

Next Level Speaking

7

Top Tips

Helping people step out of the shadows, and into their own radiance

1. **Get excited!** Recognise that working towards masterful communication is a great route to discovering the “best you” that you can be, and letting others experience that “best you”. It’s not about focusing upon, or fixing your faults – it’s more about removing barriers to unleash your massive potential as a master communicator. Whatever your initial reasons for wanting to improve – be it your presentations or interviews skills, or a particular speaking opportunity coming up, it is very likely that the implications of embarking on such a journey will be far reaching in your career, in your relationships, and in your life.
2. **Be Yourself.** The number one thing that many confident and reasonably competent speakers fall short on, is the power of authenticity. However, to achieve authenticity on a consistent basis - that takes self awareness, courage, and sometimes considerable work on yourself. It really depends upon how many layers of masks you have put on (and practiced intensely!) since childhood, and also your willingness to let go of some of these. There are proven exercises to help you do that.
3. **Mindset.** Build a psychology (or mindset) of excellence. Are you someone who puts yourself down, or are overcritical of how you come across? Or do you let your own *comparisons* with others disempower you? It doesn’t have to be that way. Start noticing the patterns that could slow your progress to becoming your best self. Start to undermine those patterns that no longer serve you – and learn how to install new habits that directionalise your thoughts and actions in a more empowering way. Around half of adults have significant fear of presenting or public speaking. If your level of fear or panic is too high to even get started, then go straight to tip 7.
4. **Your Body Speaks!** Build a physiology of excellence. Physically, how do you stand, sit and move? Do you adopt a sedentary, slouched posture, with a concave chest, eyes down? That’s not going to help you breath powerfully, or have a confident voice. Whether you already love the way you sound or not, as you work on being more centered and articulate, your voice will probably become richer, clearer, and more grounded. If your voice is underdeveloped, bespoke exercises will start to impact upon that over a few weeks, as you install better habits of being.

Bonus Point: When you combine tips 3 and 4, you gain more **state mastery**.

5. **Take daily action** to step out of your comfort zones (working on your voice and your mindset). These don't have to be enormous leaps of faith requiring great courage. Small steps forward each day, over the next few weeks and months will make a significant difference. Even with occasional set backs in confidence, make it a habit to apply your daily courage and discipline to keep moving forward. And if you're an introvert (cue long list of really successful people, but lets for now just say Steve Jobs!), get even more excited, because when introverts learn how to be their deeper selves more in public, and start getting their (often more significant) message out there, then some of the extrovert speakers just can't compete with that! By the way, we are all complex mixtures of personality types – and if you are more extrovert, then most of these tips still apply to you – it's just that your journey will be different to someone with painful shyness say.
6. **Seek out positive environments** in which to spend time, learn, test and grow. There are individuals and groups out there, (whatever their level, and whatever their issues), who share a common goal in seeking to improve their speaking, whether it be for career, relationships, etc. I'm mostly talking about groups that actually meet face to face, such as speakers clubs, although groups that practice on skype etc. can also be useful if you are in a remote area. Get feedback, and implement / utilise what works.
7. **Enlist others to help you.** Do you know someone who has overcome significant barriers, and is now someone you really admire in terms of their communication skills? Get a good coach, or mentor, and be prepared to invest in experts that can short-cut where you want to get to. Wherever possible they should work with you in person, with an emphasis upon letting you experience better ways, and being very practical about helping you apply this in the real world. Reading books on the subject and interacting within Facebook groups may help a little, but a theoretical knowledge by itself is unlikely to be sufficient to help you adopt real change.

To work with Andrew Hodge, contact him at

Andrew@hodgeam.karoo.co.uk

or 07855 445541

skype: andrewhodge

www.NextLevelSpeaking.co.uk : site in development.

Based in East Yorkshire, Andrew works locally in Beverley, Hull, York, Leeds and Sheffield, and further afield in Edinburgh, Newcastle, Peterborough, and London.

Copy write, 10 July 2017