

How To Become a Fearless Public Speaker

Dave Aizer

Okay, so you hate public speaking. The thought of it sends shivers down your spine, produces a lump in your throat and makes your hands clammy. You'd rather do almost *anything* than give a speech or appear on TV to promote your business or brand. However, there's one big problem: from a publicity and marketing standpoint, speaking in public is crucial to your growth and success.

Get Uncomfortable

Once you leave your comfort zone, albeit painfully, there are three main techniques you can learn to help you become a dynamic and captivating public speaker: (1) establish your key differentiators, (2) rehearse, and (3) work on vocal inflection and storytelling. However, those techniques are for another article because if you don't prioritize changing the way you *feel* about public speaking, no amount of training will make you great at it.

Many clients who reach out to me begin our conversations by saying they are *forced* to give a speech or their colleague is *making them* go on TV to talk about their company. They'll say things like, "I'm dreading this," or "I just want to get it over with." Whether it's participating in sports, creating art or speaking in public, it's impossible to succeed if you frame it negatively.

There's no way Michael Jordan approached a game-winning free throw telling himself he was going to miss. I can't imagine The Beatles gathered together before taking the stage and said, "Okay, mates, let's go out there and mess it up!"

There's nothing wrong with being nervous (in fact, you can use nervous energy to your advantage), but negative self-talk is crippling when it comes to performance. In order to be a powerful communicator, you must own your words and gestures, and truly believe in your message – and you can't do that if you're doubting yourself.

Spin The Negative Into A Positive

Try this: instead of describing public speaking as a problem, or something you *have* to do, reframe it as an opportunity you *get* to do. Treat it as a venture you're excited to conquer, not afraid to try. Every time you speak on behalf of your business, it's an opportunity to raise awareness, build your brand and grow your revenue. You get to deliver the talking points you want your listeners and viewers to hear. You get to shape the message and control the narrative. That's pretty cool! You have a platform that is unavailable to most of your competitors. And, even if they also have it, you'll work harder and prepare better than they will.

Play Mind Games with Yourself

Taking it a step further, don't just envision the experience going well; think about where you'll celebrate after you've nailed it. Picture yourself having dinner at your favorite restaurant and smiling ear-to-ear because you just went on national television and crushed it, or gave an amazing speech to a packed house and got a standing ovation. *Those are empowering visuals.* Think about the elation and relief you'll feel after the job is done. After your hard work and countless hours of preparation and rehearsing have paid off, you've successfully created an enormously positive outcome. The mind is incredibly powerful and you need your brain to be on your team.

That said, your brain may initially fight you. In fact, it probably will. It's unrealistic to expect positive self-talk

will immediately replace years of dread about public speaking. You may need to seize a “fake it ‘til you make it” mentality. In other words, even if you don’t necessarily believe what you’re telling yourself, just keep thinking it and saying it aloud, over and over, until it rings true. Keep putting it out there in the universe. The more often you position public speaking as a positive experience, the more eager you’ll be to embrace it and, ultimately, the better you’ll be at it.

Focus On Progress, Not Perfection

Don’t worry about being perfect. Don’t beat yourself up for saying “um” or tripping on a word when you give a speech. Nobody cares about that nearly as much as you do. Learn from and try and improve on every single opportunity, and you’ll be well on your way to becoming a confident and compelling speaker. And mentally, start with being your own biggest fan in the audience.



About the Author: *Dave Aizer is a motivational speaker, Emmy Award-winning television host, and best-selling author, as well as the founder and head media coach of Elite Media Coaching. To watch Dave in action, visit www.daveaizer.com, and follow him on LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook,*

and YouTube.