



Your Anti-Anxiety, Fear-Busting, Butterfly-Taming Presentation Checklist

Giving a talk? Presenting to your board or your boss? Take a deep breath, don't panic, and pull out this checklist!

Prep Your Material:

- Topic.** Choose a subject you know well.
- Focus.** What one or two things do you want your audience to take away?
- Practice, Practice, Practice.** With slides, out loud, with a coach. The better you know your talk, the less nervous you'll be.
- Record Yourself.** If possible, tape your practice sessions, then review with and without sound for body language.
- Memorize Open and Close.** So you can deliver on auto-pilot through the adrenaline, until you relax into your talk.
- Anticipate Questions.** It tames the anxiety by reinforcing your knowledge, while also preparing you for what the audience may ask.
- “Plant” Questions.** If you can, assign a few questions to audience members to get the ball rolling.
- Use the Fear.** Use your anxiety as a nudge to practice regularly.
- Positive Self-Talk.** Talk positively, e.g., “Everything will be fine, I can do this!” to yourself about your presentation.
- Run Time.** Make sure that your talk runs to the amount of time you've been given, or a bit shorter.
- Backups.** Create backup copies of the presentation on your laptop, disk, external drive, and most importantly, a printed copy.
- The Venue.** If you can, visit the place where you'll be speaking.

The Night Before:

- Pack.** Pack as much as possible the night before your presentation.
- Directions?** Make sure you've got them, or that you've double-checked your GPS.
- Do You Have Your Backups?** Make sure you've got them, including the printed copy.
- Charge devices.** Charge your laptop and pack the power cable, if you will be using your own device.
- Venue Entry.** Make sure you have what you need to get into your venue: pass, badge, ticket etc.



Use this checklist for tips, strategies and tricks to reduce your nerves and let you concentrate on giving an informative, effective and entertaining presentation.

The Day Of:

- Eat.** Lightly, about an hour or so before you go on.
- Coffee & Tea.** Don't drink too much in the couple of hours before you go on.
- Arrive Early.** Find your room, make sure your setup is set up, check that everything you need is in place and working.
- Check Visibility.** Make sure your slides can be seen from all audience locations.
- Pre-Game Routine.** Visualize your coming experience and a positive outcome.
- Appearance.** Check your zippers and makeup, make sure there's no food stuck in your teeth
- Relative Importance.** Remember, no talk is "that" important.
- Audience on Your Side.** They want you to do well.
- Power Pose--Take up Space.** Use an expansive stance or "power" pose to release anxiety and increase feelings of being in charge.
- Breathe.** Consciously do a few rounds of deep breathing.
- Get Physical.** Walk briskly, jog in place, etc to burn off the adrenaline.
- Drink Water.** Bring your own bottle of water. Even if you're not thirsty, start drinking small sips about 15 minutes before you take the stage.

On Stage:

- Don't Begin too Soon.** Walk on stage, smile, count to 10, take a deep breath, and then start speaking.
- Be Open & Vulnerable.** Acknowledge your nervousness, let the audience in, use it to connect with them.
- It's Not About You.** Think about your audience: What do they need from you? How will your talk make their lives better?
- Scrunch.** Scrunch your toes, or squeeze your thumb and forefinger together. This will get rid of some more nervous energy.
- Find a Friend.** Scan the audience and choose a friendly face or two to focus on.
- Move.** But don't pace, rock or fidget. Use movement to heighten a moment or make a point.
- Audience Participation.** Even a question with a show of hands can make your audience feel like they are part of your talk.
- The Unexpected.** When they ask questions you can't answer, don't panic. Turn it into a positive: "I'm glad you brought that up..." and offer to get back to them with the answer.
- Emergency Plan.** Things outside your control will go wrong. If you practiced enough, you should be able to continue with your talk anyway!