



# Conference Confidence: A Guide for More Effective Conference Speaking

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# Conference Confidence:

## A Guide for More Effective Conference Speaking

People and organizations invest valuable time, money, and effort into producing and attending conferences. But the truth is that all the slides, videos, lighting, staging, and materials are just support tools for the most valuable asset of a conference: the speakers. After the preparation and production are done, it's the presenters who carry the messages and motivation.

Drawing from our 50-year history as presentation coaches and consultants, we picked five of the most important questions for conference speakers and coordinators to ask themselves and each other, and offer some points to consider.

- Is your message interesting and organized?
- Are your visuals updated and appealing?
- Do you have a preparation and practice schedule in place?
- Are your oral and nonverbal presentation skills excellent?
- Do you have strategies for handling stress and nervousness?



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The key to a HIT – High Impact Talk – is having a clear, well-structured message, along with engaging stories and examples.

Speakers need to prioritize information for the allotted time. No matter how much of an expert you are, you won't be able to share all your knowledge in one talk. It's better to make three points well than thirty-three in a frenzy.



**Laurie Schloff**

Executive Conference Coaching Director  
[www.speechimprovement.com/laurie](http://www.speechimprovement.com/laurie)



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Many clients rely too heavily on their slides; we've all seen presentations like that. But your listeners value a great speaker more than a great slide. Be sure to say more than you show, so that you, not your slides, are running the show.

Introduce and then focus your audience on key elements in your graphics and media to help make your talk more clear. With photos, quotes, and key words, ten slides or less will best add to your message.



**Monica Murphy**  
Senior Coaching Partner  
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# Do you have a preparation and practice schedule in place?

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We all know confidence is important, but understanding how to build it is less obvious. An essential part is a well-thought-out preparation and practice schedule.

Let's say a key presentation is a month away – I'd suggest planning at least three weeks ahead, with about half your time devoted to preparation of your talk and visuals, and the rest devoted to frequent, short practice periods, so there is plenty of time for problem-solving and feedback.



**Jordan Piel**  
Conference Coach and Coordinator  
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# Are your oral and nonverbal presentation skills excellent?

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Do you have strategies for handling stress and nervousness?

Effective delivery refers to how you speak – your oral ‘image’, and how you look – your nonverbal image. Speakers need to learn to control their speed, hold interest, and articulate clearly.

In the nonverbal realm, comfort with techniques of purposeful gesturing, proper use of speaker space, and facial expression make a big difference in terms of having an impact on listeners.

In short, mastering delivery and fine-tuning messaging are equally important in order for a speaker to be effective.



**Tori Hollingworth**

Senior Coach and Conference Specialist  
[www.speechimprovement.com/tori](http://www.speechimprovement.com/tori)



# Do you have strategies for handling stress and nervousness?

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Feeling nervous is very common, especially when the stakes are high. The good news is that psychological and physical discomfort can be controlled. When speakers learn things like breathing techniques and updated thinking patterns, stress is greatly reduced. Our coaches are highly trained to help clients practice their breathing to provide an immediate calming effect and process their thought process to control or eliminate the anxiety all together and speak with confidence.

Presenting at a conference is not only an honor – it's an opportunity to make an impact in your field. All the more reason to be the best speaker you can be!



**Dr. Ethan F. Becker**

President / Senior Coaching Partner  
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# Coaching Services for Conference Speakers

Facing hundreds or thousands of people can be overwhelming – stepping out onstage is not an everyday experience for most people. And even when a speaker is comfortable in front of an audience, refining presentation content and format and connecting with the themes of the event are key to achieving results.

We help conference presenters connect with listeners authentically and speak with confidence. Regardless of your proficiency, [The Speech Improvement Company](#) will take your speaking skills to the next level. We have helped thousands of professionals by delivering proven tools and techniques for:

- controlling nervousness
- conveying authenticity
- coordinating with production professionals
- creating high-impact, interactive moments
- developing stage presence and confidence
- enhancing oral and non-verbal delivery
- motivational speaking
- staying on theme
- storytelling
- refining messaging and scripts
- staying on time
- visual aids

## Who We Are

The Speech Improvement Company, head-quartered near Boston, Massachusetts, is the first speech and communications firm established in the United States. Since 1964, we have dedicated our careers to helping people in the art and science of communication. We help professionals become more comfortable, effective communicators through consulting, group training, public workshops, and individualized coaching.

Our clients range from small companies to large corporations, entrepreneurs, educators, media personalities, politicians, professional athletes, and anyone else who has to talk as a part of what they do!

For clients not local to our offices, we can travel to your site, and we offer convenient Skype-based coaching.

## Free 30-Minute Consultation

Contact us to learn more about our individual and group coaching services, or to arrange a free initial consultation with a conference coaching specialist.

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