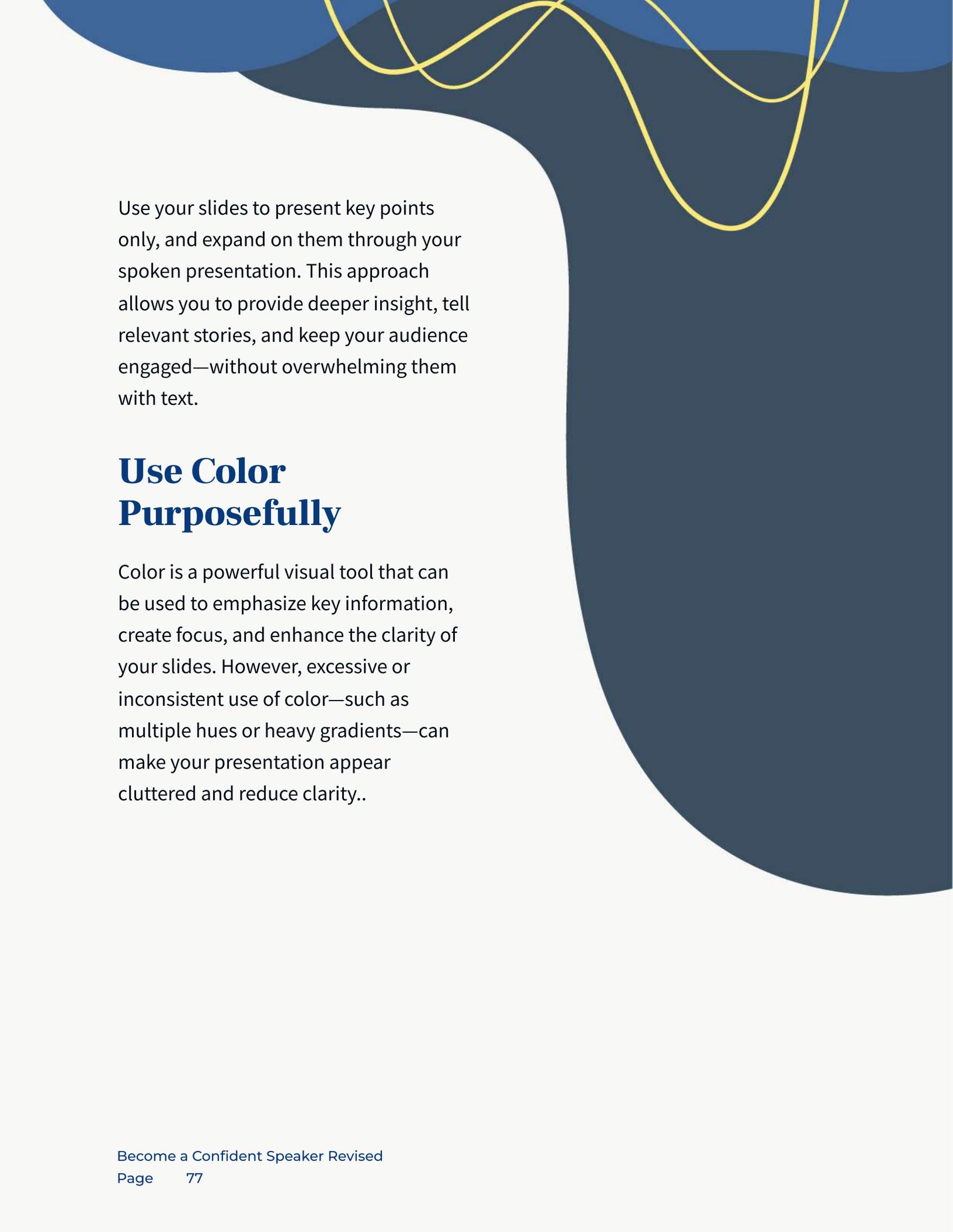


Instead, focus on clarity. Use concise language, brief bullet points, and ample white space to allow your key messages to stand out. A simplified slide not only enhances readability but also increases the likelihood that your audience will retain the information presented.

3. Don't Overload the Screen

Not every detail needs to appear on the slide. In fact, limiting on-screen content encourages your audience to focus on your delivery rather than reading along.





Use your slides to present key points only, and expand on them through your spoken presentation. This approach allows you to provide deeper insight, tell relevant stories, and keep your audience engaged—without overwhelming them with text.

Use Color Purposefully

Color is a powerful visual tool that can be used to emphasize key information, create focus, and enhance the clarity of your slides. However, excessive or inconsistent use of color—such as multiple hues or heavy gradients—can make your presentation appear cluttered and reduce clarity..



To maintain a professional appearance, limit your palette to two complementary colors per slide, and always ensure that text maintains high contrast for optimal readability.

Use Readable and Consistent Font Sizes

In presentations where text plays a central role, choosing the right fonts significantly enhances both readability and visual professionalism.

Keep text as large as possible, within reason, to ensure content is legible, even from a distance. A minimum font size of 18 points is recommended. Use bold formatting to emphasize key terms, and limit the use of italics, which can be harder to read and less accessible.

Consistency is key—apply a uniform style to headers and body text throughout the presentation. This not only strengthens your visual identity but also improves comprehension and audience engagement.

Use the same fonts, colors, and layout throughout. Make sure the design looks professional and the text is easy to read—even from the back of a room.

One Idea per Slide

Focus each slide on one clear message or point. This keeps your audience focused and prevents cognitive overload.

Here's an example of a slide that doesn't meet this condition. The slide contains five points which all appear on the slide in one go, meaning that your audience is reading ahead while you're still talking about points 1 or 2.

Camera Features

- It contains a large bright display that can easily be seen in full sunlight
- Multiple exposure modes that gives you full control of how you want to shoot
- The camera has an ergonomic design that feels more comfortable to hold
- 7 frames per second burst speed allows you to capture all the action
- 4K video at the flick of a switch allowing you to swap between still and movie modes



Instead, you could do something like this:



The slide contains minimal text and a large image that clearly illustrates that first point on the slide. The other four points are treated in a similar way.





Use Visuals to Support, Not Distract

Include charts, images, icons, or graphs to illustrate your point. Avoid decorative visuals that don't serve a purpose.

Use animations, bold text, or color highlights sparingly to draw attention to the most important ideas without overwhelming the slide.

8. Keep Text Minimal

Limit text to key words or bullet points—your slides should highlight, not duplicate, what you're saying. Aim for no more than 6 lines per slide.

Talk to Your Audience, Not to the Screen

Use the slides as a visual cue, but maintain eye contact with your audience. Don't turn your back or read word-for-word from the slide.

Control the Pace

Advance slides only when needed, not too fast or too slow. Each transition should feel purposeful and timed with your spoken message.

Here's an example of how to present data in a simple, easy to understand manner:

Wimbledon Prize Money

1985-2015



And here's another:

Beer consumption by country

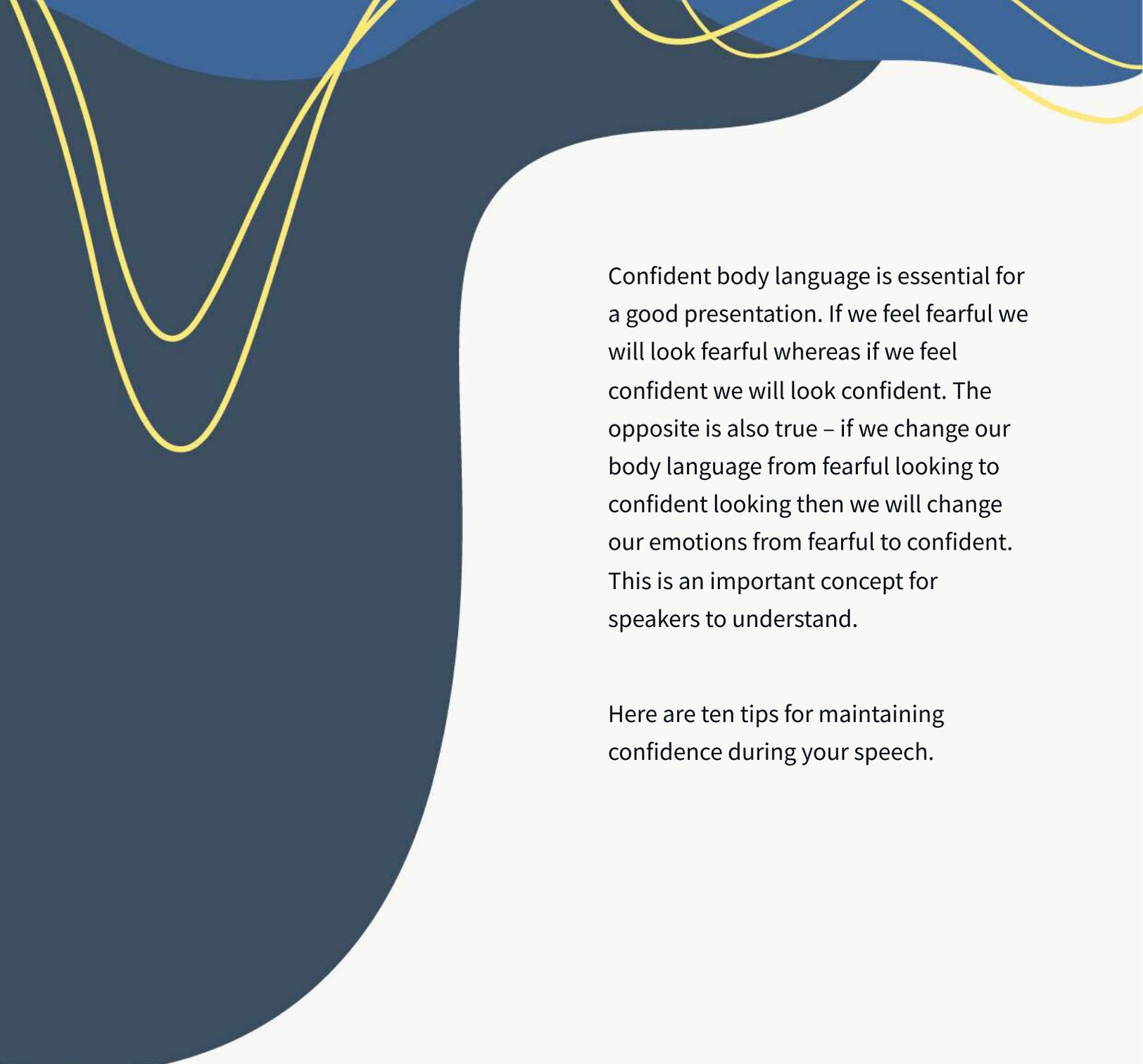
(Litres per capita)



Both of the above slides are part of a sequence, in which each picture appears one at a time. For example, the small glass appears first, followed by the others in order until the complete sequence of five glasses is displayed. The slide sequence builds up the information one point at a time so that the audience isn't distracted by information showing on the slide that has yet to be covered by the speaker. This grabs the audience's attention and really gets the point across.

(Slides by D. Henson and used with permission.)

Chap 8: Use Good Body Language

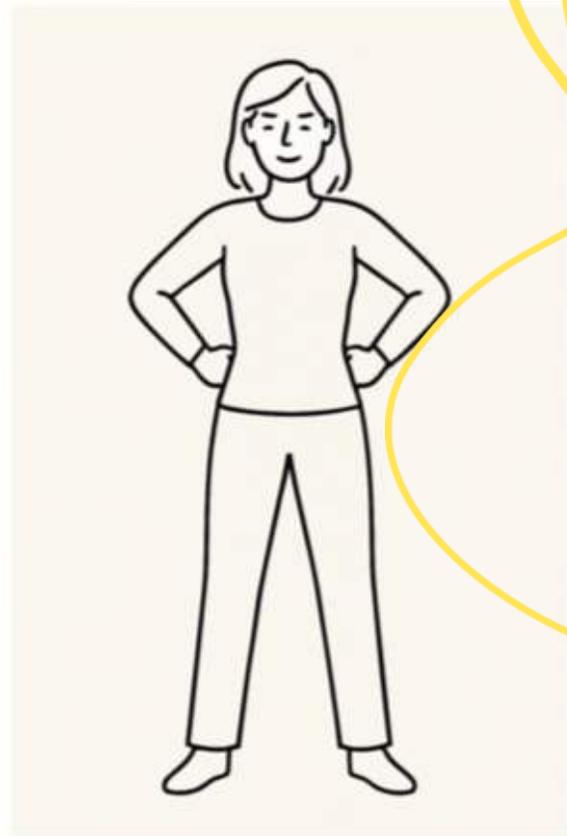


Confident body language is essential for a good presentation. If we feel fearful we will look fearful whereas if we feel confident we will look confident. The opposite is also true – if we change our body language from fearful looking to confident looking then we will change our emotions from fearful to confident. This is an important concept for speakers to understand.

Here are ten tips for maintaining confidence during your speech.

Prepare Before Your Speech

Amy Cuddy in her book “Presence” explains how adopting a “Wonder Woman” pose for three minutes before a speech increases your confidence. You can watch a Ted Talk by her on YouTube where she demonstrates these principals. So before your speech find an empty room or a Wash Room and stand like Wonder Woman for two minutes.





The Wonder Woman pose is a type of "power pose" — a confident body stance designed to boost feelings of self-assurance and presence, especially useful before public speaking or important events.

What It Looks Like:

The Wonder Woman pose involves standing tall and confidently, just like the iconic superhero:

- **Feet:** Shoulder-width apart
- **Hands:** Planted firmly on your hips
- **Back:** Straight
- **Shoulders:** Pulled back
- **Chin:** Slightly up
- **Gaze:** Forward and steady

Here's a simple mental image:
Imagine Wonder Woman standing proudly on a rooftop, cape fluttering in the wind — grounded, powerful, and fearless.



Why It Works:

According to research by Amy Cuddy and others in the field of psychology:

- Adopting a **powerful pose for just 2 minutes** can:
 - Increase feelings of **confidence**
 - Decrease **stress hormone** levels (cortisol)
 - Improve your **performance** in high-pressure situations

When to Use It:

- Right before a **speech** or **presentation**
- Before a **job interview**
- Any time you need a boost of **inner strength**

How to use it:

1. Stand Tall and Grounded

Maintain a straight, upright posture with your feet shoulder-width apart. This conveys confidence and authority. Avoid slouching or shifting your weight nervously.



2. Make Meaningful Eye Contact

Connect with your audience by looking at individuals for a few seconds at a time. Avoid staring at the floor, ceiling, or slides. Eye contact builds trust and engagement.

3. Use Natural Hand Gestures

Let your hands move naturally to emphasize key points, but avoid overdoing it. Open gestures (like showing your palms) signal honesty and openness.



4. Avoid Fidgeting

Keep unnecessary movements—like tapping, swaying, or fiddling with notes—to a minimum. These can distract from your message and suggest nervousness.

5. Move with Purpose

If you walk during your speech, do so intentionally—for example, when transitioning to a new point. Avoid pacing or wandering aimlessly.

6. Match Facial Expressions to Your Message

Let your face show enthusiasm, empathy, or concern as appropriate. A genuine smile can warm up your presence and make you more relatable.

7. Face Your Audience Fully

Square your shoulders toward the audience—not the screen nor your notes. This shows attentiveness and invites engagement.

BODY LANGUAGE TIPS FOR PUBLIC SPEAKING



1. STAND TALL AND GROUNDED

Maintain a straight, upright posture with your feet shoulder-width apart.



2. MAKE MEANINGFUL EYE CONTACT

Connect with your audience by looking at individuals for a few seconds at a time



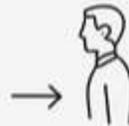
3. USE NATURAL AND GESTURES

Let your hands move naturally to emphasize key points



5. MOVE WITH PURPOSE

If you walk during your speech, do so intentionally



5. AVOID FIDGETING

Keep unnecessary movements to a minimum



7. FACE YOUR AUDIENCE FULLY

Square your shoulders toward the audience

6. MATCH FACIAL EXPRESSIONS TO YOUR MESSAGE

Let your face show enthusiasm, empathy, or concern as appropriate

Chap 9: Avoid Information Overload

“Information overload” is a fault of many presentations.

Researchers have found that there is a limit to people’s ability for processing information. They found that most people can only store up to 7 units of information in their short-term memory.

However, many PowerPoint presentations contain bulleted lists with more items, overloading the working memory of the audience.

The conscious mind can pay attention to three, maybe four, things at once. If you go much beyond that it can result in your audience losing track of things.

Fortunately, you can avoid this problem by changing your PowerPoint templates and checking your final presentations so they contain lists of 5 or less items.

How to prevent information overload

- Eliminate irrelevant information.
- Reduce the number of bullets on each slide.
- Reduce the text on slides and increase visuals.
- Limit to one point per slide.

Figuring out which point you want to make on each slide and reducing the information down will help your audience to absorb your message and allow them to focus on the most important points.

Tell a story.

Think of yourself as a storyteller rather than a presenter. Using stories can help to illustrate your point, making it more memorable and your talk more interesting.



7 tips for creating an engaging presentation Using Stories

Here are 7 practical and motivational tips on how to use storytelling effectively in a presentation, especially for professional audiences:



1. Start with a Hook

Open your presentation with a short, compelling story that draws your audience in — a personal anecdote, a surprising fact, or a customer success story.

Why it works: It grabs attention and sets an emotional tone right away.

2. Make It Relevant

Your story should clearly connect to your message. Think of it as a bridge — helping your audience move from “Why should I care?” to “Now I get it.”

Tip: Ask yourself: What’s the lesson here? Then align it with your main point.

3. Show, Don’t Just Tell



Use vivid details, sensory language, and real characters. Help your audience see the scene in their minds.

💡 Example: Instead of saying, “We had a tough quarter,” say, “Our sales team was working 12-hour days, chasing leads that kept slipping through our fingers.”

4. Use the Classic Structure

Every powerful story has a simple arc:
Beginning – Conflict – Resolution

- 
- Set the scene
 - Present a challenge or problem
 - End with a resolution or insight that ties into your message

5. Keep It Short and Focused

This isn't a novel — it's a presentation. Stick to 1–2 minutes max for most stories. Cut anything that doesn't move the story (or message) forward.

Ask yourself: Does this support my key point?

6. Add Emotion, But Stay Professional

Emotion drives memory and engagement — but balance it with professionalism. Share struggles, wins, lessons learned, or customer journeys that highlight real challenges and solutions.

Goal: Inspire trust, not pity.

7. End with a Message

Don't leave your audience wondering, “So what?”

Clearly state the takeaway from your story: the insight, moral, or strategic lesson that supports your point.

Example: “That moment taught us that simplicity wasn't just nice — it was essential.”

Chap 10: Deliver a clear Message



A common fault with speakers is that they don't have a clear message. Consequently the audience can come away feeling confused and not knowing what was the main point of the speech.

Here are 7 motivational and practical tips to help you deliver a clear, focused message in any professional presentation or speech:

1. Know Your Core Message

Before you create a single slide or draft a word, ask yourself:

“What's the one key idea I want them to remember?”

Tip: Write your main message in one sentence. If you can't, it's not clear enough yet.

2. Structure Your Content Logically

Use a clear structure like:

- Introduction (what you're going to say)
- Body (say it with examples)
- Conclusion (remind them what you just said)





Tip: Use signposts like “First,” “Next,” “Here’s why this matters,” and “To wrap up” to guide the audience.

3. Use Simple, Precise Language

Avoid jargon, buzzwords, or over-complicated terms. Speak like a human, not a textbook.

Tip: If a 12-year-old can’t understand it, simplify it.

4. Limit One Idea Per Slide or Section

Each slide or section should communicate one clear idea — not a laundry list.

Tip: Ask: “Is this helping drive my main message?” If not, cut it or move it.

5. Support with Examples or Stories

People remember examples more than abstract concepts. Reinforce your message with a brief story, case study, or analogy.

Tip: Stories give your message emotional weight and real-world clarity.



6. Use Visuals to Reinforce, Not Distract

Choose visuals that clarify your point — not just decorate your slide.

Tip: A clean chart or a powerful image can say more than a paragraph of text.

7. Repeat and Reinforce the Key Point

People retain what they hear more than once. Emphasize your core message at the start, middle, and end.

Tip: Use repetition with variation: “To sum up, this is why it matters...”

Conclusion



You have just learnt ten of the biggest obstacles that hold you back and how to overcome them. To keep you on track I have created some printable Worksheets in a bonus book, which will help you to put into practice the things that you have learnt in this book and help you to reach your goal of becoming a confident speaker.

If you would like to take your speaking to an even higher level then click on the link below for details of how our one-on-one coaching service can help you to become an even more confident speaker.

Paul Andreas
Certified Speaking Coach

Masterconfidentsspeaking.com/coaching

Become a...

Unlock the power of your voice with "Become a Confident Speaker ." This essential guide offers practical strategies to enhance your public speaking skills, from mastering breathing techniques to engaging with your audience more effectively. Step into any setting with confidence and transform your fear into a captivating presence that leaves a lasting impact.