

# Improving Your Public Speaking Skills

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*Do not share without prior permission from the presenter.*

## Why become a speaker?

- Become famous/familiar and found by:
  - Prospective clients
  - Colleagues who might refer you
- Profit — ask to be paid or have event, hotel, travel covered
  - Ask to share in payments for recordings
- Share knowledge — “rising tide lifts all boats”

## Process/Writing Better Speeches

- Define topic
  - Jazzy titles
- “Tell ’em what you’ll say, say it, tell ’em what you said” — Intro, Content, Conclusion
  - Don’t need to open with a joke
  - Include stories/personal experience if relevant
- Include call for action if appropriate; can be resource list
- Draft/Outline/Organize
- **Rehearse**
  - Don’t use word-for-word script *or* learn to look up and at audience while speaking
  - Timing — include Q&A
  - Eye contact — look at someone in audience or computer camera
    - Don’t have to imagine audience naked — yuck!
  - **Breathe!** Smile!
  - Ask someone to listen; record and play back if no one available
  - Listen for “verbal tics” — ums, ahs, likes, you knows; repeated words, stumbles
- Promote — don’t rely on host organization
- Handouts
  - PPT, PDF, Word, etc. — PPTs can be corrected onsite/during session
    - Keep slides brief; bullet points, large lettering, white space
    - Don’t stare at screen
- **Proofread!**
  - Share or not
  - Provide before vs. after presentation — speaker’s choice
- **Presenting**
  - **Breathe!** Smile!
    - Decide whether to allow interruptions or questions at end
    - Tell host/moderator how to pronounce name!
- Zoom:

Lighting in front, not behind you  
Find and look at monitor camera, not participants  
Clean, uncluttered background/Tailored background  
Muting  
Control invasions by pets, family

In person:

No new shoes, outfits, haircuts  
Prepare for long-winded questions and how to manage  
Check equipment!  
Mike  
Slides/Projector  
Giveaways  
Signings/Profit options — sell your book(s) and other items

- Follow up

Post to your website and social media channels  
Contact anyone who asked questions not answered  
Thank hosts and let them know if you'd like to speak again

## Resources

- Toastmasters
- Blog post: <https://americaneditor.wordpress.com/2016/08/10/on-the-basics-so-you-want-to-be-a-speaker-or-presenter/>
- National Speakers Bureau and speaker bureaus of professional organizations
- Ummo — prepare a speech, tap the microphone icon, wait for the countdown, then talk; it listens, logs words, number of pauses and use of filler words
- Public Speaking by Virtual Speech — delivers an immersive 3-D video that moves as you look around