



21. Overcoming Stage Fright

BVPT-104: English & Communication

Unit 5: Public Speaking and Presentation Skills

Topic: Overcoming Stage Fright - Strategies for Building Confidence in Public Speaking

□ What Is Stage Fright?

Stage fright (also called performance anxiety) is the nervousness or fear people feel **before or during public speaking**.

It can affect even the most knowledgeable students and professionals.

Common symptoms:

- Racing heartbeat
- Sweating or shaking
- Dry mouth or shaky voice
- Blank mind or fear of forgetting

□ Why Does Stage Fright Happen?

Stage fright is **natural**. It usually occurs because of:

Cause	Explanation
Fear of judgment	Worry about what others will think
Fear of failure	Concern about making mistakes
Lack of preparation	Feeling unsure of what to say
Negative self-talk	"I'm not good at this" or "They will laugh at me"
Inexperience	New to speaking in front of groups

□ Goal: Speak Confidently, Not Perfectly

Remember: **The goal is to communicate—not to impress.**

With the right strategies and regular practice, anyone can become a **confident speaker**.

□ Strategies to Overcome Stage Fright

1. Know Your Material

- The more you understand your topic, the more confident you feel.
- Make a simple **outline** of your key points.
- Prepare for common questions or doubts.



□ *Example:* If you're presenting on "CPR steps," know not just the steps, but *why* each step matters.

2. Practice Smartly

- Practice aloud, not just in your head.
- Use a mirror, record yourself, or ask a friend to listen.
- Time yourself and simulate the presentation setting.

□ *Tip:* Watching yourself on video helps you correct posture, tone, and body language.

3. Visualize Success

- Close your eyes and imagine speaking clearly and being appreciated.
- This "mental rehearsal" trains your brain for success.

□ *Affirmations:* Repeat, "I am prepared. I am confident. I will do well."

4. Control Your Breathing

- Take **slow, deep breaths** before and during your talk.
- Try the **4-4-4 breathing method**:
Inhale 4 seconds → Hold 4 seconds → Exhale 4 seconds

□ *Why it works:* It relaxes your nervous system and slows your heart rate.

5. Start Small and Easy

- Start speaking in front of a small group (friends or classmates).
- Begin with **short topics** or participate in group discussions.
- As your comfort grows, move to larger groups or formal events.

□ *Small steps lead to big confidence.*

6. Use Notes or Prompts

- Carry index cards or slide notes with keywords (not full text).
- Having a guide helps avoid mental blocks.

□ *But don't read every word—just glance when needed.*

7. Engage with the Audience

- Make **eye contact** with friendly faces.
- Ask simple questions or use humor (if appropriate).
- Treat the talk as a **conversation**, not a performance.

□ "Talk to the person, not the crowd."



8. Accept Nervousness - Don't Fight It

- It's okay to feel nervous—it means you care.
- Many great speakers still feel nervous, but they **perform anyway**.

☐ *Nervous energy can become positive energy if you channel it well.*

☐ Before You Step on Stage - Quick Checklist

Task	Status
Know your key message	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice at least 2-3 times aloud	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prepare slides or visuals	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deep breathing 5 minutes before	<input type="checkbox"/>
Carry a bottle of water and notes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Smile, breathe, and begin!	<input type="checkbox"/>

☐ Self-Check Questions

1. What are two common physical symptoms of stage fright?
2. Why is deep breathing useful before a presentation?
3. How can visualization help with nervousness?
4. Why should you avoid reading full slides during a speech?

☐ Key Takeaways

- Stage fright is common but manageable.
- **Preparation + Practice = Confidence.**
- Small wins build big courage—start now, grow slowly.
- Breathe, smile, speak—and focus on connecting, not impressing.