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Introduction

Public speaking isn't something that everyone is used to. Some of us become jittery and break into a cold sweat even at the prospect of speaking to a handful of people. Why a group, some of us stammer and become nervous even when they have to speak to an unfamiliar person on a one-on-one basis.

But, if you take care of a few things, public speaking won't be all that difficult.

These are a few tips that will guide you.

Chapter 1:

Talking with Anyone – What Do You Need?

Summary

There are only a few things you need to know in order to speak effectively with just about anyone. The most important of them, of course, is confidence.

Talking with Anyone – What Do You Need?

If you are the type that sits alone at a party with a hundred people just because you don't know anyone there, you definitely need to improve your skills of communication. Communication is the key to anything – making friendships, striking business contracts, impressing people and even getting yourself a life partner. You cannot do any of these without talking with someone.

But if talking with someone unfamiliar is something that scares the heebie-jeebies out of you, you need a quick sizing up. Probably something is seriously wrong there. Talking is actually one of the natural things that we do – it is as natural as breathing for most of us – so what's holding you back.

Let us begin by trying to see the most important things that you will need in order to be able to talk with anyone.

*Note that I will always use the phrase 'talking with someone' here as opposed to 'talking to someone'. This is not about grammar, but it is more about what I think. Talking is not something you do alone. You do it **with** someone. It is not that you just keep on going blah-blah and the other person just listens. They are talking **with** you too. It is a collaborated effort.*

Confidence

The first thing you need to start any kind of conversation is confidence. Here confidence basically means that you should have some knowledge of your self-worth. You should know that you amount to something and that is what you need to project when you are trying to open a conversation with someone. It is only when they understand that listening to you will mean something to them will they take the time. However, your confidence will only show when you are really

happy with your self-worth. Hence, this is more about a self-evolvement thing than personality development.

Be Considerate

I would say this is what gives the power to keep any conversation going. What does being considerate mean in this context? It simply means this – You have to be as much aware of the other person as you are about yourself. If you get a break at a conversation with someone, it does not mean that you will just go on rambling about yourself. Give an equal opportunity to the other to speak. Listen to what they say. Ask about them. Make them feel important in the talk too.

Be Diverse

You may start with a single topic, but if you want to keep a conversation going on, it is best to be diverse. Once you know what the person likes, you could continue talking about that subject. But it would be foolish to talk about Hollywood thrillers to a person who hasn't ever watched a movie, wouldn't it? You must make an effort to keep broadening your vistas of knowledge all the time. Remember that the more you know the more will you be able to talk.

Remember

A conversation commits partial suicide when you forget an important detail about someone. It would be ridiculous if you have been speaking with someone for fifteen minutes and you have already forgotten their name which they mentioned. On the other hand, if you speak specifically to someone about something that pertains to them, you will almost always get a good reply. A good memory is vital to good conversation; I have always experienced that.

Chapter 2:

What Does Breaking the Ice Actually Mean?

Summary

People speak about breaking the ice so very often without really understanding what it implies. Here is what it should mean to you.

What Does Breaking the Ice Actually Mean?

One of the terms that we use very often in our colloquial talk is 'breaking the ice'. If there is a really sexy girl in college or a handsome hunk and you manage to get a few words out of her or him for the first time, you say you have broken the ice with them. If there is someone superior to you at work and you have always been aloof and then suddenly you get them to talk with you, you say that you have broken the ice. So, does breaking the ice just mean getting on communicating terms with someone new? Or is there more to it than we generally imply?

I would say breaking the ice means getting the person interested in you. It is not just about getting them to use their vocal cords; it is about getting them interested in you at least to a little extent so that they feel it worthwhile to say something in response. When you have broken the ice with someone, they most usually speak something in response to what you are saying. This means that what you told them has held their interest.

Think about the term itself. When ice is ice, it is solid. It is stubborn and hard. But when you break it, it becomes pliable at once. It becomes fluid and starts moving. It doesn't take it long to become warm water. But as long as it is ice, it will continue to be hard. So, when you break the ice with someone, you are actually turning someone who is cold toward you into a warm, responsive person.

In other words, breaking the ice is the beginning step to any conversation.

How do you get that to happen?

All the rules I have stated in the first chapter work. You can use them, all at once, to make speaking with unfamiliar people a definite possibility. But you have to take the initiative here. Don't assume everyone to be frank and friendly and free-

spirited. For most people, you will have to break the ice. This may be the route to a potential friendship or business collaboration or maybe even a relationship.

Think about it.

Break the ice more often than you do.

Chapter 3:

Asking Him or Her for a Date

Summary

*It is considered to be a very difficult thing to do. Asking someone for a date.
Probably because there are just two definite answers here – ‘yes’ and ‘no’.*

Asking Him or Her for a Date

Let me make clear here, right from the start. In this chapter, and in all the chapters that follow, what I am going to tell you is how to start talking with people. Or, rather, how to get people talking with you. However, no one can guarantee the results of such communication. There are many factors at play when you talk. No one can tell you what will happen as a consequence. But at the same time you have to know that most fruitful opportunities are lost just because people don't start the communication. So, when you learn how to talk with people, how to break the ice, you are already improving your playing field.

People think approaching someone for a date is a very difficult task. However, if you go about it the right way, you will at least be able to open the conversation and know if it is a 'yes' or 'no'.

Here are the steps you can use to go about it.

1. Be confident. Think how you will open up the conversation. If the boy or girl you are approaching has some common link with you, you could have something to talk about in that context. Otherwise, you could speak about the situation in which you find each other. Like, if you see him or her sitting at the food plaza in a mall and eating alone, you could walk up to him or her and ask, "Hello, could I join you? I have seen you eating alone here often." Yes, being honest works here. If you have seen them, you have seen them.
2. Always keep taking the hints. If they like you, it will be an immediate 'yes'. A reluctant 'yes' will mean that you have to work on it. A 'no' means you have to move elsewhere.
3. If you are sitting with them, keep foraging for topics to talk about. Don't worry; the communication lines are open now. You now have to observe

- the hints. If they like something, talk about it. Don't downgrade it right away. That could mean a polite excuse and the end of the conversation.
4. Plan in advance where you will ask them if the situation for a date seems to form itself. Ask them casually. Ask them, "Have you been to China Joe? I hear that's a good Chinese place to eat." If they say they haven't, ask them if they are interested in Chinese food. Basically, get to know them. Chances are, if they like you they will say 'yes' to accompany you even if they don't like Chinese.
 5. Start small. Don't plan an elaborate date right from the start. They will be more at ease to accompany you at a fast food outlet first than at a seven course buffet restaurant. Also, for the first date choose a place where you can get some privacy but not too much privacy. That might scare them.

Most importantly, stay confident. It isn't going to be the end of the world if they say 'no'. If at any point in the conversation they refuse, don't be depressed. It is their loss, not yours! Tell yourself that and move on!

Chapter 4:

Approaching Your Job Interview as though You Own Them!

Summary

A lot of people are nervous about a job interview. It could be a life-changing experience in many situations. It is no wonder that more than half the people are scared to death about facing interviews.

Approaching Your Interview as though You Own Them!

So you got that all-important call for the job interview that you were rooting for. Now, everything depends on how the interview goes. Enough to put pressure upon your shoulders, right? But do you think you are going to nail that interview if you go with all that pressure?

You must approach your job interviews with care. You have to show them that you know your stuff, but at the same time you must not come across as brash. You have to walk a fine line here – not seem insolent but at the same time you must not seem submissive either. The impression you generate during your job interview stays with you throughout your career life.

Here is how you must prepare yourself.

1. Tell yourself that you have got this interview. Let it seem real to you. Now, you have to become practical about it. You should not let this chance pass you by.
2. Repeat this several times – *“They called me because they found something good in my résumé”*. This will help boost your confidence like nothing else can. You will realize that there’s some quality about you that they liked.
3. The day you go for the interview, don’t work yourself too much. Dress subtly, and do some breathing exercises before entering the interviewing hall. Yes, this helps.
4. Introduce yourself to them with a firm handshake if within reach. If not, make good eye contact which shows them you aren’t nervous.
5. You must have already researched on what they ask during interviews. Prepare your pitch well. The advantage here is that you don’t have to break the ice, because they will speak with you first. They will ask you to walk them through your résumé. You should have this ready. Focus on the

positive points and make sure that they hear them, but don't dwell on a particular area too much.

6. If there is something quirky about your résumé, they will definitely ask you about that. Keep a reply ready. You must know that it is the most fruitful if you could be honest in your replies.
7. Most times, they will ask you your opinion on something. This is the clinching point actually. Make sure you say something creative. Don't hold back, and don't cross any lines. Remember that this question might come out of the blue, when you think everything has relaxed. Be prepared for such assaults.
8. They may also ask you your strengths and weaknesses. Again, be upfront and honest. Don't overemphasize your plus points. Don't dwell too much on your weaknesses. Act as though they are quite commonplace, everyone has them.

You have done your best. Now, wait for them to decide whether they can take you. If the call doesn't come, you can at least seek solace in the fact that you did not make a mistake.

Chapter 5:

Public Speaking – How to Appear and Be Confident Onstage

Summary

Public speaking is a nightmare for most people. Here is what you can do to make the best at it if the chance arises.

Public Speaking – How to Appear and Be Confident Onstage

You would be surprised to know that a lot of eminent public speakers still mention about their stage-fright. We are social animals, but when it comes to facing a crowd in a commanding manner, many of us falter. Here are some points that can help you do better:-

1. The first thing you must do is practice. You must go through the topic you are going to speak about several times over. If you are called to speak on something extempore, this can't be done, but let us assume you have a notice, however short it is. Rehearse the speech in your mind.
2. While rehearsing, you must actually mentally place yourself on the stage. Don't think about the empty walls that surround you right now, think about the several eager ears that will be sitting in front of you. This puts new pep into your practicing and actually motivates you to practice more.
3. The first sentence is your ice-breaker here. If you deliver it well, the rest of the speech usually becomes a breeze. Make sure you practice it the most.
4. Now, keep one thing in mind. Your audience is very much interested in hearing what you have to say. They aren't going to heckle you. In fact, they will encourage you by giving applause or a laugh at the right moment. Understand that your audience is with you – they are probably considering you are superior to them because you are the one talking.
5. Always keep a few great jokes ready, especially to tell them at the start. When you see your audience laughing at what you say, you feel more relaxed. The nervousness tides away.
6. Focus on what you are trying to say, not on your words. This is extremely important. It is all right if you slur some words or if some words come out of your mouth ungrammatically. What's important is that your message should be conveyed.

7. If you make a mistake or if you have a slip-up, there is no need to be apologetic. Your audience is human; they understand such things. In most cases, people don't even notice small speech errors.
8. Keep practicing. Don't let any opportunity to speak to a crowd pass you by. When you speak more, you are able to deliver better.

Think of yourself as important and you will be able to do a lot better. For that, you will need confidence; you will need to know your self-worth.

Chapter 6:

Scoring a Hit with Your Very First Lecture

Summary

If you are called to lecture a group of people on a subject that you are knowledgeable in, there are several things that can come in the way. One of them is the nervousness of having to speak with a crowd.

Scoring a Hit with Your Very First Lecture

Things can go very wrong if you aren't prepared for delivering a lecture that you have been called for. Lecturing is a different type of communication, but it is communication all the same. If you want to make sure that you succeed in your lecturing, here are the things that can help you.

1. Confidence is of paramount importance. In fact, there is no reason why you shouldn't be confident. When you are lecturing some people, those people are seeking to learn something and you are the one with the knowledge. Automatically, you are at a more superior pedestal than they are. They trust in you already, to an extent.
2. Make your entry in the classroom with flair. They should know that their lecturer has entered and not just another student. Dress well and carry yourself with grace. A good entry marks the beginning of a good lecture.
3. Don't just bombard them with your name. It is a better idea to tell them what you are going to instruct them on, give them a few lines of what they should expect to be doing during your lectures and then give your name. Don't ask their individual names, but tell them that you would like to know their names and will ask them one by one when you interact with them.
4. Speaking of interaction, keep your lecture interactive. You will find that you can communicate to a much greater degree that way. Ask them simple things, like their opinion on a particular point, what they would have done if they were in place of the subject and so on. Make them think, make them ponder. That keeps them away from judging you. It keeps them engrossed.
5. Be thorough with what you will be lecturing them on. You should know your subject inside-out, especially if you are going to allow them to ask questions at the end.
6. It is all right to take pauses in the course of your speaking. In fact, that's one advantage of keeping your lecture interactive. During the short intervals you give them to think, you can take a moment to gather yourself.

7. Close with confidence too. Summarize all the points of your lecture, because your audience will be more alert toward the end of your lecture than they were during it, and sign off with a smile.

People will judge you at the first lecture itself. But if you always keep in mind that these people don't know something and you are instructing them on that, you get the confidence you need to keep going.

Chapter 7:

How to Speak with Your Business Clients and Always Win!

Summary

It could be very important to you to speak with a business client. All you get is a few minutes and you have to impress them in that duration. Here is how you can tackle this, something that seems to be a tall order.

How to Speak with Your Business Clients and Always Win!

It is actually easier to speak with a client than with anyone else because of the fact that the pressure is less. I don't mean to say there isn't any pressure at all, but it isn't as bad a situation as speaking on stage can be, right? For that reason, you can hold better conversations with them. Also, since both of you are probably well-versed in your areas, are professional people and looking for something that can interest both of you, it becomes easier to have the conversation.

These are some things that you need to keep in mind:-

1. Remember that clients like to speak a lot about themselves. They will want to tell you what they are looking for, how their business is placed, where you come in, etc. Give them a patient ear. In fact, ask questions to keep them going. It helps you overcome your nervousness in speaking with them and you know more about them, which means you, can review the deal in your mind.
2. Your clients will ask you questions too. Answering them is a good way to open the conversation.
3. Remember that the client probably needs you as much as you need them. You may have competition, but the fact that they have even considered an interview with you means that you have as good a chance as anyone else.
4. When you are speaking with them, speak directly about the business. This is the first thing that a business client likes to hear. The small talk can wait; you can get into that if you see things are warming up.
5. Speak about what you do because that's what you know best. It also builds your confidence. When you are done, ask them questions that you think they would like to answer.

6. Do not lose your confidence even if the meeting gets rough. Many clients return even after bad meetings. The most important thing is that you keep your chin up and keep answering and asking questions.
7. Talk money afterward. Don't bring it initially into the picture. When you have fully understood your role in the deal, the talk about money will start.
8. Keep smiling and keep listening to the client. Many times, this is what really works in clinching the deal.

If you follow these things, you have done your best. After this, the result of the meeting isn't in your hands.

Chapter 8:

Speaking with Famous People and Celebrities

Summary

Being celebrity-struck doesn't help when you have to speak with someone famous. There are some methods that you have to follow.

Speaking with Famous People and Celebrities

So you meet a heartthrob at the mall. You find people hounding him or her as though there isn't anyone else alive on the planet. But you want their autograph badly. You catch a still moment where you can make your move. But can you trust your voice to carry you through?

It can be very nerve-wracking for most people to go up to a celebrity and speak with them. However, there are some ways you can use in order to do this.

1. You have to keep the realization alive that the person who is the object of your desire is also human, just as you are. They also suffer from the same kinds of emotional upheavals as we do. Probably they want someone to talk to as well. When you think this way, approaching them for a conversation becomes much easier.
2. You must also remember that celebrities love talking. Given half a chance, and if nothing isn't occupying their mind currently, they will start talking with you.
3. You begin the conversation by walking up to them, keeping very cool about yourself. Don't get hyper-excited; most celebrities love this cool approach. It gives them a welcome respite from the screaming and screeching fans that they are usually surrounded with.
4. Open the conversation by mentioning some of the work they have done and what you have liked. Celebrities always like to hear their praise! But be frank, if you want to hear some good words in return. Most celebrities will be able to tell when they are being put on.
5. Ask for an autograph right away. You will probably get one.
6. If you have to deal with a famous person for a longer time such as officially accompany them for an event, even then these rules will apply. The ice-breaker will always be talk about some work they have done. Then you

could move on to talking more specific things relating to the event you are both sharing.

Most importantly, remember that celebrities won't bite your head off and they won't call security on you all the time as they show in the movies. Even they are interested in what their audience has to say about them and hence they will lend you a good ear.

Chapter 9:

Being a Leader... How Communication Helps

Summary

You cannot be a leader without being a good communicator first.

Being a Leader... How Communication Helps

Leadership is of two kinds – the first is an inborn quality while the other is when it is thrust upon you. But in either case, if you want to stay on top as a leader, it is very important to learn how to communicate with people. It is only when you talk with them can you get to know their ideas, which can help you immensely in forming your own opinions, and also tell them your decisions and plans. If you, as a leader, are afraid to speak with the people whom you lead, you will not survive for long in that position.

And that is true whether you are the leader of a dozen people or a hundred thousand people. You need communication skills to stamp your importance.

1. As in all other forms of communication, you have to have one thing – confidence. You have to be confident that you can lead these people. When you are confident, you speak straight. You don't slur. You don't repeat things. You don't mince words. People take you as a straightforward speaker and that helps.
2. Be sure of what you will be telling. If you are sure about that, you won't find it difficult to tell them what you have to.
3. When you have to announce something, it's not a very good idea to blurt it out right away. Keep at least one or two sentences of introduction to what you are saying. This will make your audience attentive and it will also help you focus on the main topic that you are going to talk about.
4. Keep things interactive. Allow questions and answers. When people talk, the pressure of keeping talking alone isn't on you. You can even take a moment's breather from time to time to collect yourself.
5. Be friendly with your team. You may think being too friendly is nonproductive, but it actually works. When you are friendly with your team, you aren't intimidated about speaking with them.

Once you have spoken your first few words, you will find that the speaking process itself isn't so difficult anymore. But maintaining a leadership is a continuous process and it pegs on various factors; speaking is just one part of it.

Chapter 10:

The 3 Ingredients for Any Kind of Successful Public Communication

Summary

Successful public communication requires some important factors. These are the three you just cannot do without.

The 3 Ingredients for Any Kind of Successful Public Communication

If you are looking at being a pro at public communication, whether it is about asking someone for a date or to ask the public to vote for you, there are three important things that you will need.

Be confident in yourself.

Lack of confidence comes across very poorly in communication. People don't like speaking with people who don't know what they are trying to say. It is all right even if you have to mentally rehearse what you will say before the occasion. It helps you stay focused on what you have to say. Don't speak too hastily or too slowly. Speak confidently. If you are confident about yourself as a person, you will find that your speech automatically improves.

Listen to others.

Listening to others gives you a great break in the conversation where you can reflect on what you have to say further. But, more importantly, it helps you strike a better chord with the others because they feel that you are sensitive to them. Just going on blabbing about yourself doesn't help you much.

Hold their interest.

Conversations become successful only when you are able to hold the listener's interest. You might be speaking with ten different people every day. Do you think the same things interest all ten of them? If you can understand what people like and then talk in related realms, it really helps. To be able to do this, you will also need a good memory. You will need to remember what different people like and speak with them accordingly. But it will all pay off in the end.

Conclusion

Once you get the hang of it, you will find that speaking is a really beautiful thing. It is educational, it is entertaining and it brings you closer to people.

But you have to start speaking for all of that to happen.

You now know how you can begin doing that, whether it is for a date or an autograph. Or, speaking on stage in front of a thousand people!

All the best to you!!!

