

DON'T SWEAT THE SMALL STUFF IN SPEAKING

5 ways we take the enjoyment out of the performance - and how to put it back in again.

The golden rule is prepare to your utmost. Decide on the **objective** of your speech or presentation at the beginning.

Make sure you have answered these 3 key questions:

- What is my **key** message?
- What do I want to **achieve**?
- Are there any **special requirements** to take into consideration?

Then do all the work to make sure you have prepared properly – **Remember the 5 Ps:**

PRIOR PLANNING PREVENTS POOR PERFORMANCE.

Once you have properly prepared then just think about these **5 points**:

1. IF YOU FORGET SOMETHING IN YOUR SPEECH, DON'T SWEAT IT.

The audience won't know, they won't care (unless you make a big deal about it) and you can **either move on and leave it out** or **mention it later** on - for example, "While I was speaking to you I thought of something else I would like to share with you..." etc.

2. DON'T SWEAT ABOUT ANY ONE INDIVIDUAL.

For example, people react in different ways to humour; some like belly laughing, some like chuckling, some smile and some just smile inside. So use your great eye contact to check out the mood in the room but **don't obsess** about that one person in row 8 who doesn't seem to get it. I am sure you can remember an occasion when you have noticed a member of the audience who seemed to be really serious, even while you delivered your best lines...and then the same person has come up to you afterwards and congratulated you on a really humorous speech. Everyone reacts differently.

3. DON'T SWEAT ABOUT APPEARING NERVOUS.

Possibly the greatest hang up new speakers and presenters have is that they will appear nervous, that everyone can see through them and realise that they are a quivering bundle of nerves. We have a golden phrase we always tell participants at our workshops...

"The audience don't need to know you are nervous unless you notify them!"

And of course we notify our audience by apologising for being there, or speaking really

quickly or pacing the platform like a lunatic. So here are the rules:

- Slow Down
- Don't apologise for anything (the audience are lucky to have the opportunity to hear you)
- Remember the audience want you to succeed

4. DON'T SWEAT THE BRAIN FREEZE.

It has happened to every speaker, presenter, trainer or teacher at some stage. You are in the middle of a great sentence and then **Bang** – your mind goes into deep freeze. So what do you do? Here are some simple remedies:

- **Remember the Power of the Pause** - it is not just to add impact, but also to give you a chance to recover
- **Repeat your last sentence** - this will often get the synapses firing again and if you have read 1.) above you will realise the audience won't even remember the repetition
- **Use the SpeakersBank "Rescue Remedy"** - pause, nod to the audience, slowly walk over to your glass of water (strategically placed just in case!), take a sip, slowly return stage centre and then repeat your last sentence, for example " And let me repeat once again that last point..." The audience think you are completely in control and in charge of the moment. And the best thing is this really works.

5. DON'T SWEAT NOT BEING PERFECT.

I am sure your first reaction is "if only", however being perfect doesn't always look good on the platform. A lot of the times being perfect comes across as too slick. As long as you don't have too many obvious imperfections then the audience will be carried away by your passion and enthusiasm for your subject. This wins every time over "being perfect". So watch out for too many filler words ("um", "like", "you know"), speaking too quickly or running around the stage; then just prepare and perform with passion and you will never have to **Sweat** again.