

It was the 2008 Malayalam blockbuster movie, *Pranchiyettan and the saint* which portrayed the hilarious failure of an uneducated rich man before the audience. The hero, 'Pranchiyettan' was all set to deliver a sumptuous speech on the podium, seeing his ex-girl friend and her husband staring upon him, he becomes nervous and starts to fail that too by making others laugh for his funny tongue slips. Well that could be a story, but many of us might've already gone through such tough situations, haven't we??

On the other hand there are people around us, whom we use to admire and get amazed seeing their public speaking skills. What is it about these men, which makes people listen to them with most attention and curiosity? For some, it may be authority, beauty, devotion and even a successful life. But more than that we should admit the facts like ability to connect with people, to involve them and make them feel important, through their manner of communication, which successfully rewards them the desired attention. Of course, their confidence, positive attitude, and dressing sense makes a lot of difference too.

Majority people are introverts, very talented in their writing skills but they just lose their sight as speakers. Mostly during the school days, we use to panic thinking of delivering a speech in front of an audience, who generally will be familiar crowd. The same shivering continues even when they start working or even at the age of retirement. If you are also one among those panic men or a beginner, here are some tips for a comfortable sail, and for expert speakers, this may overhaul you...☺



### Practice

Especially for the beginners, practice it as many times as you can. The best idea is to stand in front of the mirror and rehearse it while watching yourself. This will help you to develop an appropriate body language and add your confidence level. You may also try the same in front of your dear ones and invite comments therefrom. If possible, rehearse along with the visual aids you are using so that you are at ease. People become nervous while speaking in front of others.

## The topic

You may be a great speaker; however, if the content of the speech is not properly planned it is going to backfire. We have to be well aware of the category of people listening to us. I still remember the terrific day, when I was invited to a summer camp to take a session on “effective communication”. The co-coordinators said that the audience will be of the age group 15-17. I was excited, referred books, went prepared, that too in a formal way. What I saw in the auditorium was astonishing ! The audience were in the age group of 5-20 ☹ and behind their seats were their parents and even grandparents too ready to listen. Just imagine the situation; all my preparations, calculations were thrown in mud. Moreover, I became speechless and started to shiver. The PPT which I prepared was of no use; tough day, I purposefully made the session an interactive Ice Breaker..(narrow escape)

So just make sure that you know exactly what you want to convey, what kind of audience you are going to face, confirm the same and then go ahead. Try maximum to avoid abrupt starting and endings of sub-topics in between the speech. You may also consider adding spice to the session with stories, funny experiences, which may make it more interesting.

## Arrangements at venue, Voice Modulation

It's a good idea to go the hall where the programme is scheduled some time earlier than the scheduled time and become familiar with the surroundings. You have to take a look at the audio and other aids, be familiar with the same to avoid technical disturbances. If you need a collar mike tell the co-ordinators in advance; or a system for display of your PPT, better to have a trial before the session starts and trace somebody to assist you in this regard. Giving the speech in the same tone makes the audience bored. Stress the important point and if you plan to share an interesting experience, take a pause and then tell it. Make sure that there is clarity in your voice, your speech is audible, by delivering it loudly but at the same time with slow phase.

## Nervousness, stage fright

The most important aspect of public speaking tips is to keep your nervousness well hidden from the audience. Be confident, at least express a faking confidence. No matter, how experienced a speaker you are, the first few seconds, the shade of stage fright will haunt you. ☺ Stand firmly, it shows confidence; keep your hands visible, it builds trust; have a smile on your face, it creates attention!!

## Be well-dressed

First visual impression counts a lot. Wear something which is very comfortable to you. The key is that you look professional, respectful and above all, comfortable. Once you start talking, the audience shouldn't be noticing what you are wearing and you, the speaker, should not be over-concerned about what is worn, as it leads to change of attention.

## Audience, the Kings

Eye contact with the entire audience is the key mantra. Do not just look in one direction or one beautiful lady/handsome guy; look at different people at different times during your speech so that the audience will feel involved. Try to make your speech more interesting by making arguments on the topic. Cite interesting stories, experiences and examples, which may seek attention even of the uninterested. Never defer answer the questions raised.

## Disrupting audience

Suppose, a question pops up in the middle of your presentation, that's amazing; someone is listening! If such question forms a part of your presentation, you may hold it on and skip for the time being. Always repeat the questions received from the audience before you answer. It provides you with a little more time to think and answer the best way...professional tricks !☺ Well, that's just one side of the coin. Consider an arguing audience attacking you. We have to be patient enough but should strongly defend. A small failure from our side to do this will make the confidence of the entire audience on us turn into a big question mark.

## Sleeping audience

To have sleeping spectators in front of you means, you are a boring speaker. Crack some jokes..Also consider making them applause 2-3 times, make them dance, do some breathing exercise ....(all provided the age group is comfortable; else you are gone).



## Presentation

Never overload your slides. Presentations should feel like conversations, even if one-sided, make sure you interact in the best way. Never read out your speech word by word. Try not to bundle your speech with lot of statistics and if you are making it, be sure of the source and its authenticity. Another trick is to make immediate "Pause", say for 10 seconds, then for 2-3 seconds and the audience will guess that you are lost; have a naughty smile, look around the hall and when you start speaking again, they naturally assumes the 'pause' was intentional. Such silly tricks may wake the sleeping crowd too.

Well, these are some basic tips which is very easy to advise but not that easy to follow. Let me state a disclaimer : 'I hereby state that I will not be personally responsible for any disasters which may arise, to those who strictly follow the rules contemplated in my Article'... Kudos ! ☺

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