



THE ART OF PUBLIC SPEAKING

Presenter: Allison Shapira, President, Global Public Speaking LLC

Leadership

Video Transcript

[TEXT: YOUNG AFRICAN LEADERS INITIATIVE
ONLINE TRAINING SERIES]

[TEXT: THE ART OF PUBLIC SPEAKING]

[TEXT: Learning Objectives]

1. Learn how to craft your message.
2. How to keep the audience engaged.
3. How to overcome your fear of public speaking.]

[TEXT: Allison Shapira, President, Global Public Speaking LLC]

I'm Allison Shapira, and this is "The Art of Public Speaking."

In this lesson we'll learn how to craft your message, how to keep the audience engaged and how to overcome your fear of public speaking.

No matter where you live in the world, public speaking is essential for you to exercise leadership. It's not enough to have a vision; you have to put that vision into clear, concise, persuasive language.

When you speak in front of an audience of one or more people, with a specific purpose, you are speaking in public. It's something we do every single day, in every country, industry and sector in the world. It's speaking up in a meeting or at a conference. It's giving a presentation before a client or potential funder. It's inspiring an audience to take action on an important issue in your business or in your community.

Now, if you're anxious about public speaking, you're not alone. It's one of the biggest fears in the world. But the good news is public speaking is a skill, not a talent! It's like learning a language or playing a sport; the more you practice, the better you get.

There are two elements of public speaking: there's what you say, the content, and then there's how you say it, the delivery. Let's start with content: crafting your message.

Before writing your speech, it's important to know your audience. Make sure you use language and logic that will resonate not just with you but also with them. Your speech should have a goal or purpose, so you can have a clear call to action at the end. And you'll want to use your own words, so you can let out your natural energy and enthusiasm and keep the audience engaged and interested.

Keeping the audience engaged is also why you need effective delivery. Be sure to make eye contact with each member of the audience so that it feels like a conversation, not just a speech.





Now, eye contact and other elements of delivery are highly cultural, so when you identify your audience in advance, be sure to ask yourself what's appropriate for that audience. Body language is also important; your facial expressions, whether you smile or not, the movement of your hands and feet, should *add* to your message instead of distracting from your message. And your voice is so important — make sure you use an authentic and conversational tone, instead of trying to sound like somebody else.

Now what if you get nervous before you speak? There are many ways you can overcome your fear of public speaking. The more you practice and prepare, the more confident you'll feel, so don't write the speech at the last minute. Before you give your speech, close your eyes and imagine giving a great speech. Imagine the round of applause from the audience and the sense of accomplishment you'll feel. That way, when you actually give the speech, you'll feel like you've already succeeded. Finally, learn how to breathe using your diaphragm, the muscle attached to the bottom of your ribcage. This will help you calm your nerves, center yourself and speak with power, authority and confidence.

So whether you're writing, practicing or delivering a speech, remember that public speaking is a skill, not a talent. It's not about trying to sound like anybody else; it's about being you at your best, onstage as well as offstage. And it's about finding your voice and your courage to speak up, so that you can inspire others to take action. That is the essence of leadership.

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