Confident Public Speaking

It is important to appear confident and enthusiastic during oral presentations and public speaking events. This can help you and your audience to have a more enjoyable time.

What/How does a confident and enthusiastic speaker…

Do:

• Gives the audience 10 feet or more when giving a speech
• Builds credibility by:
  o Demonstrating expertise
  o Showing how trustworthy they are
  o Showing goodwill towards the audience
• Monitors the audience’s nonverbal gestures and adjusts accordingly
  o Nonverbal channels of the audience:
    ▪ Body angles – leaning forward is positive, leaning back is negative
    ▪ Face – maintain sufficient eye contact to show honesty and interest; always smile
    ▪ Arm – gives support to hand movements
    ▪ Hands – open hands gives the impression of open and honest; self-touching (i.e. hand on face) shows a cautious warning; closed hands portray a message of negative feedback

Remember each gesture is like a single word and a word has several meanings.


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Say:
- When speaking to persuade remember:
  - Logos – logic and reasoning
  - Pathos – emotional ideas, appeals to human being
  - Ethos – the speaker’s reputation and personality
- Establish a rapport with the audience in the beginning of the presentation
  - Be interested in them as people
  - Be good-natured
  - Use humor and common experiences to establish common ground
  - Be straightforward and direct
  - Fill yourself with admiration and respect for your audience
  - Have fun

Remember audiences prefer that you send pictures into their minds

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Why:
- Increases/maintains audience attention
- Enhances speaker’s appearance as knowledgeable
- Decreases speaker’s anxiety/tension

How:
- Before the speech, stretch and move (warm up activities)
- Wait until you feel ready before starting to speak
- Scan the crowd and look for smiling faces
- Smile
- Breathe deeply
- Add movement or gestures (make sure they are deliberate)
- **Remember:**
  - The best way to find a smile in a crowd is to smile yourself
  - If the speech isn’t too formal, try adding a joke or a story


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• If holding absolutely still is too hard, add some movement
• If you are not (or don’t seem) excited about your speech, you can’t expect anyone else to be
• If you get stuck or too nervous, just pause, take some breaths, and keep going
• You are not as bad as you think you are
• It will all be over soon