

Your logo

# Speaking and presenting

SEMINAR EVENT

LESERKOPF



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## EXPLANATION

This introductory topic constitutes a first step toward successfully carrying out a speech or a presentation. It includes the most essential aspects you have to observe when speaking in front of an audience.

The introduction will provide you, in a generally comprehensible manner, with inspirations and tips in order to positively channel anxiety as well as captivate and maintain your audience's attention.

This script is not about preparing the content of a speech, nor does it deal with the question of employable tools for a presentation or the participants for whom the appeal is intended. These aspects are exhaustively discussed in the regular **TRAINPLAN**® seminar topics. The successful implementation of a speech or presentation is the sole focus of this introductory topic.

The inspirations should serve to create a convincing and effective speech – after all, your efforts serve a certain goal: informing your superior about the newest sales figures, or convincing customers of the benefits of a special offer. At any rate, your listeners should say at the end of your presentation: “This is the best I have ever heard about this topic!” Only then can you be sure that you have achieved the intended effect.

If your content is thoroughly prepared and if you take to heart the tips and hints in this introductory topic, you will already come across more convincingly merely due to your enhanced self-confidence.

**We wish you every success with your endeavors!**

## PERSONAL PREPARATION

*“If you want to ignite others, you have to use the fire within yourself!”*

**Augustinus**

Before turning your attention to specific techniques concerning your presentation, please take a look at some basics you have to create to be able to implement the tips described later.

Does the following situation seem familiar to you?

The big moment is upon you! Your pulse is starting to race; your palms are getting sweaty. You are shaking, and your knees are feeling like rubber. Your body is glowing with heat, and your throat feels constricted.

These are typical symptoms of stage fright.

It has been established by psychology that speaking in front of an audience is one of man's primal fears. The fear of speaking in public does not only befall the beginner but also the veteran, who has spoken in front of an audience a hundred times. And this is a good thing: Anxiety will make sure that you are totally awake and able to concentrate. Up to a certain extent, it proliferates your **performance capacity** – only when this extent is exceeded will you have the feeling of not being able to cope with the current task.

In order to get a grip on your fear and use your energy positively, there is a particularly effective tool: thorough preparation. This does not only include contextual preparation, but also your own **personal preparation**.

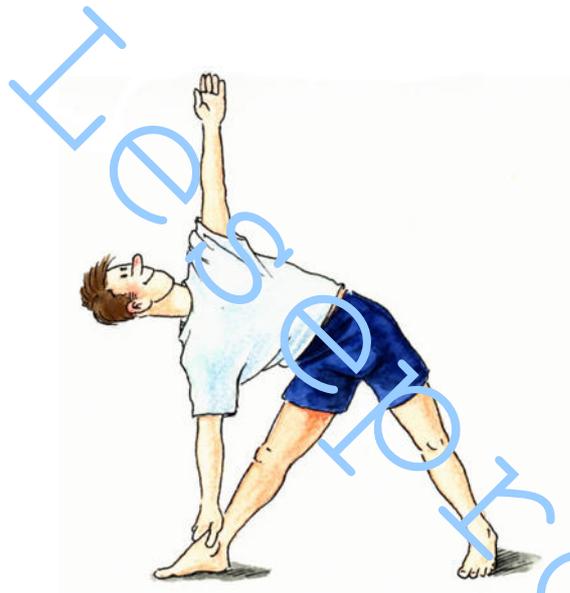
Disregard the unpleasant side effects of anxiety, and your stage fright will have the following effect: You are completely committed and are burning with the desire to get started. You can let this condition work to your advantage if you are able to shake off your physical discomfort and to **channel** your energy correctly and effectively. You are already on fire – to stick with the quote from Augustinus, all you have to do now is let the spark ignite your participants.

Positively channel  
fear and nervousness

## Calming your body

If you are already nervous hours before the seminar, this is a sign that your inner anxiety transfers itself onto your body. It is particularly important to give yourself some **rest**.

Find a quiet place – maybe a room where you cannot be disturbed – and do something nice for your body: Stretch, conduct a few relaxation exercises, breathe deeply, stimulate your circulation, and supply your brain with oxygen.



If you are so anxious that you can hear the beat of your heart in your ears, try calming down your pulse: Inhale deeply and slowly through your nose, hold your breath and mentally count up to three. Then, slowly exhale through your mouth. Repeat this breathing technique for a few minutes. You will notice your heart rate slowing down.

If you are tense and cramped and cannot ease this condition through physical exercise and breathing techniques, make use of the following **brief relaxation technique**. It can be repeated as required.

Reduce physical tension

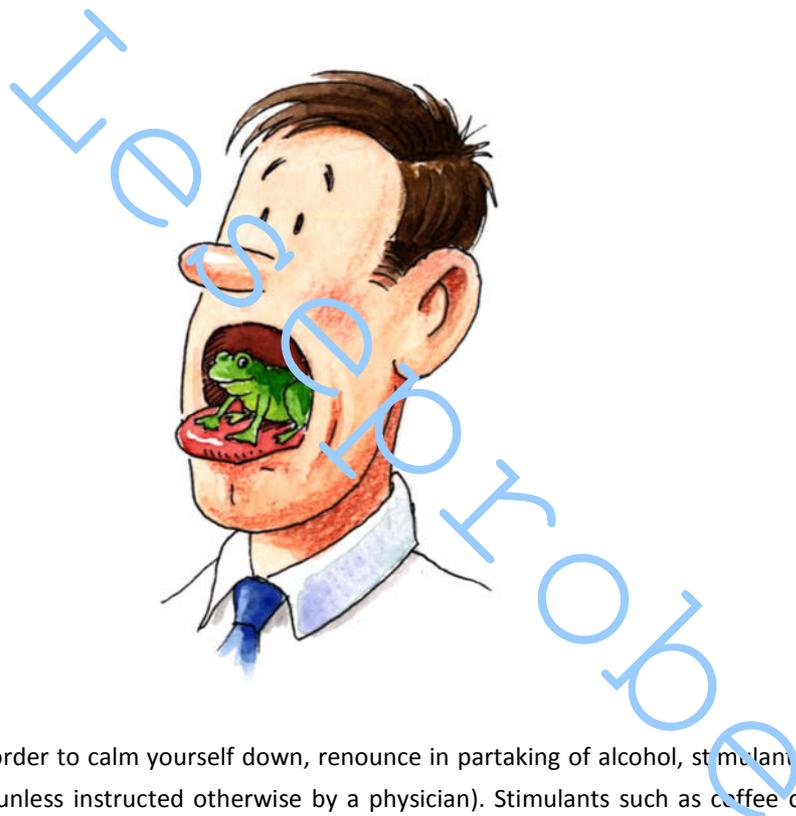
### Exercise: Relaxing quickly!

- Sit down comfortably, and close your eyes.
- Fold your hands behind your head. Push your elbows back, and press your hands firmly against your head.
- Press teeth and lips firmly together.
- Then stretch your legs and point the tips of your feet downward. All muscles are tense. Breathe calmly through your nose, hold your breath, and flex the muscles in your stomach.
- Hold this position for about five seconds. Count quietly: "1 and 2 and 3 and 4 and 5."
- Then, slowly exhale through your mouth, relax your muscles, and let your members hang down. Feel your body.
- Remain in this position for a few minutes. Breathe calmly. Imagine sinking down like a wet pillow.
- Before getting up, tell yourself: "I am calm and relaxed. I am awake and refreshed. **I will inspire my audience!**"

### Things you should avoid

If, during or before the event, you feel a constriction in your throat, make sure to solve this problem **gently**. Avoid clearing your throat too frequently. This would only damage your vocal chords, and you are still going to need them.

It is much better to cough properly and then have a glass of lukewarm water. This will make your vocal chords supple. Form the habit of regularly gargling with water in order to take gentle care of your vocal chords.



At any rate, in order to calm yourself down, renounce in partaking of alcohol, stimulants, or medication (unless instructed otherwise by a physician). Stimulants such as coffee or Coke have a reverse effect: They do not calm you down but – as the name suggests – will make you more jittery even if, in the short term, they can help increase your concentration.

Alcohol, on the other hand, decreases your inhibitions – but this is a double-edged sword: a little too much and you may lose control of what you do or say. For the sake of a successful event, it is best to refrain from drinking alcohol.

Go easy on your  
vocal cords

Avoid stimulants

## Calming your mind

The most important thing at first is not to ponder upon everything that might happen during your event. Nervousness and anxiety are largely based on the fear of forgetting important aspects or being subjected to a complete blackout.

Have **confidence** in your own abilities! You will not forget anything. At the right time, you will be able to formulate all important thoughts clearly and precisely. Your stage fright is the best indicator: Your body mobilizes all its energy for the moment when it counts.

Remember that you are thoroughly prepared. You are the expert. Your participants have come to benefit from your knowledge and skills, not to harass you. Remember:

**Realistic self-evaluation is the best path to success!**

Distraction is the word of the hour: Directly before the event, it is best to occupy yourself with something entirely different. For example, think of a nice experience or talk to some of your participants. That way, you may even be able to collect a few supporters before the event.

Distraction is the key  
to success!



## Maintaining a positive basic attitude

Prior to your event, try maintaining a **positive** basic attitude: Think of a similar situation that you have mastered with flying colors. Imagine how you will solve your task. Think of the enthusiasm of your participants, of the pride that you will feel, and of the praise that you will be given concerning your brilliant abilities. This form of autosuggestion works best in a state of **relaxation** – for example, directly after the relaxation technique that has been described.

Embrace the challenge that lies before you, and develop a positive basic attitude. Do not approach the task with resignation but with zeal and enthusiasm! This will enable you to convince your audience beyond the shadow of a doubt.

If you want to convince yourself of your own abilities prior to the event, invite some of your friends and acquaintances to a **mock seminar**. Conduct this “dress rehearsal” as if it was a real seminar. Afterwards, have your participants tell you what they liked in particular, and what you could possibly improve for the next time. That way, you will have a confirmation of your abilities as well as some inspiration with regard to improving your seminar – things that will reaffirm your plans and take away another cause of nervousness.

If you notice during the mock presentation that you do not want to rely exclusively on your memory, you can note down the most important aspects on small file cards. That way, you can be absolutely sure to have the right input at the right moment. It is usually enough to note down a meaningful **cue word** – the arguments connected to it should then come to mind immediately.

This is a psychological aid. You will probably not even need the cards during your presentation. The mere knowledge to be able to always look information up during the presentation greatly contributes to limiting your fear and nervousness. Just remember: You are optimally prepared – what is the worst that could happen?

Think positively!

Conduct a mock presentation

Make notes