

News & Announcements

Welcome Back!

Here are a few study tips to get you started right this school year:

- ▶ Set goals
- ▶ Attend all classes
- ▶ Ask questions in class
- ▶ Organize & stay organized
- ▶ Do your homework every night
- ▶ Set aside time to review past notes
- ▶ Look ahead to upcoming topics
- ▶ Make up quizzes for yourself
- ▶ Schedule in extra study time
- ▶ Build confidence in your ability to do well
- ▶ Ask for help when you need it

STR in the Community

Smart Tutor Referrals offers talks and workshops for peer tutors, learning assistance teachers, teachers and students.

If you are interested in hosting a talk by Smart Tutor Referrals, please contact us for more information.

30 - 45 minute talks for peer tutors are offered free of charge as a community service.

Happy Birthday to Us!

Smart Tutor Referrals is celebrating 6 years of supporting families in education. We began in 2002 and since then have helped many hundreds of students in Victoria. Hooray! Students and families benefit from our dedication to honesty, respect, positive vision, building learning confidence, individual ability and contribution.

Thank you for continuing to support this local, values-based business.

Making Effective Presentations

"And the day came when the risk to remain tight in a bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom."

Anais Nin, Cuban-French Author (1903- 1977)

Have you ever had one of those dreams where you're standing naked in front of an audience that you are expected to speak to? Most of us have had some variation of this dream (at least once in our lives). Perhaps it's a way for our dream mind to express (and work through) that feeling of exposure often felt by new and inexperienced presenters. As with anything, learning more and practicing are probably the best ways for new presenters to improve their speaking skills and to lessen any feelings of stress or anxiety that may be linked to public speaking.

Below are tips and perspectives on public speaking that can help anyone become a better speaker regardless of experience level.

Know Your Topic

- ▶ Narrow your topic to a main thesis and a few key points before beginning.
- ▶ You ought to be able to express your entire main point in 2 sentences – what are you really trying to say? If you can say it succinctly, in 2 sentences or less, then you'll be better able to lead people to understand the focus of your entire presentation.

Know Your Audience

- ▶ What will benefit them most?
- ▶ What would appeal?
- ▶ What are they expecting?
- ▶ Find a balance between what you want to say and what they need to hear. Can you fit the parameters in a creative way through stories, questions, visuals, examples or props? What is going to engage your audience the most?

Know Your Intention/Goal

- ▶ Why are you speaking? If it's only because you have to because your teacher said so, then consider why it matters to you to do what your teacher asks. Usually this comes down to a desire to help others understand a topic more clearly ; to express oneself well; and /or to show one's responsibility and respect (to teacher, to a boss, at a funeral, at a wedding, etc.).

Do Your Research

- ▶ Don't just depend on being able to come up with ideas off the top of your head or at the last minute. The best presenters seem to speak

effortlessly because they've put in so many hours of research and preparation beforehand. To make it sound simple, you've got to do the difficult work of tracking the information down and synthesizing it in a way that you think your audience will relate to.

- ▶ Don't include information you're uncertain about (someone else listening may know more and ask a detailed question). When you're researching, take notes to help you organize your talk later.

Organize

- ▶ Create an outline with a clear movement from beginning to main points to ending. Include only your strongest points so you're not trying to support yourself with weak points in your presentation.
- ▶ Consider the best way to organize your talk. Some topics are best broken down chronologically or in steps, some are best broken down in other ways (for example, What is the topic? Why is it important? How is it used?).
- ▶ Flashcards are great for presentations – they're small enough to hold in your hand without covering your face and they're big enough to hold key points without you needing to squint to find the information if you write clearly enough.
- ▶ Number pages or flashcards – there's nothing worse than stepping up to find your talk out of order.
- ▶ Include only clear key points on your notes. Don't try to read directly from your notes – it's usually quite boring to listen to a presenter read.
- ▶ Have your beginning and ending laid out clearly – you want to be able to open and end with confidence.

Practise Speaking

- ▶ In a mirror – use your lips, mouth and voice to express each word clearly (there are even such things as lip and tongue exercises).
- ▶ Tape record yourself – listen to your intonation and how clearly you communicate – are you interesting to listen to? Do you express each sound/word clearly?
- ▶ Use a digital camera to record a video of a practice talk – watch your body language.
- ▶ Ask a test audience to observe a practice talk – stuffed animals or family members/friends are good because they're almost always completely encouraging.

About Us

Our Mission Is:

- ▶ To provide top quality, flexible learning support and service to students and parents through:

In-home private tutoring matched specifically to each student's needs.

Stimulating workshops building skills in a practical and creative way.

- ▶ To enhance students' skills and increase learning confidence through one-on-one support that is truly individualized, recognizing each student's unique abilities.
- ▶ To improve the quality of life, in individuals and communities through education.

Our tutors are certified teachers and professionals. They are carefully screened and chosen specially to match the needs and learning styles of each student.

We support families in education.

For more information and resources, visit us on-line at:

www.SmartTutorReferrals.com

Contact Us

Managing Director Registration

Dahlia Miller
250-544-1588
dahlia@SmartTutorReferrals.com

Mailing Address:

2011 Courser Drive
Sidney, BC
V8L 2N5

www.SmartTutorReferrals.com

Introductions

- ▶ Near the beginning of your talk, thank the audience and the person who gave you the opportunity to speak (let people know if you'll take questions during or after the talk).
- ▶ If you're nervous, it's okay to say so, but only say it once at the beginning of the talk and then get on with doing your best.
- ▶ Be imaginative in your introduction – tell a story, ask an engaging/provocative question, make a strong statement, do a quick survey asking people to raise their hands if they've experienced something to do with your topic – draw them into wanting to listen.

Speak Clearly

- ▶ Breathe deeply, pushing your belly out as you breathe in (to enable you to draw air into your lungs fully).
- ▶ Relax your cheeks, lips, tongue, throat, chest and shoulders.
- ▶ Use your diaphragm, not your throat, to speak so you speak loudly enough. Don't make your audience have to strain to hear you.

Express Your Confidence

- ▶ Keep both feet on the ground when standing.
- ▶ Don't shift positions too often (this draws attention).
- ▶ Face the audience – if you're using visuals, angle toward the visual but still face the audience.
- ▶ If you're using visuals, use your inside hand to emphasize something (if you use your outside hand to point to the visual, you'll be facing your back more toward your audience and you may lose their attention or a feeling of connection with them).
- ▶ Smile, often.
- ▶ Nod your head at points if you'd like the audience to agree with you.
- ▶ For more information on understanding and "speaking" body language, see the body language article February 2008.

To Emphasize

- ▶ Use your hands – try to use your whole hand when pointing rather than one finger.
- ▶ Use slow movements that are not too exaggerated unless you are going for a more comic effect.
- ▶ Change positions to emphasize a new point (re-angle your body toward the audience) – this helps to keep people's attention.
- ▶ Stand in front of your podium with both hands on it, or to either side of your visual, prop or podium.
- ▶ Look down toward your chest momentarily with your mouth closed lightly – this will draw people's attention back toward you, before starting a serious point.

Speak, Don't Read

Be Respectful Toward Your Audience

- ▶ Some people suggest imagining audiences naked (again back to exposure) – another way to work with your audience is to consider what they really want to get from your talk.
- ▶ Does your audience want information, tips, inspiration, or entertainment? Focusing on their needs can help you to forget your own nervousness.

Expect Nerves

- ▶ Even experienced orators feel butterflies before speaking – that's part of the experience.

Stay Present/Enjoy Yourself (as best you can)

- ▶ If you're so caught up in your own head and focused on how you feel, you won't be paying attention to what you're saying...you may be boring.
- ▶ Do your best to just be your natural self – that's usually the most interesting.

Make Eye Contact

- ▶ Don't stare them down, but don't ignore them either.
- ▶ If someone appears bored or tired (there are a few in every crowd) don't look at them, talk to the interested ones.

Ask for Feedback

- ▶ Ask for pointers after practice talks.
- ▶ Asking for feedback on your effectiveness after every talk you'll have a better chance of improving. This can help you to find out how others see your speaking style.

Lighten Up

- ▶ Don't take it too seriously or personally. Yes, there is an intimacy to expressing oneself but it's just another experience – it's not going to be the sole determiner of your worth/grade.

Handling Questions

- ▶ Point (using your full hand) and nod toward one person to let the audience know who you've selected to ask a question if several people put up their hands.
 - ▶ Focus on the person asking and really listen (take notes if the question is long so you can be sure to address all of the points).
 - ▶ Repeat your understanding of the question if it's not just a simple one.
 - ▶ Answer as directly as possible – perhaps with a simple sentence or two, by re-elaborating a point from your talk, or by telling a story.
- Ask if your answer answered their question. If you're not sure of the answer, open it to the audience, an expert (like your teacher), or let them know you can talk afterward and find the answer for them.

"The greatest antidote to worry, whether you're getting ready for spaceflight or facing a problem of daily life, is preparation....the more you try to envision what might happen and what your best response and options are, the more you are able to allay your fears about the future."

John Glenn, American space pioneer