

## **CONFRONTING YOUR FEARS OF SPEAKING IN PUBLIC**

The common theme I hear from nearly all my clients and in fact the main reason for them asking for my help is that they are terrified of making a fool of themselves when called on to speak.

My mantra is ***“everyone (including me) is nervous about speaking in public, but if you can get those butterflies to fly in formation, your adrenalin can become a positive force and you will overcome the terror of suiting up”.***

Yes, those nerves can be a positive force, but when we embrace a challenge, we often succeed and then we feel great, don't we?

Nelson Mandela who faced fear with courage much of his life essentially said ***“the brave one also feels afraid, but then conquers that fear”.***

So, I hear all the time... ***“I hate making speeches; I really do”.*** Therefore, the following advice may help you control those natural emotions.

1. First make sure you have prepared your address, and then 'story board it in your mind. Do a bit of homework about the venue, your audience, equipment and then get there early to engage with them.
2. Before you are called on, imagine you will be successful and be excited about your opportunity – yes, they *will love you*, believe me! Breathe deeply, meditate and do anything else to relax you.
3. Proceed slowly to your spot and don't start before looking around, focussing on happy faces each side and smiling. Then use that pause for effect and when you start, energise your speech and be excited.
4. A little bit of light, self-deprecating humour; dignified and with integrity will help your tension. Your eye contact, voice and the slow pace can all help.
5. Have a strong opening to create the mood with use a quotation, or a rhetorical question or an expanding idea “come with me on a journey ...!

Yes, you *can* conquer fear by doing the things they fear the most, providing you persist. Be determined to enjoy many positive experiences and while losing the nerves may seem a slow process, you will improve if you embrace the challenges.

It is likely that our workshops will help you become more confident as you are called on to speak. Everyone can cure the anxiety about speaking in public.