

Speak!

Use Your Voice



Lend me your ears

"Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears."

from *Julius Caesar* by William Shakespeare

No matter what field you plan to pursue in life, your ability to present your ideas clearly and effectively will make a difference.

Rather than beginning to think about public speaking the first time you need to do it, this series will help you develop and refine your public speaking skills now, so that by the time you need them, you will be ready to deliver your ideas with confidence.

*Glossophobia
is the fear of
public speaking.*

Resources

- [Public Speaking](#) (Wikipedia)
- [List of Speeches](#) (Wikipedia)
- [Glossary of Rhetorical Terms](#) (Wikipedia)

Be the Energy

We will get into the tools available when you are presenting, but let's start with the audience.

You need to connect with your audience to be effective, but words alone will not be enough.

In normal conversation, people take turns speaking, which keeps both people engaged. **Remove that back-and-forth, as you do when you are giving a speech, and peoples' brains start to drift.**

As such, when you are speaking, and asking others to be in an exclusively listening role, **the burden is on you to keep their brain engaged.**

You can ask questions of your audience. You can use humor to keep your audience waiting on your next line. There are a lot of tricks, but bottom line you need to help your audience stay focused on your message.

You need to be the energy for the whole room.

Your voice, words, and presentation need to come together to fill the entire room with the energy that your audience cannot create for itself while listening.

Imagine not just your words, but your energy stretching to the very back corners of the room, and blanketing everyone in between.

That does not mean you need to ham it up, and act over-the-top in any way. Authenticity is an asset in public speaking.

It does, however, mean that you need to work not just on your ability to project your voice (i.e., speak loud enough so that everyone can hear you), but you need to work on *how* you say what you say, as well.

You need to master the performative element of public speaking, and we will be working on that today!

NOTE: We will cover speechwriting in future sessions. For today, you will use the famous words of others, so that you can focus on *how* you deliver the words.

The How

Today we are going to focus on three ways we can improve our public speaking using just our voice. In other sessions we will talk about additional aspects.

The power of the pause

- The most powerful tool you have is silence. Pause at every comma and take a longer pause for periods.
- Pauses allow your listener to process and you to breathe without interrupting your flow.
- Add pauses wherever you want to add emphasis, even if there isn't a comma or period in sight!
- Pause to give yourself time to think, rather than resorting to "um" and other filler words.

Volume

- You need to make sure you are heard, so speak up!
- Use volume to emphasize words and phrases.
- You don't always need to speak louder to add emphasis. Experiment with decreasing your volume to add emphasis, as well, which can be a very powerful tool!

Confidence

- You will hear a lot of suggestions over the course of your life about how to deal with fears related to public speaking. Find out what works for you by trying different approaches.
- Familiarity often helps. Get familiar with where you will be speaking by arriving early. Get familiar with your audience, if possible, by introducing yourself to people before you speak. Get familiar with your material by practicing.
- Remember, people cannot see inside your brain. If you act confident, no matter how you are feeling, people will see your acting, not your nerves! Another approach is to acknowledge your nervousness, because everyone can empathize!
- Push out your nerves by focusing on your message and delivery. This won't be easy at first, but even practicing in your head can help keep your brain busy! The more you practice, the easier it will get!
- Remember, confidence is not arrogance. Arrogance isn't going to win anyone over!

Application

Take turns delivering the quotations below. Practice varying all the elements listed on the previous page, and see what you think works best.

Franklin D. Roosevelt

"The only thing we have to fear is fear itself."

Thomas Edison

"Genius is one percent inspiration, and ninety-nine percent perspiration."

William Shakespeare

"To be or not to be, that is the question."

Mark Twain

"The secret to getting ahead is getting started."

Here are some longer quotations to practice with, if you have extra time.

John Quincy Adams

"If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader."

Vincent Van Gogh

"In spite of everything I shall rise again: I will take up my pencil, which I have forsaken in my great discouragement, and I will go on with my drawing."

Helen Keller

"The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even heard, but must be felt with the heart."

Steve Jobs

"Part of what made the Macintosh great was that the people working on it were musicians, poets, and artists, and zoologists, and historians. They also happened to be the best computer scientists in the world. But if it hadn't been computer science, these people would have been doing amazing things in other fields."

Practice

Are you ready to practice? The next few pages include quotations, speech excerpts, and poems of varying lengths for you to work with.

You do not need to memorize the words. Focus instead on your delivery. Bring the words to life, and give them meaning with your cadence, thinking about:

- **Pace:** how fast or slow you go in different sections;
- **Emphasis:** what words and sounds you make stand out through your delivery; and
- **Volume:** how loud or soft you speak at different points, making sure to vary appropriately.

Don't stop with these examples! In addition to historical speeches from great speakers, look for other fun excerpts to work with from poetry to monologues from your favorite movies.

Angelou / Jefferson

Maya Angelou

"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

Wonder Woman

"I am the hope that you can't see. I am the strength that you don't have. I am the courage that you dare not believe in."

Thomas Jefferson

The U.S. Declaration of Independence

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

Emerson / Jordan

Ralph Waldo Emerson

"Finish each day and be done with it. You have done what you could. Some blunders and absurdities no doubt have crept in; forget them as soon as you can. Tomorrow is a new day. You shall begin it serenely and with too high a spirit to be encumbered with your old nonsense."

Michael Jordan

"I've missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. 26 times I've been trusted to take the game-winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed."

Churchill / Kennedy

Winston Churchill

"We Shall Fight on the Beaches," delivered June 4, 1940

"We shall go on to the end, we shall fight in France, we shall fight on the seas and oceans, we shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air, we shall defend our Island, whatever the cost may be, we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender."

John F. Kennedy

Innagural Address, delivered January 20, 1961

"And so, my fellow Americans: Ask not what your country can do for you — ask what you can do for your country. My fellow citizens of the world: Ask not what America will do for you, but what together we can do for the freedom of man."

Lombardi / Jobs

Vince Lombardi

"I firmly believe that any man's finest hour, the greatest fulfillment of all that he holds dear, is that moment when he has worked his heart out in a good cause and lies exhausted on the field of battle - victorious."

Steve Jobs

"Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do. If you haven't found it yet, keep looking. Don't settle. As with all matters of the heart, you'll know when you find it."

Reagan

Ronald Reagan

"Remarks at the Brandenburg Gate," June 12, 1987

"We welcome change and openness; for we believe that freedom and security go together, that the advance of human liberty can only strengthen the cause of world peace. There is one sign the Soviets can make that would be unmistakable, that would advance dramatically the cause of freedom and peace. General Secretary Gorbachev, if you seek peace, if you seek prosperity for the Soviet Union and eastern Europe, if you seek liberalization, come here to this gate. Mr. Gorbachev, open this gate. Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!"

Roosevelt

Theodore Roosevelt

Excerpt from "Citizenship in a Republic," April 23, 1910

"It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat."

Kipling

Rudyard Kipling, *If*

If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you;
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too;
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or, being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or, being hated, don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise;

If you can dream—and not make dreams your master;
If you can think—and not make thoughts your aim;
If you can meet with triumph and disaster
And treat those two impostors just the same;
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to broken,
And stoop and build 'em up with wornout tools;

If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
And never breathe a word about your loss;
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the Will which says to them: “Hold on”;

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with kings—nor lose the common touch;
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you;
If all men count with you, but none too much;
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run—
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And—which is more—you'll be a Man, my son!

Shakespeare

William Shakespeare - *Julius Caesar*

"Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears;
I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him.
The evil that men do lives after them;
The good is oft interred with their bones;
So let it be with Caesar. The noble Brutus
Hath told you Caesar was ambitious:
If it were so, it was a grievous fault,
And grievously hath Caesar answer'd it.
Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest—
For Brutus is an honourable man;
So are they all, all honourable men—
Come I to speak in Caesar's funeral.
He was my friend, faithful and just to me:
But Brutus says he was ambitious;
And Brutus is an honourable man.
He hath brought many captives home to Rome
Whose ransoms did the general coffers fill:
Did this in Caesar seem ambitious?"

When that the poor have cried, Caesar hath wept:
Ambition should be made of sterner stuff:
Yet Brutus says he was ambitious;
And Brutus is an honourable man.
You all did see that on the Lupercal
I thrice presented him a kingly crown,
Which he did thrice refuse: was this ambition?
Yet Brutus says he was ambitious;
And, sure, he is an honourable man.
I speak not to disprove what Brutus spoke,
But here I am to speak what I do know.
You all did love him once, not without cause:
What cause withholds you then, to mourn for him?
O judgment! thou art fled to brutish beasts,
And men have lost their reason. Bear with me;
My heart is in the coffin there with Caesar,
And I must pause till it come back to me."



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