

APSU Writing Center
Speaking with Confidence

Why Practice Public Speaking?

Building confidence as a speaker now sets you up for success in future presentations, interviews, and workplace meetings. Consistent practice makes speaking feel natural and helps refine both your message and delivery style.

Public Speaking Practice

- Practice in front of others and request constructive feedback.
- Record and review your speech to evaluate pacing, clarity, and energy.
- Practice with a peer or writing tutor and ask them:
 - Did I speak too fast?
 - Did I rely on filler words?
 - What areas did I excel in?

Preparing and Using Notes Effectively

- Use notes as brief reminders.
- Avoid reading word-for-word.
- If using slides, let them support your message rather than replace it.

Structuring Your Speech

- Keep points clear and in logical order.
- Use transitional phrases such as “firstly,” “next,” and “in conclusion” to guide listeners.

Presenting with Confidence

- Dress professionally to boost confidence and create a positive impression.
- Use open gestures and step in front of the podium with purpose.
- Make eye contact throughout the room to build rapport.
- Pause between points to allow the audience to absorb information.

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Projecting Your Voice

- Avoid filler words like “um,” “like,” or “you know.”
- Speak in a clear, steady tone and aim for a conversational style.
- Imagine you’re speaking to one person rather than the entire crowd.

Using Body Language Effectively

- Stay relaxed and avoid nervous habits (tapping, playing with a pen).
- Use natural gestures and lean slightly forward to emphasize key points.

Preparing for Q&A

- Anticipate audience questions and prepare responses.
- It’s okay to admit if you don’t know an answer, offer to follow up later.

Practice Makes Perfect

The more you practice, the more confident you’ll become as a speaker!

- Practice consistently to build confidence.
- Focus on the 3 Es of Effective Delivery:
 - **Energy** – Speak with enthusiasm.
 - **Eye Contact** – Maintain connection with the audience.
 - **Expression** – Use tone and gestures to emphasize key points.



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References

Gaffney, A. (2024). *Tips for effective delivery*. Hamilton College.

<https://www.hamilton.edu/academics/centers/oralcommunication/guides/tips-for-effective-delivery>

University of Nevada Writing Center. (2014). *Speech delivery practice*.

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