

Presentation jitters



Talking in front of others is anxiety provoking for a lot of people. Here are some tips to help manage anxiety when you're presenting.

Before the presentation

- Familiarise yourself with the topic and ask questions if you are unclear of what is required.
- Get prepared early - do not leave it until the last minute. Know the content well. The more confident you are with the material the less anxiety you will experience.
- Practice your presentation in front of the mirror and/or supportive family and friends. Remember, the more practice you get the more confident you will feel and increased confidence can reduce anxiety.

On the day of the presentation

- Acknowledge any anxious thoughts or feelings you may be experiencing and recognise these are normal. Try not to worry about them as the more you worry the worse they will become.
- Reassure yourself "I'll be OK" and "I can do it".
- You can reduce the intensity of your anxiety by slowing down your breathing. Count slowly to five as you breathe in and then count to five as you exhale.
- Try tensing and releasing your muscles, starting with the muscles in your feet and working your way up your body to your head. This can help to reduce muscle tension and make you feel more relaxed.

During the presentation

- Accept your anxious feelings and thoughts, they may be uncomfortable but they will pass. You can control what you say and how you say it even though anxiety may be present.
- Concentrate on the content of the material you are presenting.
- Increase the normal volume of your voice and speak clearly.
- Anxiety can cause you to rush your words so try to speak slowly. This will also help to slow down your breathing and help you relax. If you find yourself rushing, take a three second break between slides/palm cards.
- Maintain an upright sitting or standing posture. You can relax a bit by occasionally moving your body rather than standing or sitting too rigidly.
- Make eye contact with your fellow students. Remember that the vast majority are supportive and either have, or will be, in the same situation presenting too. If making eye contact is difficult for you, pick a spot beside them in line with their eyes to focus on.

Avoid over analysis after your presentation as it is very easy to only focus on negatives and then blow them out of proportion.

Remember that most people get nervous before giving a presentation or talk. Nervousness will not prevent you from getting through the presentation, it may even help you to stay alert and get through the task. Remind yourself, "even though it may not feel like it, this presentation is only a snapshot in time of my entire life, I accept that I may not enjoy public speaking and I will get through this!"

For help with presentation jitters or other skills contact us at Student Wellbeing.

Online resources

This Way Up - Student Wellbeing Program

A free online course with practical strategies for coping with stress and study.

www.thiswayup.org.au/programs/student-wellbeing-program

Other helpful tip sheets:

Relaxation Techniques
Traditional Meditation
The Calming Breath
Grounding Techniques

Recorded resource:

Presenting Confidently
www.newcastle.edu.au/current-students/support/personal/counselling/study-and-wellbeing-resources



Access support and more information

www.newcastle.edu.au/counselling or call (02) 4921 6622