



Fear of Public Speaking? 11 Nuggets to Neutralize that Fear *Now!*

Glossophobia is the Fear of Public Speaking. The word comes from the Greek *glōssa*, meaning tongue, and *phobos*, fear or dread.

The Bad News

This fear can negatively affect your personal and professional life. Passing on opportunities to make presentations puts you behind others who accept that challenge.

We perceive *really* great speakers to be *Experts*. Perception is reality, and we prefer to work with *Experts*. You *do* want to be perceived as an *Expert!*

Missed *speaking* opportunities are missed *business* opportunities.

People who regularly *take* and *make* speaking opportunities grow the perception they are *Experts* and grow their businesses.

The Good News

There are *proven* ways to lessen the Fear of Public Speaking. Read on!

11 Nuggets To Neutralize that Fear *Now!*

- 1. There is comfort in knowing “You are *not* alone!”**
 - Up to 75% of the population suffers from this malady. Survey after survey consistently lists the “Fear of Public Speaking” as the number one fear most people have.
 - Know the audience wants you to be successful. They came to learn something and are pulling for you. They are very happy it is *you* at the lectern and *not them*.
- 2. *Never, Never, Never* tell the audience you are nervous and/or unprepared.**
 - It could become a self-fulfilling prophecy.
 - You may be “shaking on the inside,” but it’s not always noticed by the audience.
 - In Toastmasters, they talk about the fact that we really do not want to get rid of the butterflies, but want to train them to *fly in formation*.
- 3. Arrive early to *Meet & Greet!***
 - *This is huge!* It is much easier to talk to people you’ve already met.
 - *Insist* on Name Tags. They *close the gap*, *pull you in*, and quicken the *Meet & Greet* exercise.

4. Know your Stuff!

- *Really* know what you're talking about. It should be a subject you are very familiar with and have continually kept up abreast of.
- There is a *Confidence in your Competence* that will lessen your fears. Your entire demeanor will be noticed by the audience, and their reception to your message will help calm you.

5. Have a prepared, structured Roadmap to follow.

- Have *all* the steps of your presentation in place. Having a specific plan and following it will reduce anxiety.
 - Introduction
 - The Introduction answers three questions:
 - *Why* this subject?
 - *Why* this speaker?
 - *Why* now?
 - *You* write this and review it, and its' importance, with the Master of Ceremonies.
 - Opening
 - Grab the audience's attention
 - Tell them what you're going to tell them. Orally, give them your roadmap. This way they'll know what to expect and when it will happen.
 - Body
 - Have three to five topics that support your main theme.
 - Make each point, and tell a story to support it. *Personal* stories are best.
 - Questions and Answer (If appropriate.)
 - Usually, the best position in your presentation to do this is before the Closing.
 - In your Opening, tell them when and how you'll be handling questions.
 - Closing
 - Tell them what you told them.
 - Have a strong closing.
- Throughout your presentation, take the audience's temperature by looking at there body language, facial expressions, and occasionally asking. "Does this make sense? Am I explaining this in a manner that you understand? If not, shame on me. Let me know, please, so I can state it in a different manner."
 - Receiving positive responses that your audience is **Getting It!** has a calming effect.

6. Practice - Practice - Practice

- Practice aloud, in front of a mirror, into a digital voice recorder, with a video camera, in front of friends and family, etc.
 - We've heard the expression, "Practice makes perfect." It doesn't.
 - "*Perfect* practice makes perfect." That doesn't exist.
 - The truth is, and I don't recall where I heard it, is, "The road to perfection never ends!" *Keep practicing!*

7. Have notes or a Mind Map at hand.

- There is nothing wrong with referring to notes!
 - Your knowledge is in your head. You know your stuff. Use those notes to *refresh* those facts for you.

- Check out Mind Mapping. It is a nonlinear, visual, brainstorming tool that uses pictures, symbols, and colors. For many, it is much easier to look at a graphic to recall a part of a presentation rather than read text.

8. Deep breathing exercises

- When we're stressed, we sometimes sigh. Sighing makes us feel better. It's a snippet of how deep breathing exercises work.
- One technique to use before speaking is to breathe in and count to seven, then breathe out and count slowly to eleven while making the "Ah" sound. Extending the breath out calms you down.

9. Meditation

- Practice in your "Mind's Eye".
 - "See" yourself confident and the audience responding favorably.
 - There was an American soldier who, while a POW in Vietnam "played" golf every day. When he returned to the states, his first round on a real course was his best ever!

10. Medication

- Beta blockers are doctor prescribed medications that lower anxiety. Consult your physician to see if these would be a fit for you. Some people find them very helpful at first, and eventually don't need them.

11. Speak!

- This is absolutely the most important nugget on the list.
 - ***Speak! - Speak! - Speak!***
 - If you want to be a great baker - *Bake!*
 - If you want to be a great swimmer - *Swim!*
 - If you want to be a great speaker - *Speak!*
 - Studying the craft will help, but the "learning is in the doing!"
 - *What is the worse that could happen?*
 - The baker's cake will fall.
 - The swimmer will lose a meet.
 - The speaker may make a fool of him/herself. ***So What!***
 - Be like the child learning to walk. When they fall down - they get up! They'll surf around the coffee table, steadying themselves at every step - and *fall*, again. Then, as we should do when we "fall," they pull themselves up and try it, again! They'll keep doing this until they eventually walk. Unless there is a physical disability, everyone learns to walk. *When and why* do we stop getting up when we fall?

I Guarantee:

The *worse* speech you'll ever give, will be *far better* than the speech you *never* give!

I'm going to close this article with a *Challenge* and a *Prediction*.

Here's my *Challenge*:

Print these **11 Nuggets for Lessening the Fear of Public Speaking Now!**

Then: Read them - Study them - *Apply* them!

Do that and my *Prediction* is this:

Your next presentation will be *absolutely, positively* - ***No Sweat!***

About the Author

Fred E. Miller is a speaker, an author and a coach.

Businesses and individuals hire him because they want to improve their Public Speaking and Presentation Skills.

They do this because we perceive really great speakers to be *Experts*.

Perception is reality.

All things being equal, we rather deal with *Experts*.

He shows them how to **Develop, Practice** and **Deliver** *Knock Your Socks Off Presentations!* with - **No Sweat!**

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