

Speech Project #1- Telling us about YOU.

The objectives of this project : To give a speech of between 4 to 6 minutes length to your Club members introducing yourself to other members. You will know you succeeded in this project if other Club members indicate that they found out something about you that is interesting, something that happened to you or something about how you think or feel?

Your evaluator will also be looking at the following items.

Did you speak at a pace that allowed the audience members to understand what you were saying?

Did you maintain some level of eye contact with the camera (You are not expected to memorize the speech , but if you have practiced it a few times , you should be able to look up a few times if you are using notes.)



We live in a world where much of our communication is by text and photo and video sharing. Much of our communication is in writing . We write tests exams, and essays. Many people are surprised when they are in the upper levels of university or in the workplace that much of their communication becomes face to face. People often have to verbally express their arguments and reasoning in front of a group , to their boss, or professor and many are not prepared for it.

There are two issues many people have when they start giving verbal presentations. The first is that they feel a lot of anxiety. The second is that they don't know what to talk about.

Who is anxious about anxiety – all of us!!



**Is this you when you think
about giving a speech??**

Let's examine the anxiety issue first. Yes, it is true that many people feel anxious when making a speech. It is probably truer to say that everyone feels some amount of anxiety, especially when they start out. It is safer to text or produce a scripted video where we have the chance to edit , than to stand up in front of other people and talk. We don't see the look on our teachers face when they are marking our essay in private. We

might not be amused if we did! But if we are giving a presentation in front of others , we will see their reactions. What if we make a mistake , won't people think we are less than perfect?

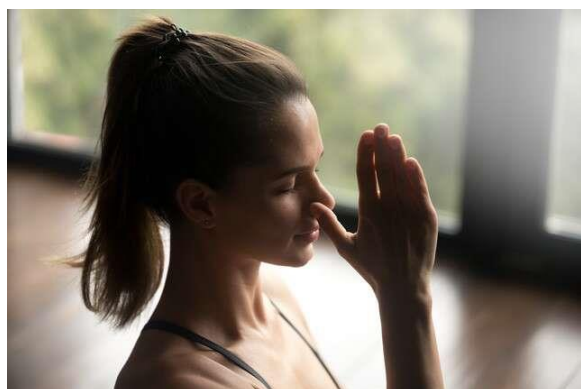
It is important that we feel some level of anxiety when we are delivering a speech. Even experienced speakers will say that some anxiety is better than none. It shows that you care about your messaging.

There are steps you can take to reduce anxiety, generally, and before giving a speech. Make sure you are well hydrated. When we are anxious our mouth can feel dry, and it can prevent us from speaking well. Watch the hydration though – you don't want to drink so much water that your eyes and legs are crossed when giving a speech.



Don't be too hydrated!!

Just before the speech deliberately breathe in and out 10 times holding your breath 5 seconds each time. Try plugging one nostril and breath in and out slowly. 5 times, Plug the other nostril do the same. Make sure your video feed is off! ha-ha ! Ground yourself in a sensory 5-4-3-2-1 exercise. Immerse yourself in your surroundings – Look at 5 things around you, touch 4 things listen to 3 things, smell 2 things, taste one thing.



Perhaps the main way to reduce anxiety is to be prepared. That means not writing the speech out the night before. That means practicing it with someone else before giving it. Keeping it simple at first will reduce tension. Cramming a speech full of figures, statistics and quotes is a sure-fire path to confusion. Of course, we can read all those figures, statistics, and quotes , but our eventual goal is to be able to give a speech without reference to notes, so try in your first speech to look at your notes as little as possible.

Anxiety is mainly a physical and psychological reaction to feeling unsafe. And this is why we are practicing speeches here with each other. This is a safe space. No one will get fired here for slipping up on a speech, no one here is going to get a poor mark, or not get into university. We give speeches here to practice giving them out in the real world, where we do get performance appraisals and grades, and raises.

Nearly always our anxiety is an aspect of **only** our inner world. Sometimes, people say when they are giving a speech or presentation that they were shaking. Audience members though consistently report though they saw no such thing. It is often the case that audience members will think that the presenter was calm and collected. It is only inside your head- the rest of the world doesn't even know it.

You will be asked to practice your speech with someone before you give it. When you are giving the speech, make sure that you look at that person several times on the screen . One of the things we can do when we are anxious is to talk too fast. This can be a psychological reaction to just wanting to get finished as quickly as possible. Arrange a signal with your speech partner to have that person let you know if you are speaking

too quickly. This has another benefit. Looking at the person, takes you outside of yourself a few times during the speech. It reminds you that there is a world outside of the anxiety you may be suffering inside. It also should remind you to breath. Finally, it reminds you that someone is cheering for you to do well.



There is a saying that perfection is the enemy of excellence. There have been very few perfect speeches given, if any. Remember you are striving for excellence, not perfection. And you are competing with yourself. Your stories, your presentation, your voice will be different from anyone else. They are yours alone.



What to talk about?

Many people wonder what they should talk about. In this speech project you are being asked to give a talk about yourself that will let others in the group learn something about you as a person. There are many ways of doing this. Some people give what is called a Resume Speech. They talk about where they were born, where they went to school, where they lived. This can be one approach, but it can sometimes be rather

routine and boring. There are other approaches that can be used that may tell others more about the type of person you really are. Consider the answers about yourself about the following questions:

- Who is the person in my life that had the biggest impact on me? What would I be like if they had not been in my life. How might I be different?
- What is it that I like doing in my spare time to relax, and what does that choice of activity say about me?
- Do I have a favorite subject in school? Do I have a subject that I really don't like. What does that say about me as a person. What does it say about what I should do in life to make money?
- Am I an extrovert, or an introvert. Am I the type of person who draws energy from other people, or do I need to be alone a lot to reenergize. Do I live a life that matches the type of person I am. For example, if I am an introvert, do I feel forced to take on a lot of "people: activities that I wish I didn't have to do.
- Do I like to do engage in team activities or ones where I am by myself. Would I rather play football or chess. Do I prefer physical exertion , or mental exertion. What does that say about me?

These are sample questions you might ask yourself. There are lots more that you can probably think of. The process of asking yourself questions like this is central to giving any speech, not just this first speech of introduction. There are other types of speeches that we will explore in later projects, such as giving a research speech. But even in those types of speeches it is always important to ask yourself questions such as . "What do I think about this? Going through the process of questioning yourself is the first step in preparing speeches.



Two more things- one being what should you not talk about. This is an important question. Remember this is your speech, but you are giving it to an audience. And the audience is more important than you. Stay away from topics that some of your audience members might find upsetting. That usually involves , sex, religion, and politics. That does not mean these items are totally off limits, but it is always best to check in with someone to get their

opinion about how your presentation might be received. More about this in a later lesson.

The last thing. You have 4 to 6 minutes. That might seem like a long time , but once you get rolling, it will pass really quickly. When you write out the speech think in terms of speaking about 125 words a minute. If you are aiming for 5 minutes, make your speech about 600 words. You will be timed. You will hear about it if you go way over time, so be conscious of this