Taming Adrenaline

Surefire Strategies for Overcoming Speaking Anxiety

Video Series

Part 1: Introduction

Part 2: On-the-Spot Remedies

Part 3: Avoiding the "Tells" of Nervousness

Part 4: Long-term Strategies



Brought to you by Cara Hale Alter, founder of SpeechSkills and author of *The Credibility Code: How to Project Confidence* and Competence When It Matters Most. For more tips, videos, training options, and free resources, visit speechskills.com/LeanIn

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Part 3: Avoiding the "Tells" of Nervousness

Key Takeaways

Symptoms of Nervousness

(What you feel)

- Rapid heart rate
- Dry mouth
- Butterflies or nausea
- Increased perspiration
- Clouded thinking
- Flushing
- Tense or shaking muscles

"Tells" of Nervousness

(What you show)

- Small posture/small voice
- Asymmetrical stance
- Hands locked down
- Facial gestures "masked"
- Self-touch
- Eyes and nose not aligned
- Tail wagging

Most symptoms of nervousness are not clearly visible to an observer—but the "tells" of nervousness are. With a little forethought and practice, the tells can be corrected so that you appear confident in spite of any anxiety you may feel.



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Part 3: Avoiding the "Tells" of Nervousness

Discussion Questions

 When you experience speaking anxiety, what symptoms do you most often feel? How many of your symptoms are clearly visible to an 	 In the future, what specific behaviors can you adjust to counteract your nervous tells?
outside observer?	
When you experience speaking anxiety, what	
tells are you most likely to show?	

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Part 3: Avoiding the "Tells" of Nervousness

ACTIVITY 1:

Play SoundBites: Justifications Deck

Play a round of SpeechSkills SoundBites (find the free SoundBites sampler at speechskills.com/LeanIn). Using the purple "Justifications" deck, take turns offering 30- to 60-second responses to the prompts. Please note that these types of impromptu questions tend to create self-criticism. Work very hard to avoid apologizing or "tail wagging" during your turn. Answer with confidence, even if you have to "fake it 'til you make it."

ACTIVITY 2:

Show Your Nervousness; Then Counteract It

Break into pairs and take turns talking for 60 seconds about your favorite vacation spots. In this round, try to deliberately show as many tells of nervousness as possible.

Next, try the exercise again but, this time, work hard to eliminate these nervous behaviors. Note that it helps to focus on strong posture, strong voice, and strong eye contact.

