

HOW TO SPEAK WITH CONFIDENCE



WHY WOULD YOU WANT TO LEARN TO SPEAK WITH CONFIDENCE?

You've most likely faced many moments when you've needed to speak confidently. It could have been for a presentation, speech, job interview, asking a question in class, or chatting with friends. Speaking confidently inspires people to listen to you. You'll feel heard and respected – and good about yourself!

WHAT?

Tips to practise and remember, so you can speak with clarity and energy, engaging your listeners and communicating effectively.

IT'S OKAY TO...

- > not know what you want to do
- > get knocked into the pit
- > move faster or go slower
- > fail (as long as you tried)

WHAT YOU NEED

- > Your voice!

WHAT TO DO

- 01 Look the part.** To speak with confidence, you need to present yourself confidently. Dress for the occasion and adopt an assured posture: keep your back straight and push your shoulders back. Look people in the eye and don't fidget or move away while you're speaking with someone.
- 02 Pay attention to your belly.** Professional voice coaches recommend that you pay attention to your ribcage, standing tall, shoulders down, drawing your breath just a bit into your upper belly. What this does is allow your voice to reverberate in your ribcage which makes it sound richer. Here are some more tips:
 - > BetterHumans – How to dramatically improve your speaking voice:
<https://betterhumans.pub/how-to-dramatically-improve-your-speaking-voice-according-to-a-top-vocal-coach-4ae67cdb160d>
- 03 Voice is vital.** The volume of your voice has a huge impact on how confidently you speak. This doesn't mean you need to shout. Speaking with certainty means your volume is just right: you're not whispering, but instead can be heard clearly. Your tone should be decisive and approachable. Try not to hesitate or speak with a questioning tone (that goes up at the end).
Voice coaches suggest this exercise: place one hand on your upper chest so that it's half on your collar bone, then practise making this hand vibrate when you speak. Obviously you don't do this when actually impressing the socks off your new boss / girlfriend / supervisor. But knowing what it feels like by practising it first really helps.

WHAT TO DO CONT:

04

Slow down. If you're nervous, you may speak quickly or mumble. It's important to slow down your speech, so your listeners have time to absorb your words. Take a deep breath and remember to pause sometimes. You can even count to three before speaking. Slowing down also gives you time to consider the words you'd like to use, so you'll feel measured and in control. One more tip: don't speak over anyone – it will ruin the fabulous impression you are making.

05

Ditch the 'um.' It's such a part of everyday conversation, it's easy to forget how 'um' can make you feel unsure or sound like you don't really know what you're talking about. Practise talking for one minute without saying 'um' or 'ah'. Record how many times you say it and consciously make an effort not to, when you try again. The more you practise leaving it out, the more confident you'll sound.

06

Believe it! The most important element of speaking confidently is to believe what you're saying. If you don't believe it, your listeners won't. Respect yourself: your words and thoughts matter. You deserve to be heard. This self-belief will help you speak with certainty.



GOT IT?

> You speak with confidence and clarity, and you're happy with how effectively you communicate as a result.



TRY THIS

If you feel like you've nailed it but you want to level up, try this:

- > Practise what you're going to say out loud, either to yourself or to someone else.
- > Explore the link to tips from a voice coach – some coaches even offer online workshops.
- > Join a debating team to help you practise speaking confidently.

SO WHAT?

- > Your confidence will increase in many areas of your life, and you'll learn how to express yourself and speak with self-respect.
- > Your communication skills will improve your social and professional conversations.
- > Identifying how to improve your speech helps your self-management.

WHAT ACTION WILL YOU TAKE?

- Stand in front of a mirror and practise good posture.
- Try the exercises mentioned above to make your voice sound richer.
- Practise speaking at a reasonable volume, with an assured tone.
- In your next conversation, try to slow down your speech.



IF YOU LIKED THIS ONE YOU MIGHT WANT TO TRY...

- > How to Give a Formal Speech
- > How to Talk to Someone You Don't Know
- > How to Arrange a Job Interview
- > How to Cold Call Someone
- > How to Craft a Persuasive Argument