5 Ways to Improve Your Presentation Skills

Imagine the following scenarios:

You are walking towards the podium or stage as your name is being called. You are next in line to make a presentation.

Imagine yourself preparing your sales materials, staring into an empty meeting room and expecting to pitch your products to some very important customers.

Imagine yourself in a room full of interviewers waiting for you to convince them that you are the best person for the job on offer.

Do any of these scenarios sound familiar? And do they produce that gut-wrenching anxiety?

Making group presentations, or public speaking, have often been ranked as the Number One fear of many people. Try out the following quick tips to make that next presentation a better and more effective one.

How To Improve My Presentation Skills Tip 1:

Reframe The Meaning Of Making Presentations

Reframing is essentially a technique that allows us to adopt different ways or perspectives of looking at the same thing or situation. When someone says that he sees a glass that is half full and another claims that the same glass is half empty, are they really looking at the same glass? Often stress happens and doubts creep in when we let ourselves be seduced by an easily-framed meaning of a situation when we should also be looking at the same situation with another frame as well. Speaking in front of a group is scary for some because they give a negative meaning to this really simple act. If you could ask yourself how making a presentation can reap potential benefits for you or even be enjoyable, wouldn’t it give you a more positive meaning to the act of public speaking? This is a good start.

How To Improve My Presentation Skills Tip 2:

Tell A Story

Dr. Howard Gardner, a professor at Harvard University and the author of Leading Minds, once remarked, “Stories constitute the single most powerful weapon in a leader’s arsenal.” In fact, stories could be potent weapons for a presentation as well. Stories, if crafted well, can keep your audience highly attentive and engaged to your very words. By impacting the heart more than the head would help you create “emotional memory” with your audiences. Often, people may not remember what a speaker has told them but they would remember how a speaker made them feel.
How To Improve My Presentation Skills Tip 3:  

**Make A Sale**

If you are selling a product, a key method of engaging your audience is to focus on the benefits instead of the features. People would much rather hear WHAT a product can do for them than HOW it does it. Narrow down your product’s features until you get to the core of how it solves a problem. No sale can be made when a salesperson only concentrates his pitch on his product features. Even Steve Jobs introduced the first iPod during the Apple Music Event in 2001 by extolling its foremost benefit of being able to store up to one thousand songs. Audiences’ reactions would be vastly different if he were to simply describe the iPod as the latest MP3 player that has a one gigabyte memory capacity.

How To Improve My Presentation Skills Tip 4:

**Effective Gesturing**

Where in the world do I put my hands? This has got to be one of the most frequently asked questions by anyone yearning to be an effective presenter. There isn’t a fixed position to where your hands should be when speaking. This may not be the answer you expect but this is the artful power of gesturing. Ironically, the very minute you become conscious of your hands, the more preoccupied you will become about their positions. The trick to this where—do—I—put—my—hands problem is to completely immerse yourself in your speech. Throw yourself with abandon into your talk, lose yourself in it and allow your passion and emotions to take control. In this way, no one will have to be conscious about the position of the hands because your hands will become the very tool for a brilliant, convincing presentation.

How To Improve My Presentation Skills Tip 5:

**Speaking Precisely**

You must know what a word means before you use it. Nothing sounds worse than someone using big words out of context. There is nothing wrong with using big words as long as you are using them correctly. Do not use a big word just because you know it or your ego encourages you to do so. Sometimes, even with the intention of convincing our audiences, we end up confusing them instead. Only use a bigger word if it is the only word available to express exactly what you mean. By concatenating our recondite suppositions with superfluous verbal expressions would only result in utter befuddlement.

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