



# 6 Simple Steps to Conquer Your Fear of Public Speaking

By The Public Speaking Academy

# Introduction

Speaking in front of groups of people is a top ten human fear and for most a very stressful experience. However thanks to breakthrough techniques based on years of professional speaking fear of public speaking when practiced in the right environment can be overcome and even enjoyed!

We have designed this book specifically for those with anxiety and fear to learn as our course delegates do:

- adopt the most powerful ways to use fear to build momentum
- think on your feet
- find confidence and convey your ideas with confidence, clarity and charisma regardless of the size of the group, and in just about any setting.

This really is one of the most powerful books you will read and we urge you not to just read the information but to take action to reap the rewards.

# Conquer Those Nerves and Build Your Self Confidence

Are you the type who cringes at the thought of walking on stage? The type that is overcome by sweaty palms, a racing heartbeat and shaky legs the moment you take your first step on that platform. If you are, don't think of yourself any less. Fear of public speaking is highly common and almost everyone has experienced or felt it at one point in their lives. In fact, statistics show that public speaking fear affects an estimated 95% of all speakers. Recent studies in the United States of America have shown that fear of public speaking actually ranks higher than fear of death! Don't you find it bizarre that the general public fear facing crowds more than the prospect of Heaven or Hell?

That being said - let's dissect this common feeling in order to understand it better. Let's start with 'what is fear?' Fear is defined as the anticipation of pain. Yes, you heard that right. Fear is not pain, but the mere anticipation of it. There are 5 causal elements of stage fright:

1. The perception or imagination of the presence of people who will judge

2. The possibility of failure
3. The inherent need to do well in order to avoid failure
4. The feeling of uncertainty of whether one can do well
5. An excessive focus on one's own behavior and appearance

The reason why we experience uncomfortable symptoms like light-headedness, sweaty palms, and increased heart rate is because this fear is actually a psychological condition that is manifested physically via these symptoms! So in order to prevent these symptoms, we have to conquer fear. How do we do this? By attacking every one of the 5 causal symptoms. In this session I'll reveal 6 very simple steps to help you overcome your fear of speaking to audiences on stage.

## Step 1: Be audience-centered

In order to conquer fear, you have to remember that your presentation is not about yourself. Instead, it's really about your audience. Focus on the needs of your audience, rather than on how you will perform and your fears will automatically disappear. The truth is, no one really cares about your voice, or how you look. Your audience is most interested in what you have to offer them. Concentrate on how you can provide optimum benefit to the people listening to you. If you're selling a product, concentrate your efforts on selling the benefits of your product to your audience. If you're sharing a learning, focus on how they can benefit or take action with what you have to share. Whether or not you are telling a story to build rapport, or delivering a sales pitch, a focus on your audience's needs can help take your mind off your fear.

## Step 2: Accept that you make mistakes

No one is born a perfect speaker. Good public speakers aren't born, they're made. Do you think Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered that amazing speech on his first try? That man was a Reverend who had delivered countless speeches and sermons prior to "I Have A Dream". Even he made mistakes. So if you screw up, does it really matter? What's most important is that you learn from your mistakes. If you notice a mistake during your speech, no one in the audience is going to disapprove if you backtrack to amend that mistake. In fact, it's more credible that you do. In order to improve and be better, you have to take risks. Think of your presentation as an opportunity to benefit and convey amazing information to your audience. And remember this, Thomas Edison failed thousands of times before he invented the light bulb. And did it deter him? No. His inventions are spread across the world today and are constantly innovated upon. Do you want to be a Thomas Edison, or the person who's too afraid to leave his house for fear he falls?

## Step 3: Ditch all that negative self-talk

If you remember the causal elements of stage fright I just mentioned, you'll notice that all of those elements have a recurring theme - negative self-talk. Just like how the seeds of a tree determine its fruits or end product, what happens on the inside has a significant impact on our outside. This means that our actions and fears are actually influenced by our subconscious minds. Negative self-talk not only drains your energy, it demotivates you. In order to overcome this, you need to start replacing all that negative self-talk with positive ones. Stand in front of the mirror daily, straight-backed and with a smile on your face. Replace your "I can't do this", "People will judge me" and "I'm going to suck" thoughts with phrases like "I feel energetic!", "I'm prepared and focused!", "I am delivering value to my audience!" and "The audience is my friend, not foe." Eventually, the attitude and actions will follow. Like the famous saying goes, you've got to fake it till you make it.

## Step 4: Convert your fear into positive energy

Did you know that aside from your thoughts, you can also convert your physical behavior? You can help convert stage fright symptoms with the power of visualization and belief. For example, did you know that sweaty palms and a racing pulse are also symptoms of an adrenaline rush? So instead of attributing negative thoughts to your racing pulse and sweaty palms, why don't you decipher these physical reactions as an adrenaline rush? As excitement and optimism for your presentation? This not only decreases your fear, it also immediately turns on the alertness and energy switch in your body. Your physical reactions are what you make them to be.

Aside from that, if you find yourself blanking out midway through your presentation, don't panic. You can choose one of two routes. You can either be honest, tell your audience you forgot and need to refer to your notes and laugh it off with a joke on aging, or you

can side track a little and tell your audience a story of a funny thing that happened to you recently. Both routes give you a minute to realign your thoughts, give the audience a minute to laugh and humanize you to your audience.

If dry throat is your stage fright symptom, tell the organizers beforehand to prepare a glass of warm water or tea (cold drinks constrict your throat and cause more discomfort than comfort) and take an occasional sip in between your points. This not only gives your audience a minute to take notes, you are also offered a moment to recoup your thoughts and ready yourself for your next section. Remember to only take a sip though, and not gulp the entire glass down.

## Step 5: Present daily

I'm not just talking about practice (I'll get into that later), I'm talking about incorporating it into your daily life. To tell you the truth, speaking to an audience is no different from your day-to-day interaction with the people around you. In a conversation, you're either trying to convey a message or sell an idea - both require the same basic skills and elements in a public presentation. Once you grasp and understand this concept, this can help you feel much more confident and powerful on stage. When you're talking to your friends, try to visualize yourself on a stage and imagine that they are your audience - how they react to you in that scenario is really how they will react to you on stage, with the exception that your friends can actually interrupt you. One way of gaining confidence and overcoming fear, is to incorporate elements of your public speaking skills into your daily conversations with your boss, colleagues, friends and family. Take careful notice of how they respond and you can easily tweak your conversation style to produce your desired reactions.

## Step 6: Practice Makes Near Perfect

I'm repeating this point from our last session because it is that important. This may seem simple enough, but the truth is the more you know your material, the more confident you'll be as the fear of forgetting will disappear almost entirely. Like I mentioned previously, practice your speech on 2 people, then 4, 8 and so on. Carefully assess your feelings whether it's confidence or anxiety throughout the presentation and record your practice groups' feedback. Again, remember that it doesn't have to be perfect and instead will get better as you go along and practice more. With time and sufficient practice, your presentation skills will drastically improve to the extent where you no longer have to worry about embarrassing yourself or screwing up.

And remember, practice means doing it – not writing it. Write down the basics, the structure and key points of your speech and then build it through practice. It never has to be exactly as planned, every speech will - and should - be different. Mistakes and all!

Here's a quick summary the 6 steps to help overcome stage fright:

1. Be audience-centered
2. Accept that you can make mistakes
3. Ditch your negative self-talk
4. Convert your fear into positive energy
5. Present daily
6. Practice makes near perfect

Now that you've got the basics of presentation preparation and the steps to eliminate stage fright down to a T... let's get you speaking!

# Next Steps?

This guide provides all the information you need to get over that fear. And information is great, but without actions – particularly in Public Speaking – very little can be achieved. It’s time to face that fear, put this in to practice and become a speaker!

The Public Speaking Academy provide workshops, which can be accessed directly via [our open courses](#), where you can practice in a safe environment with experienced trainers.

If you’d like to test the water – and not sure if you’ll be able to step up to the podium just yet – our ‘Fear of Public Speaking’ Masterclass is the perfect introduction, where you’re not expected to speak (but do get the opportunity). You’ll make great steps towards becoming a presenter and learning some of our best kept speaking secrets.

We also provide an exclusive membership club which will give you unlimited access to access our workshops. To learn more about this, you’ll have to pop along to one of our [workshops or Masterclasses](#) (or [contact us](#) to find out more).



Not sure what's right for you? [Get in touch](#), we can discuss your requirements and put a plan together that works best for you.

*“Everything’s impossible, until it is done” – Nelson Mandela*



# About The Public Speaking Academy



The Public Speaking Academy is a passionate organisation dedicated to all spoken word, presentation and communication skills - enabling people from all walks of life to become confident and exciting speakers. We are committed to helping all our clients become the very best.

We offer courses and workshops to help anyone overcome the Fear of Public Speaking – and many of our students have conquered that fear and gone on to do amazing things ([see our testimonials](#)). We also deliver more advanced training, 1 to 1 coaching and consultancy. If you wish to know more, please contact us anytime by phone (**0782 333 8347**) or email [info@publicspeakingacademy.co.uk](mailto:info@publicspeakingacademy.co.uk)

You can also find us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) (@speakingac) and you are welcome to connect with us on [LinkedIn](#) (search for Anthony Mercer, Billal Jamil and Lee Furness).

We'd really appreciate it if you can let your Facebook and Twitter followers know about us - a quick tweet or post would be



fantastic! And your genuine feedback on our Facebook feed would be very welcome.