



## Use Emotional Intelligence To Address Speech Anxiety

by Gleb Tsipursky & Patrick Donadio | Self Leadership

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What do you feel when you imagine standing up in front of an audience? Visualize the bright lights in your face, see all those people looking at you and expecting you to deliver a top-notch performance. Do butterflies start fluttering about in your stomach? Do your palms start to sweat? Does your head get light?

Leaders at all levels of organizations – from the bottom to the top – need to be good at giving speeches. This is a skill that becomes increasingly important as you grow in your career. Yet research shows the large role played by [speech anxiety](#) in blocking our ability to give great speeches. Fortunately, a few tips can go a long way to build up confidence and address fears around public speaking. [Research shows](#) that those individuals given some tips and training in public speaking were able not only to improve their own communication, but successfully taught others how to give better speeches. Therefore, training in public speaking works, hands down!

The keys to overcoming fear are mental preparation and practice. Emerson said, “*Do the thing you fear and the death of fear is certain!*” Now, you are never going to get rid of it totally, but we can help you get rid of most of it.

### Dealing with Fear

Recognize that the first thing to do is to deal with the fear itself rather than focus on the speech. Sure, some anxiety is useful. It gets adrenaline going and can give you energy and enthusiasm. Yet beyond that limited amount, if you don’t deal with the fear, you won’t be able to give a great speech, no matter how hard you try.

This fear comes from your [emotional self](#), not your rational self. It’s not helpful for you to have fear to achieve your goal of giving a great speech, but your emotional self doesn’t know that. You need to use [intentional thinking](#) strategies to manage your emotions in order to reach your goals.

To address your fear, remember you are not unique in your fear. There would not be the [extensive research](#) on speech anxiety if you were! Scientists even have a special term for this fear – [glossophobia](#). Knowing that this term exists, and that it is a well-studied topic, should relieve some fear for you.

### Be Positive!

Next, apply the [science-based strategy](#) of positive self-talk. Give yourself a pep talk and psych yourself up. You can do this in many different ways. Some people meditate, others pray, others listen to music, and others go jogging. There are many different ways to get your energy level high. Whatever works for you, do it! If you’re not prepared mentally, you won’t be prepared.

Besides positive self-talk, use [positive thinking](#). If you want to be an effective public speaker, you have to believe in yourself. If you do not believe in yourself, how do you expect other people to believe in you? Remind yourself that you know more about the topic than the audience does. Now, you can expect a few people out there may be more knowledgeable. You are not going to know more than everybody does. However, chances are if you done your homework and picked a topic you know about you will know more than most people in your audience.

In this post, part 1, we focused on internal emotional management strategies to address speech anxiety. In part 2 (scheduled to be published on October 6), we will focus on external strategies to address fears and anxieties through managing your body and practicing for the big day!

**This post was co-written by Patrick Donadio and Gleb Tsipursky**

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Have you found effective strategies to help you speak confidently in public? Tell us about them via the comments!