

# 21 Ways To Be A More Engaging Speaker

by David Koutsoukis

1. Get relaxed. Don't rush.
2. Smile and enjoy the experience. Tell yourself you're going to enjoy this time with the audience.
3. Be yourself. Don't try to be someone else. Be the authentic you.
4. Have good intention. People will be forgiving of your performance if they know you care about them and your intentions are good.
5. Stand front and centre of the 'stage' in front of your audience. This is the most powerful position.
6. Make sure people can see you properly and ensure you have good lighting so people can see your face well. You actually sound louder if people can see your face clearly.
7. Make sure people can hear you properly. Use a good microphone and PA if you need to.
8. To demonstrate authority: stand directly facing your audience with toes pointing forward. Have arms either both by your side; or one arm by your side with the other across your body with elbow/s bent at right angles; or both arms at right angles across the front of your body. Keep your head still. Gesture with your palms down and fingers together. Use short sharp sentences.
9. To demonstrate that you are approachable: have an open stance. Let your arms sit naturally. Let your head bob if it needs to. Use open palm gestures. Use flowing sentences.
10. Speak low and slow. Keep the pitch of your voice as low and slow as this commands more respect from audiences than fast, high-pitched voices. Just think of television newsreaders.
11. Use Entrainment. Before you speak, pause for about 5 seconds and gain eye contact with a number of people.
12. Don't shout. Use a conversational tone.
13. Avoid too much jargon. People 'zone out' when they hear too much 'corporate speak'.
14. Questioning Technique. To get involvement and build context ask questions. E.g. Has anyone ever been annoyed by bad customer service?
15. Progressive Affirmation. Get the audience to nod their head and agree with you after making a point by saying things like; e.g. "Does that make sense?", "Would you agree with that?", "Are you with me on this?"
16. Use exciting words. 'Energising' words such as Sensational, Brilliant, Outstanding and Fantastic to capture people's attention. e.g. "Your efforts have been outstanding!"
17. Tell personal stories to make a point. People love a good story and these are often the most memorable part of a speech.
18. Metaphors. To make your message more engaging and memorable use metaphors – a word or phrase that compares something to something else. e.g. "John is the nicest bulldozer I have ever met."
19. Simile. Same as a Metaphor but uses 'like' or 'as' – "Ben's got a mind like a steel trap!"
20. Augment your speech with visuals. People remember pictures more than words.
21. Don't try and say too much. Remember the phrase "The less you say the more they'll hear."

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