

## Building Confidence (Speech: Chapter 2)

### I. Understanding Stage Fright

#### A. What is Fear?

- a. “**Biological** process by which animals, including humans, secure the necessary energy to do a job that really matters—one that might potentially result in physical and/or psychological injury” according to Dr. William Guys of Western Michigan University.
  - i. Regular energy—food, air, and rest
  - ii. Emergency energy—adrenaline
- b. Fight or Flight Syndrome
  - i. Work through the fear or run from it
  - ii. Depending on circumstances determines which is the right way to react

#### B. What are the Symptoms?

- a. Forget the words
- b. Upset stomach
- c. Flushed face
- d. Dizziness
- e. Fast heartbeat
- f. Shortness of breath
- g. Excessive
- h. Perspiration
- i. Wobbly legs (either before or after the speech)

#### C. Reasons for the Symptoms

- a. Body is flooded with energy
- b. Dislike of being evaluated or judged

#### D. Overcoming Fear

- a. Accurate perception of our audience
- b. Accurate perception of our speech
- c. Accurate perception of ourselves

### II. Establishing an Accurate Perception

#### A. Your Perception of the Audience

- a. Research proves audiences typically notice no or little anxiety in a speaker
- b. Audiences will forgive errors if they feel:
  - i. You really care about what you are saying
  - ii. You really care about them

#### B. Your Perception of the Speech

- a. See your speech as sharing information **NOT** a putting on a performance

- b. Your speech is a part of you—something that you care about
- C. Your Perception of Yourself
  - a. Have confidence in yourself, and know no one is born confident—it must be built
  - b. Know that failure is a chance to grow
  - c. Remember you are human
  - d. Remember this is not the end of the world—you will have another opportunity
  - e. Laugh and everyone will laugh with you
- D. What Have You Learned about Perception?
  - a. Perception is a key element in building confidence
  - b. Don't be tricked by your mind
- III. Examining the Planks of Confidence
  - A. **Content**
    - a. Select a worthwhile topic
    - b. Have evidence to back up your ideas—do the legwork (research)
  - B. **Organization**
    - a. Use an outline that is easy for you and your audience to follow
    - b. Offer clarity and sequence—don't always be spontaneous
  - C. **Notes**
    - a. Use notes—preferably a notecard in outline format
      - i. Do NOT put too many words on a single notecard
      - ii. Do NOT use too many notecards
    - b. Used correctly they can be the training wheels for your speech
      - i. Do NOT read the notecard to your audience
      - ii. You still HAVE to prepare for the speech
  - D. **Friendliness**
    - a. With it your audience will be much more forgiving of any errors
    - b. Without it your audience may tune you out
    - c. See the audience as individuals not a collective mass
  - E. **Impression**
    - a. First impressions ARE everything
    - b. “55% of what others think of you is determined before you ever open your mouth”
    - c. Appearance makes a difference
  - F. **Dedication**
    - a. Practice, practice, practice FOR REAL
      - i. Do NOT simply read your notes—actually practice your speech aloud
      - ii. Do NOT stop writing or practicing after only the introduction and conclusion
      - iii. Practice more than just the words

1. Practice the eye contact
2. Practice movement
3. Practice voice clarity, strength, and tone

**G. Empathy**

- a. Understand your audience—know you are not the only one to ever feel nervous
- b. Know the audience’s behavior may have nothing to do with you and your speech
  - i. The audience may have outside issues affecting their behavior—i.e. Problems at home, etc.

**H. Newness**

- a. Have something new or original to say—this brings newness to an old topic
  - i. Personalize your speech with a personal story

**I. Conviction**

- a. Really believe what you are wanting to share
- b. “If you are confident about the importance of your message, then your audience is more likely to be persuaded” (pg. 43).

**J. Enthusiasm**

- a. Intellectually—so your mind is sharp and alert
- b. Physically—so your body is actively involved
- c. Great outlet for nervous energy
- d. Enthusiasm is catching