

Tips and Tricks for FOCUS 09 Speakers

1. Positive attitude, energy, and enthusiasm grab your audience's attention.
2. Group similar ideas together to establish memorable themes.
3. Prepare by rehearsing in front of a mirror.
4. Vary your pace and maintain eye contact to keep your audience's attention.
5. We make 11 judgments about a person within the first seven seconds. Make your first impression count!
6. Check out the equipment at least 10 minutes beforehand. Remember what Murphy says...
7. Write down the key message (one sentence) you want people to remember and post it all over your office. Write your presentation with that in mind.
8. Keep slides simple — Fewer slides and more anecdotes make a presentation more engaging.
9. Make sure the audience leaves the location feeling informed.
10. Involve the audience in the presentation as much as possible.
11. Structure your speech around three or four main points.
12. Keep the audience interested by having a few relevant anecdotes.
13. Summarize your main points in one sentence. Then repeat it — again and again.
14. End your presentation on a strong point. People remember the beginning and the end the most.
15. Pause when you ask your audience to look at a visual aid.
16. Count to 10 (1...2....3....) after asking, "What questions do you have?"
17. If you think your material is boring, your audience surely will. A good speaker can make the most uninteresting subject come alive.
18. Keep your hands out of your pockets when speaking.
19. Relax the hour before your speech.
20. Get a good night's sleep before your presentation.
21. Smile at your audience. They'll smile back.
22. Start imagining a successful presentation. Visualization can make a difference.
23. Pause briefly each time you make an important point.
24. Make your initial eye contact with someone whom you consider approachable.
25. Always close with a good, strong summary.
26. Remove change and keys from your pocket. You might play with them during your presentation.
27. Practice answering questions beforehand.
28. Divert hostile questions back to the questioner or the audience. (e.g. What do others think?)
29. After repeating the question, address answers back to the entire audience.

30. Look for ways to find common ground with your audience (e.g. similar business problem, same system, similar working environment, etc.).
31. Video yourself weeks beforehand, so YOU see what THEY see.
32. The audience doesn't know the order of your presentation, so don't apologize if you get out of order.
33. Rehearse, rehearse, rehearse.
34. A good visual is worth a thousand words.
35. Minimize builds and transitions, as too many can be distracting.
36. Use the 5 x 5 x 5 Rule. No more than five words per item, five bulleted items, and five text pages in a row.
37. Check spelling and grammar. Then, have someone else check it.
38. Conduct your sound check before being introduced. Your first sentence to the audience should NOT be, "Can you hear me?"
39. Most jokes offend...be careful. When in doubt, leave it out.
40. Caffeine, sugar, chocolate, and milk aren't good to consume beforehand. They can jitter the nerves or make you thirsty. Room temperate water is the best.
41. When running out of time, cut material — Don't speed up.
42. Write titles so they read like newspaper headlines. (e.g. "We Saved a Bundle" versus "Cost Analysis.")
43. Restate a person's question in different words to validate you understood it.
44. Breathe — Slow down and let the material sink in with your participants. A pause can go a long way.