

### 3 Ways to Calm Nerves before Public Speaking

Most people fear public speaking more than death. As dramatic as it sounds, statistics on the subject consistently rank the fear of public speaking #1 on the list of all fears. In fact, nearly 75% of the population shares this fear. Considering everyone, at some time in their lives will be asked to speak in public, this poses a huge obstacle.

What's a speaker to do? If you're lucky, you will just experience some discomfort and anxiety and get through it. Unfortunately, many people freeze, verbally stumble or spiral into a melt-down ruining their reputation. The good news is that there are techniques to trick your body and your brain into feeling comfortable.

**Here are 3 ways to calm nerves before public speaking:**

1. **Slow Breathing** – Like an athlete, controlling your breathing is essential to making it to the finish line without collapsing. Before taking the stage, take some private moments to very slowly inhale through your nose for several seconds and exhale through your mouth for several seconds. Follow this pattern until you feel your heart rate slowing down. Do this every time you begin to feel anxiety especially right before you speak.
2. **Find friendly faces** – It sounds simple, because it is. As you look out into the crowd, make eye contact with three friendly and engaged faces on the left, right and center of the room. Use those same faces as your focal points when you look into the audience. No one will ever know you're only making eye contact with three people—and the friendly feedback you get from them will give you confidence to get through your speech.
3. **Preparation** – The number one thing you can do to calm your nerves before public speaking is PREPARE! The more comfortable you are with your speech, the more confident you will be giving it. I don't recommend memorizing your speech unless you are skilled at doing so. Be familiar enough with your speech so that if you forget a few details it is easier to pick up and keep going.

For more tips on public speaking or to request a speech coaching session, contact [Anietra@AnietraHamper.com](mailto:Anietra@AnietraHamper.com).