

1. Cut it to the bare essentials - Outline the problem / reason for your speech within the first minute. Keep it as short as possible – be brutal! People switch off during long speeches so stick to the core essentials.

2. Use attention grabbers - Use a thought provoking quote or grab people’s attention with a question: “Hands up, who is feeling sleepy today? Now who is feeling anxious? 75% of people stated that it’s easier to talk about physical health than mental health...”

3. Anecdotes to evidence - Move from anecdotal, relatable examples into research or wider issues. Take people on a journey and finish on your most important point - the ‘why’ of your speech. Finish with actions to take away – ‘I’ll leave you with this thought...’

4. Own up if you don’t know - There is no shame in not knowing everything - no human does! So if you get an unknown question just be honest - “Good question, I don’t know the answer to that one – but I shall look it up later and email you”.

5. It’s about the message, not you - If it feels strange to be looked at, try not to think of the audience as looking at ‘you’ but concentrating on your message. You are helping people to learn. Focus on making that message clear and interesting, not on yourself.

6. Fake it til you make it - Pretend to be a confident speaker by standing straight with your shoulders down. Pause, breathe and smile before you begin speaking. Remember this is just one speech, a learning opportunity. Practise every chance you get. Every speech is a practise run, until one day when you look back and realise you’re a confident speaker.

7. Be relatable - Share real life examples or your own experiences. Put a bit of your personality into it - humour or compassion. Every person is engaging in their own unique way. Find out how you engage others by asking friends and build on your own unique skills.

8. Give people time to listen- Listening is a much slower process than reading. Use short sentences. Speak slower than your usual pace and pause after a key point to let it sink in. For a 5 minute speech, aim to share 3 key points with your audience. Less is more.

9. Learn from the best - Watch people who are good at telling stories such as TED Talk speakers – observe how they pause, gesture, use facial expressions and alter their voice. Everyone has to start somewhere, and observing others can boost your own skills.

10. Speak from the heart – Show people why it matters to you. Let your enthusiasm come through your words, gestures and facial expressions. People will not remember little mistakes but they will remember your passion. And when you finish speaking, remember to congratulate yourself before anything else– it’s a great accomplishment.