

T.I.P.S.

The Speaking Center Presents:

Techniques to Improve Public Speaking

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Convenient and simple techniques or suggestions to help improve in a variety of public speaking areas.

Eliminate Filler Words

Why do we use *Filler Words*?

- They serve as placeholders while we are thinking
- They are used to give ourselves time to think about what to say
- They are our way of saying, “I have more to say”

Some of the ways to help minimize the use of filler words

1. **Relax and center yourself:** Beginning speakers often use more filler words when they feel nervous. Find a strategy that helps you relax before your speech. Incorporate this strategy into your preparation.
2. **Practice:** This is the best way to gain confidence and improve your delivery.
3. **Pause:** A better habit to have is the use of a pause when you are thinking of what to say next. A short pause is acceptable.
4. **Slow down:** It is normal to speak at a faster rate when we are nervous. Speaking at a slower pace will help reduce the use of filler words.
5. **Identify your nemesis:** It could be “um” or “ah” or anything else. Most of us gravitate towards a particular filler word. Being aware of your speaking will help to identify overuse of words or phrases.
6. **Accept imperfection:** Learn to accept the fact that using an occasional filler word is not a terrible thing. It is when we begin to overuse filler words that they become a distraction.



Reference: Lucas, S. (2015). The art of public speaking (Twelfth edition.). McGraw-Hill Education