

Engaging your Audience

by Charlotte LeVasseur

I. Introduction

A. **Why am I standing here?**

1. Charter member of Toastmasters club for approx. 10 years
2. Club President and Advanced Level speaker
3. Hundreds of speeches, stories, presentations, contests
4. Briefly talk about first speech and how toastmaster helped
5. What is in it for you?
 - a. Builds confidence
 - b. Eliminates the shakes = nerves
 - c. Creates a smooth presentation that is enjoyable
 - d. Keeps people engaged

II. Positives and negatives

AA **Find your hook!** Use a prop when appropriate

A. **What to do?**

1. Become familiar with your surroundings
 - a. Know where to find the bathrooms, emergency exits, handicap entries
 - b. What can and cannot be touched
2. Know your audience
 - a. Gauge your presentation to all age levels
3. Make eye contact with people all through the audience
4. Lean forward a little toward your audience
5. Use opened hand gestures with palms facing upward and out
6. Another useful pose is to hold your hands behind your back
 - a. The men in the Royal family use this.

7. Speak slowly, carefully and be concise
 - a. Visitors from other countries and folks from other regions of the US need time to process English spoken in our unique regional accent.
 - b. Emphasize key words or phrases that make a point
8. Practice speaking, practice speaking, practice speaking.
 - a. Use your cell phone to capture a video of yourself speaking.
 - b. Speak in front of a mirror and watch how you present yourself
9. Most of all—FORGIVE YOURSELF!!!!
 - a. Everyone falls on their face or makes a mistake.
 1. Find your sense of humor.
 2. Make people laugh - people love those who poke a little fun at themselves. Engaging your Audience
10. Show your enthusiasm for your subject
11. You are on stage. You are trying to convince people to believe you until you tell them otherwise.

B. What not to do - don't

1. Look at the floor or over people's heads or put your hands in your pockets
2. Fold your arms across your chest
3. Use AH, UM, UH, you know, okay, slang words, connecting phrases with the word "and" in between
4. Speak fast or ramble on and on
5. Try to put too much information in your story
 - a. All that can be found in the history books
6. Make excuses or apologize
7. Criticize or make derogatory comments
8. Fidget or pace back and forth.

III Remember that you are a gift - treat yourself kindly.

Resources from YouTube:

- [Public Speaking for Beginners](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i5mYphUoOCs) by Alex Lyon
- [The Power of Words](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lqq1roF4C8s) by Mohammed Qahtani
- [6 Public Speaking Tips to Hook Any Audience](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k8GvTqWtR7o) by Charlie from Charism on Command using *The Power of Words* by Mohammed Qahtani