

Chiropractic ECONOMICS

The Magazine Dedicated to Practice Growth and Prosperity Since 1954 • www.ChiroEco.com



**Brigadier General
Rebecca Halstead**

Commanding the way for Chiropractic

PAGE 76

Make the most of
your **coaching
experience**

PAGE 31

Web 2.0 and your
chiropractic practice

PAGE 42

Create your **Internet
marketing** campaign

PAGE 62

Explore your
software options

PAGE 67

The importance of
analyzing **financial
performance**

PAGE 111

Get Paid
& Go Paperless!
Free Consultation
SEE PAGE 117

PLUS

Software
Directory
PAGE 86



Picture the audience in their underwear

Improve your presentation skills without needing to be perfect

By Monica Wofford, CSP

Debra took command of every room she entered. Her stage presence was larger than life and never fit merely behind the lecture, much less on the stage where she stood.

But she had not always been this good or this comfortable.

Her knees shook and she braced herself on the front counter to attempt a natural look. There was pacing, praying, four hundred “ums,” and a diagram drawn wrong. It felt like a bad comedy, but Debra wasn’t laughing. She was mortified and decided right then and there to do better.

She had a lot to learn to improve her speaking skills, but heck, she’d learned things before.

What would be so hard about speaking?

A friend and mentor who was a certified speaking professional and had a degree in communication shared the following strategies for improvement:

- **Avoid “perfect speaker” syndrome.** Audiences prefer to connect with a speaker who is as human as they are. If you are human while sitting next to a member of your audience and a completely different person when on stage, word will spread that you are unapproachable and not real, and that usually translates into “stuck up” or rude.

Don’t make mistakes on purpose, but embrace them when they happen. If you forgot something, mess up a diagram, or trip off the stage, let it go. It doesn’t mean you are a bad speaker, it means you are a good, fallible human. Humans connect with audiences far better than perfect speakers.

- **No foreheads, only eyeballs.** Many speaking courses advise looking at the forehead or nose of audience members and it will appear as if you are making eye

contact, but keep from exciting your nerves when you don’t actually look at the eyes.

Well, that is bunch of bologna. Connect with your audience by really connecting with them. Look them in the eye and though this may temporarily rattle your nerves, it will immeasurably improve your spirit when they connect back with you.

- **Get to know your audience.** One way to calm your nerves is to become more familiar with the audience. Meet and mingle before you speak. Shake hands and talk with those you will be speaking to from the stage. Even try to determine who your raving fans are so you can focus your attention there.

Speaking to potential friends and those you have already begun to get to know is much easier than speaking to strangers, about whom you know nothing, including what they want to hear from you.

- **Identify worst case scenario.** What is the worst possible thing that could happen if you were to speak in front of a room full of patients, colleagues, or interested audience members? Would you die? Most likely no, but it might feel like it.

However, most fear of public speaking is rooted in the survival skills to escape glaring eyes and sizing up that comes from audience members and reminds your survival skills of the predator behavior. Thus, your flight instincts kick in.

Speaking and the fear of it does not have to be based on instinctual responses at this stage. Come up with what the worst things are that could happen when you speak publicly, and then consciously remind your brain that you could handle each and every one of those issues — that alone will help you dissipate the fear before stepping on stage.

- **Watch yourself on camera.** To improve your speaking skills, see it from the audience’s perspective. How can you ask your audience to watch you if you are not willing to do the same?

Video tape your presentation and then watch it from

It is practice that will make you a better speaker.

beginning to end. Then watch it in fast forward. Repetitious hand gestures or pacing will show up very easily when in fast forward. Start the presentation video again, but this time turn up the volume and walk away. Listen for ums, repetitive words, and any other tone issues that may need work.

Where your audience is looking

for a connection and information, you are watching with an improvement mindset.

- **Change your focus.** Giving a presentation or speaking in public is about your audience. Period. Change your focus from how much you are nervous or fearful and pay attention to how the audience receives you, what they need to hear, and what

you are there to deliver. Removing the focus from you will help you to be distracted by far more important things: Your audience.


- **Have a conversation.** In truth, speaking to a large group is much like having a one-on-one conversation with each person in the room. If you are having a simple conversation, your gestures will flow more smoothly, and you will naturally become more interactive. This is, of course, provided that in your normal conversations you are inclined to pay attention to the person to whom you are talking, and not to your opportunity to interrupt or hear yourself talk.

The speaking profession is ripe with advice and techniques, but the truth is the best way to get better at the trade is to practice, practice, practice.

It is the practice that will make you a better speaker beyond specific staging or techniques. Get better by speaking more often.

You might also consider hiring a speech coach to help objectively clarify feedback that you may not readily see in a video.

It is no longer a trade that will incite fear, but one that will exude confidence.

Remember how Debra commands a room? She didn't wake up one morning as a dynamic speaker. She practiced and worked hard on getting better — and so can you. 



Monica Wofford, CSP, is the CEO of Contagious Companies and a nationally known trainer, speaker, coach, and author of

Contagious Leadership and *Contagious Chiropractic Customer Service*. She can be reached at 866-382-0121 or at info@monicawofford.com.

Visual Verification on Going

ARTHROSTIM®

IMPAC
Get Dynamic

Talk to the Brain,
Make the Neural IMPAC Connection™

IMPAC Inc. ©2009

Leading Chiropractic Technology for Over 27 Years

www.impacinc.net Email: edmiller@impacinc.net 800-569-8624 or 503-581-3239