# How to Overcome the Fear of Public Speaking as a Leader

Public speaking isn’t easy, and plenty of people actually suffer from a fear of public speaking. This fear can, thankfully, be overcome, which is what I’m going to be talking about in this presentation. A lot of people with a fear of public speaking will try to avoid public speaking situations altogether. Even if they know the people they’re speaking to fairly well, they might still feel a great deal of anxiety and dread about giving a speech in front of them. Let’s talk about some strategies you can use to overcome the fear of public speaking, especially if you’re a leader.

## Get Organized

When you’re preparing to give a speech or presentation, it's always a smart move to carefully plan out what you want to share. This will include having any props or visuals you want to use at the ready. The better prepared you are, the less nervous you're likely to feel before you actually step up to speak. Using a brief outline on a note card can also be quite helpful when it comes to staying on track while giving a speech.

## Practice, Practice, Practice

Practice your entire presentation several times to make sure you're fully ready. Don't hesitate to ask for feedback on your speech or presentation from both your close friends and people you might not be as familiar with. It’s also a good idea to record a video of yourself giving the speech beforehand. Then, you’ll be able to watch it later and gain an understanding of which areas you need to make improvements in.

## Don’t Fear Moments of Silence

We all “blank out” sometimes. Perhaps you’ve experienced this while giving a presentation at school or simply while talking to a friend. If you ever find yourself getting flustered during a presentation, remember that what may feel like an eternity of silence is often just a matter of a few seconds. Your audience won’t be too bothered by a few moments of silence, anyway. Take a couple of seconds to slow down, breathe, and get back on track.

## Challenge Your Worries

When you’re feeling afraid, you might experience a sense of dread and be concerned that the worst possible thing is going to happen. This is called “catastrophizing,” and it’s a fairly common symptom of anxiety. In order to challenge your worries and fears, you may want to write them down and reflect on *why* you’re feeling so afraid. This will help you sort out your feelings, and combat your anxiety. It’ll also help you gauge how likely it is that the “worst possible scenario” will actually happen.

## Know Your Topic

The more you understand about the topic, the easier it’ll be for you to talk about it for a long time. Just consider how many hours you could potentially spend talking about something you’re super passionate about. If you know your topic — and are passionate about it — then your words should flow pretty freely while you’re giving your speech. There’s not a huge likelihood that you’ll mess up, and even if you stumble over your words a bit, it should be easy enough for you to get back on track.

## Visualize Your Success

Keep your eyes on the prize. Spend some time imagining that your presentation will go well (because it probably will, as long as you spend some time practicing). Thinking positive thoughts should help to reduce your anxiety. Thoughts like “I’m going to kill this presentation” or “I’m going to knock this out of the park” might even give you an extra boost of confidence!