

Top 10 Tips For Managing Your Nerves when Presenting

1. Obtain information about the group in advance. Your key messages may be identical for different groups, but your examples, anecdotes and your final 'call to action' will vary for difference audience needs.
2. Put yourself in your listeners' shoes – what are their questions, concerns, fears, goals, approaches to learning? Think about what they *need* to know about your topic, not just what they might want to know. And always, always, always focus on *what's in it for them?* Your presentation must answer – for them – these 3 questions:

Why you?

Why this information?

Why now?

3. Know your material well. There is no substitute for plenty of preparation – but *without sounding overly rehearsed!*
4. Have well-prepared session notes that are useful to you. It is best if your notes are in 'point form' (rather than full sentences) – and preferably handwritten in colour. (Colour aids your retention of the information as you prepare your notes, and is more quickly processed by the brain when you do need to refer to them.)
5. Use checklists to ensure you have remembered all necessary materials. Do you need to take Business Cards, Handouts, your Laptop, a Remote Control for your slides, other Promotional Material for your company, Music, and/or Props of some sort?
6. Dress comfortably and appropriately to the group you are addressing. Rapport is about creating a sense of *sameness* between you and your audience – and first impressions count. Be slightly more formally dressed than you expect them to be.
7. Check venue and equipment **immediately prior** to your session. It is highly recommended you arrive some 45 minutes before your audience and are totally set up and ready to go prior to the first arrivals. This will help create the impression that you are a professional and are fully prepared.
8. Talk with individuals informally before you start. Then when you stand up in front of your group, you will see some familiar and friendly faces in your audience.
9. Use 2 to 4 second eye contact with everyone. Imagining you are talking with your group in your own lounge room can help you have easy and relaxed eye contact with everyone.
10. Develop your own style of presentation, rather than attempt to imitate. The key to engaging your audience is *being authentic*. The world is full of presenters who 'spin' information and come across as doing a 'hard sell'. Being the **real you** will add to your credibility and convey your trustworthiness.