

125 Secrets to Help You Speak Like a Pro

By Sally Morgan

Powerful Voice of Success

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Are these your obstacles?

- " *Does presenting to a group strike fear in your heart?*
- " *Do you ever "freeze" when leaving an important voicemail?*
- " *Is your vocal or physical language a barrier between you and achieving your dreams?*
- " *Does anxiety grab (clench) your breath and hold it when you are speaking?*
- " *Do you lose concentration when speaking in public?*
- " *Do you experience vocal fatigue, vocal strain or hoarseness?*

Speak Up and WIN! can help.

Sally Morgan has helped hundreds of people like you overcome these—and other – career-stopping challenges.

- " Win maximum leadership.
- " Win self-assurance.
- " Win maximum wage.
- " Win new respect.
- " Win influence.
- " Win status.

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Maintaining Calm

"The brain starts working the moment you are born and never stops until you stand up and speak in public."

Anonymous

1. **Maintaining calm requires consistent practice.** First practice the following tips when you are relaxed, then apply them in stressful situations to maintain calm.
2. **Determine where your fear is accumulating inside your body.** When you have localized the fear breathe down into it, shake it, move it and keep it busy. Now you are in control of your fear, instead of your fear being in of control you.
3. **Believe that your audience wants you to succeed.** They want to be entertained and educated.
4. Keep in mind that **everyone in the audience is so glad you are speaking and not them!**
5. **Picture the audience as your strongest supporters.** You will receive what you project.
6. **Warm up your body and voice.** Being prepared will keep you calm. See 10-Minute Warm-Up.

7. **Mistakes made and acknowledged with honesty, grace and humor are perfectly acceptable** - besides, mistakes make you human, accessible.

8. **Create a fictional character who personifies your fear.**
Mine is Fred Fear – a skinny, slouching wimp. Before presenting, I tell Fred to sit down outside the hall and leave me alone. He obeys. Create a character and feel the freedom as you tell your fear what to do, not vice-versa.

9. **Disregard an audience member's disinterested expression.** Their life may be in crisis - not a reflection of your presentation.

10. **Concentrate on your audience and subject matter,** not on yourself. Fretting about a wrinkled suit will not help your speech.

11. **Establish a trigger such as the color red.** Red becomes a reminder to focus on a calm breath.

12. **Practice.** A fully prepared presentation equals a confident speaker. See Preparation.

13. **Fight the jitters and they will fight back.** Accept your butterflies to reduce nervous energy.

14. **Inhale slowly releasing lower back muscles, exhale slowly contracting lower abdominals.** Repeat 3 times

to lower heart rate and calm nerves. Repeat continually when waiting to speak.

15. **Release the jaw on inhale; release the jaw to exhale.** Jaw tension is the enemy of calm presentation.
16. **Reverse negative self-talk.** Listen to the negative statement, then switch to a positive and repeat loud and clear.
17. **Yawn and sigh.** Yawn and sigh. Subtly repeat this natural process 5 times to calm body and mind.

Posture

Think appearing in public is frightening?

When opossums play 'possum, they are not "acting".

They pass out from sheer terror!

18. **Confident physical presentation gives you self assurance and commands respect from any audience.** Thoughtfully implement the tips from this section into your body, and good posture will become a habit.
19. **Increase the length between your shoulders and your earlobes.** Stretch the neck long and tall, chin level.
20. **Eliminate the "poochie belly" look.** Instead of sinking into your hips, stretch along your spine to increase the length between tailbone and waist.
21. **Stand with weight evenly distributed between your feet.** Unevenly distributed weight throws the hips out of line and gives your stance an "attitude."
22. **Keep your chin level when speaking.** Shoving the chin forward or up compromises posture, causes neck pain and risks vocal strain.
23. **Stretch your spine long and straight for a powerful presence.** Picture an anchor running from your tailbone

into the ground and the spine as an elastic band stretching up through the crown of your head to the sky.

24. **Reduce shoulder pain, stretch upper chest muscles and realign posture by drawing your shoulders straight up, straight back and straight down.** Slide shoulders blades down your back. Allow your head to drift back on top of the body. Now breathe to make your new posture feel more natural.
25. **Shake, wiggle and shimmy your shoulders periodically during the day to ease tight muscles.** Tension cannot live in motion.
26. **Refrain from hyper-extending your knees.** Locked knees pinch lower back muscles, ruin alignment, cause lower back pain and bind the breath.
27. **Think about how you appear to others when you are sitting at a conference table or standing behind a podium** – and lift up with your collarbone making it a part of your face. You will appear more open, friendly and competent.

Breathing

Native Americans believe that the soul is in the breath.

28. **Breathing is a cyclical function.** To be effective and efficient, breath must be in constant motion through open airways. This section is designed to give you tips on how to open your airways and keep the breath moving.
29. **To reduce tension in the body** and the voice, never bind, conserve or hold breath.
30. **Inhale only to your resting capacity.** Too much air is worse than too little. You can always take another breath. You can't always get rid of excess air with speech.
31. **Release lower back muscles to increase the depth of inhale.** Remember, the deeper the inhale, the stronger the exhale - and the voice.
32. **Become aware of your spine.** Concentrate on releasing or softening the muscles around your spinal column and breath will drop into your lungs. This extremely beneficial and healthy inhale takes some conscious thought. With steady repetition, spinal breathing becomes subconscious and effortless.

33. **Breathe athletically using abdominal muscles for powerful, healthy sound production.** Dynamic, physical breathing becomes increasingly efficient.
34. **Fend off shallow breathing by never raising your shoulders on inhale.** A shallow inhale grips the voice as the chest contracts to support exhalation.
35. **Practice the breathing tips in Speak Like A Pro every day.** Proper breathing helps more than any other exercise to calm anxiety, focus thought, strengthen speech and boost energy.
36. **To reinforce spinal breathing** - breathe high into your head finding the top of the spine, which is equal in height to the top of your ears, then drop the breath all the way to your tailbone.

Resonance

“Creativity is allowing yourself to make mistakes. Art is knowing which ones to keep.” A. Einstein

37. **Be aware that producing a resonant sound is a combination of an open throat, a stretched spine and proper breathing.** Follow the previous tips in this booklet to lay the foundation, then employ the tips in this section to develop Resonance.
38. **Abstain from shouting to make yourself heard.** Besides being rude, the sound is harsh and damaging to your delicate vocal system.
39. **Speak as though someone around you is hard of hearing** – clearly and not too fast. Propel your words towards others.
40. **Use a microphone whenever one is available.** If you speak often, bring a mic along to save your voice from strain.
41. **Play with making huge Shakespearian or Operatic sounds.** You will feel a bit silly at first, but a full-bodied, more resonant sound will result.
42. **A nasal, whiny sound is caused by closed sinus cavities not by speaking into the nose.** To open nasal

passages put your lips together, teeth apart and inhale straight up through the nose feeling the cheekbones "spread." Exhale via the same passage.

43. **Bounce the words off the roof of the mouth, the back of the front teeth and through the sinus cavities behind the nose.** These hard surfaces will conduct sound vibration, or resonance, of your voice carrying it to others.
44. **Keep in mind that resonance is sound vibration - movement.** Use your abdominal muscles to move breath and sustain resonance.
45. **Produce words in your mouth not in your throat.** Language is a function of the lips, teeth and the tip of the tongue.
46. **Imagine sending your words up from the navel.** Of course you don't speak in your belly, but you can speak from your belly for increased power.
47. **Tilt your words into the mask of your face for better resonance.** Send them right out through the bridge of your nose.

Diction

"Speak properly, and in as few words as you can, but always plainly; for the end of speech is not ostentation, but to be understood." William Penn

48. **Diction is voicing all the sounds that make up language.** The following are tips on creating clear, understandable verbal communication.
49. **Pronounce each and every word completely.** At first this will take a conscious effort. After practice, it will become habit.
50. **Solicit feedback from friends and family on the clarity of your speech.** You hear yourself from the inside - through bone and muscle. An outside opinion is more accurate.
51. **Accentuate your consonants for clarity - include final T's and D's.** Consonant use separates amateurs from professionals. Yes, the music of speech is in the vowels, but we are paid for the consonants.
52. **Increase the clarity and effectiveness of your speech** by releasing the consonants forward, sssspit them out - especially a consonant at the beginning of a word.

53. Move energy and breath through to the very end of sentences. If your words become inaudible at the end of phrases you may seem depressed, shy, or unreliable.
54. **Beware of ending statements with question or doubt.** My name is Sally Morgan? Women are particularly guilty of this habit - asking permission instead of making a statement.
55. **Over-enunciating is a trap in itself.** For example: "A little tot takes time." The final T of tot and the initial T of takes should be pronounced as the same T. Double stopping, pronouncing both T's, can seem pretentious.
56. **Emphasize your speech with consonants.** Which is more effective: Ssssstop; or Stoop? The former emphasizes; the latter complains.
57. **Vary your vocal inflection, pitch and volume** to match the purpose of your message and sustain others' interest.
58. **Clarity counts.** Dropping letters off words can change the meaning. Enlist could become endless.
59. **Issue beginning consonants forward for release of breath.** Let vowels follow consonants through the mask of the face – right out your cheekbones and towards others.

Eye Contact

"Words calculated to catch everyone may catch no one."

Adlai Stephenson

60. **Eye contact is an important part of non-verbal communication because it creates a personal connection with others.** Here are a few tips to make you more accessible as a speaker through your eye contact.
61. **Make eye contact with everyone in the room** to build a personal connection and maintain other's interest in you and your subject matter.
62. **Divide a large audience into quadrants** and give each quadrant "personal" eye contact. Everyone will feel included.
63. **Sustain eye contact for a phrase or two then move on.** Lengthy focus on one individual will make him/her uncomfortable.
64. **Highlight headings in your notes so a quick glance catches the next subject.** If you focus on your notes, you will lose the audience.
65. **Be conscious of the effect your focus has on your presentation.** Stare at the ceiling and the audience will see only the whites of your eyes. Stare at the floor and others see only the top of your head.

66. **If you have trouble looking at the audience, find 5 or 6 specific points of focus.** For example: an exit sign, a picture, the coffee pot, the thermostat. Shift focus between points, otherwise your eyes take on a “dead” look.

Preparation

"It usually takes more than three weeks to prepare a good impromptu speech." Mark Twain

67. **Baseball teams have spring training – you, as a businessperson who speaks, also need to train and prepare.** Meticulous preparation creates a professional presentation.
68. **Prepare your body (calm and posture)** and your voice (breathing, resonance, diction).
69. **Open an imaginary trap door on the back of your head and let all the garbage spill out.** Garbage is everything but the task at hand. You will concentrate much better after "the dump."
70. **Write out what you are going to say, no matter what the encounter:** 30 second commercial, voicemail, sales presentation or keynote speech. Writing helps organize thought.
71. **Assume others know nothing about your subject matter or thought process.** Start at the beginning of your thought process and invite them on the journey. Your process will also be clearer.

72. **Lavish time and energy on preparation.** Every ounce of energy will pay off when it comes to show time.
73. **Deliver your speech out loud even if the content is fully prepared.** Written phrasing has a different effect when spoken. Make necessary adjustments.
74. **Rehearse how you will handle technical difficulties** with your microphone, visual aids, power point or other electronic devices. Do not be caught off guard.
75. **Identify places where you think your audience will laugh or clap or respond.** Still, there will always be surprises!
76. **Practice in front of a mirror, video camera, your pet, your kids or a kind friend.** Ask for feedback and be prepared to hear a critique and make the necessary adjustments.
77. **Study speakers you admire.** Determine why their speech and presentation are dynamic.
78. **Rehearse as though your audience is listening.** Let the jitters be with you, don't try to push them away, but channel the nervous energy into your presentation by bouncing around as you speak.

79. **Record your presentation, listen for tone, pitch, speed, clarity of speech, message and likeability.** Address each problem and adjust accordingly. Record and listen again. Make the necessary changes.
80. **Videotape your presentation.** Watching may be painful, but always enlightening. Is the presentation Interesting? Informative? Entertaining?
81. **Hire a coach – especially if presenting and speaking are an important part of your life.** Remember even Academy Award Winners like Geoffrey Rush have vocal coaches.

Presentation

"Well timed silence hath more eloquence than speech."

M. F. Tupper

82. **93% of audience understanding comes from presentation** – only 7% comes from your words. Implement the following tips to explore the other 93%.
83. **Embrace others with a warm greeting.** Let them know you are glad to be in their company by your tone of voice, smile and eye contact.
84. **Stand accessible, straight and strong – never stiff** - looking right at others. Show the audience you've got nothing to hide.
85. **Stick to the outline of the speech you have prepared.** Even if a last minute idea occurs, failure to thoroughly review the concept may result in harming the content of your speech.
86. **Preach what you practice – without sounding "preachy."** Take others with you on a journey of discovery – a logical progression through your thoughts. Then your "sermon" will eliminate a barrier and create a connection.

87. **Be natural, be yourself.** Truth may be stranger than fiction, it is also more fascinating.
88. **Utilize spontaneity and humor to diffuse a situation when things go awry.** And trust me, the unexpected is always memorable.
89. **Remember the presentation is not about YOU** it's about the audience.
90. **Tell a relevant success story that supports facts and figures** to avoid lulling others to sleep.
91. **Never scold, condescend, yell, belittle, embarrass, talk down, ignore or otherwise diminish in any way your audience.** As a general rule of thumb it's not in the content, it's in the delivery.
92. **Motivate, inspire, energize, praise, humor, entertain, teach, and otherwise raise the spirits of your audience.** They will feel great and so will you!
93. **Indifference will quiet the heckler.** They want attention – keep the focus on the speech!
94. **Respond to others.** Response bridges the gap between you and me. That's true communication.

95. **Vary the pitch, tone, volume and tenor of your speech to enhance content.** Creative attention to delivery keeps others (and You) interested

96. **Gestures are most effective coming out of stillness.** If you constantly gesticulate, you are punctuating nothing.

97. **Keep it simple.** Simplicity in speech is an art.

Voicemail

"Let thy speech be short, comprehending much in a few words." Aprocrypha ~ 200 AD

98. **Your voicemail message is a vocal handshake.** Use the following tips to make your messages as firm and effective as a solid handshake.
99. **Script a standard format for all the voicemails:** name, company, phone #, reason for call, reason to return the call, phone # and closing statement.
100. **Put a smile in your voice when talking on the phone.** Your listeners will hear a frown. By the same token, they will hear the smile and respond.
101. **Extended rambling messages are ineffective** and annoying to voicemail recipients.
102. **Write out every word before you dial to eliminate the "um's" and "uh's" symptoms of the unprofessional.** Recite the message, then dial.
103. **Follow the same rules of good posture, breathing and resonance on the phone as when speaking to someone in person.** A voicemail does not include the 97% of communication which is non-verbal.

104. **Practice leaving voicemails.** Call a friend, leave a message and ask for honest feedback.
105. **State your name, company, phone #, etc. in an even friendly manner.** No whining, begging or pleading allowed – it is not professional.
106. **Exclude background noise from your message.** Distraction interferes with clarity.
107. **Call people by their name when leaving the message.** They respond more positively.
108. **Visualize the recipient as you leave your message.** See them in your mind's eye or direct your message to a photo. This will make your message sound more personal.
109. **Speak clearly and slowly, especially when leaving your name and number.** The recipient can't return your call unless the message is understood.

Vocal Health

Johns Hopkins University has announced there is a syndrome where the heart is stunned, or Heart Stunning. This could be caused by a death in the family, a surprise party or triggered by public speaking!

110. **Use of this Vocal Health section will keep your voice healthy** while implementing tips from the previous sections to develop professional speaking skills.
111. **Stand erect with the spine straight and strong.** An open instrument is the best road to vocal health.
112. **Drink plenty of water.** Water keeps your vocal system lubricated and prevents raspy, dry voice from poor usage and dry mouth from stage fright.
113. **Abstain from whispering if you have a sore throat.** Whispering blows extra air through your vocal folds creating more irritation and more soreness.
114. **Gargle with warm salt water, laced with honey.** Warm water soothes, salt heals and honey will coat your vocal folds preventing damage.
115. **Speak "over" a sore throat.** Inhale to the top of your head and speak up and over the soreness.

116. **Try Slippery Elm lozenges when your throat is sore.** They are a favorite of opera singers.
117. **Get plenty of sleep and proper nutrition.** Your body is your instrument – proper care is required.
118. **Partner with a trained coach** who can help discover your natural, healthy voice.
119. **Beware: Loud speech and resonant speech are two different things.** Loud speech is full of effort. Resonant speech is full of energy.
120. **Stop talking if you feel laryngitis coming on.** There is no cure for laryngitis but silence.
121. **Enjoy the resonance that you create when the voice is open and free.** Positive reinforcement works every time.
122. **Visit an Otolaryngologist,** a doctor who specializes in the voice, if you have persistent vocal problems.
123. **Apply the breathing and resonance tips in this booklet** to maintain a healthy voice.

Conclusion

124. **Radiate confidence from the minute you walk into the room** - and now that you know how – Speak Like a Pro! Best of luck and thank you to all my readers!

“Breathe!”

10-Minute Warm Up

1. Take 3 slow, deep breaths, releasing the muscles of your lower back to center yourself. Repeat 10 times.
2. Standing straight on both feet, raise your arms straight up to the side, then rotate your palms toward the ceiling, bringing your scapula together.
3. With your arms still stretched out to your sides, palms up, blow out an imaginary candle with a series of 3 short bursts of air, releasing your jaw in between each exhale. Repeat 10 times.
4. Repeat step 3 adding "SSSHH" on the bursts of exhale. "SSSHH" 3 short blasts, releasing the jaw in between. Repeat 10 times.
5. Still using "SSSHH" on exhale, make 2 short blasts and sustain the 3rd "SSSHH" as long as you can. Keep a steady stream of breath moving at all times. Repeat 10 times.
6. Now repeat step 5, but on the 3rd exhale change to "SSSHHOOOOO". Repeat 10 times releasing your jaw in between.
7. Check your posture and center. Repeat step 2.
8. Repeat step 6 changing the 3rd exhale to "SSSHHO" (long O); "SSSHHAAH", "SSSHHAY", and "SSSHHEEE", repeat 10 times releasing your jaw in between.

9. Now inhale tall, then using your Shakespearean voice, call out as though to someone across the street, "YO!" Repeat 10 or more times, each time speaking with more power and release.

10. Repeat step 9 calling "Hello!"; "Hello, Moe!"; "Ho, Ho, Ho!"; "Hey, what do you know!"; "Go, Go, Go!"; "No snow for Joe!". Now you are warmed up and ready to go!

Use This Booklet to Promote YOUR Business

Your business information, customized in this booklet, can be used in any of the following suggestions:

1. During the holidays, instead of giving business calendars try a Speak like a pro booklet for a gift. It's unique, handy, practical and more value for your buck.
2. An invitation to prospective clients.
3. A thank you after a sales call.
4. An incentive for orders over a certain amount.
5. A thank you for a new client or account.
6. A thinking-of-you greeting to an absentee client.
7. A classy gift for any occasion.
8. An employee fringe benefit.
9. A mass-mailing bonus.
10. An invoice enclosure.