

# BUSINESS BASICS

## Make Presentations Without Fear

(NAPSA)—A little forethought may help you fight a common fear.

For most Americans, public speaking ranks among their worst fears. Surveys regularly find that high anxiety about giving a presentation scores at the top of lists that also include snakes and death. For as many as 20 million Americans, fear of public speaking can be serious enough to be classified as a mental health problem, according to psychiatric research.

There are many reasons speaking in front of a group is so troubling. Some people worry they'll be "exposed" as ignorant or incompetent. Others are concerned they'll make a bad mistake. Many people are just naturally shy. In one way or another, all these reasons trace to a lack of self-confidence.

Whatever the reason, the problem is serious, because the ability to deliver an effective presentation can be especially important to success on the job and career advancement in almost every business, industry and profession. Luckily, the ability to be an effective presenter can be within virtually everyone's reach. Experts who teach verbal communications skills agree that effective public speaking is learnable. "The best public speakers are made, not born," said Robert Geline, president of 144 Media LLC, a public relations firm with offices in New York City and the San Francisco area.

An Emmy Award-winning former broadcast journalist with a decade of experience in helping professionals of all kinds to become better communicators, Geline outlined a three-part process the pros know can lead to presentation success:

### **Understand Your Audience**

Determine the interests, needs

The best presenters make their first priority to determine the interests, needs and concerns of the audience they will be addressing.



and concerns of the audience you will be addressing. All audiences attend a presentation with the expectation that they will hear information that is useful to them and it's the speaker's job to provide it. "What's in it for me?" is the silent question in every listener's mind and one that every presenter needs to answer convincingly throughout the talk.

### **Prepare a Focused Message**

The best presenters know that long-winded anecdotes or jokes that don't make a point are not the stuff of winning presentations. They build the presentation around one or two central points that speak directly to the information needs of the audience and they make sure to support those points with relevant facts, data, and personal and professional experience.

### **Show Your Passion**

The way you deliver your presentation is as important as anything you say. It's not enough to tell your audience you're "so excited" to be speaking to them. If you do not show your passion and enthusiasm for your subject as you tell your story, you cannot expect your audience to be passionate or enthusiastic about what you are saying.

Experts agree that following this preparation strategy and making sure to practice your talk in advance will build your confidence and produce improved results when it's your turn to present.

### **Learn More**

Learn more at [www.144media.com](http://www.144media.com) or (212) 203-8182.