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Home Skills & Tools Public Speaking 15 SharesPublic speaking skills refer to the talent of effectively addressing an audience. Whether it is in front of a group of people you already know or a crowd of complete strangers, your ability to communicate to them with clarity and confidence is known as your public speaking skills. There may or may not be an opportunity for interaction between the speaker and audience. The basic difference, however, between a casual talk and public speaking is that the latter is more purposeful and meant for celebratory, entertainment, influencing, or informative purposes. Why is public speaking important Good public speaking skills can have a huge impact on your career for the following reasons: Demonstrates your knowledge. You are always at your best when you can articulate your thoughts clearly and effectively. Public speaking skills help you do exactly that. After all, the true worth of the knowledge you possess can only be realized when you can show and apply it. Demonstrates your confidence. Not only does public speaking increase your knowledge during the process of preparation but it also develops and demonstrates your confidence. Whether you are interviewing for a job or hoping for a promotion, your confidence is what will make you stand out among other candidates. Helps you lead better. The higher you climb up the career ladder, the greater will be the number of people you shall have to lead. As a result, the need for public speaking skills and the confidence pertinent to it also increases, making it one of the determining characteristics when considering someone for promotion. How to improve public speaking skills Following are some helpful tips for improving your public speaking skills: Prepare with practice. Once you have prepared a presentation or speech by giving it a logical flow and making it more vibrant with the addition of examples, stories, and visually appealing props, only then your true preparation begins. If you are wondering what that means, remember that practice is the key to preparation. Practice your speech/presentation alone or seek to speak in front of other people until you can speak fluidly with confidence and comfort. This may sometimes require you to tweak your words during practice but it's preferable to do so in practice instead of doing so at the occasion where you intend to take the mike. Accentuate your strengths. Analyze yourself as a public speaker and identify your true strengths and weaknesses. Most of us tend to imitate other public speakers who are popular amongst the crowd. However, the best way is to be yourself and focus on your own strengths. For instance, you might have a good sense of humor that helps in grabbing attention of the crowd, you may be an interesting story teller, or you may be good at clearly explaining complex ideas. Whichever is your strength, utilize it wisely to keep your audience paying attention. Keep your ears and eyes open to feedback. Although, all sorts of public speaking do not involve direct interaction between the speaker and his audience, there are various ways in which audience is able to provide feedback. If the audience cannot speak their opinion out loud, as a speaker you should be able to look for nonverbal cues such as the body language or facial expressions of the audience. The feedback, thus, provided by the audience can prove to be a helpful guide in improving one's public speaking skills. 15 Shares Career DevelopmentTypes of Public Speaking Skills and How To Improve ThemBy Indeed Editorial TeamPublished 12 June 2021The Indeed Editorial Team comprises a diverse and talented team of writers, researchers and subject matter experts equipped with Indeed's data and insights to deliver useful tips to help guide your career journey.Most job roles and industries require public speaking skills to communicate and engage with team members and audiences confidently. Strong public speaking skills increase your chances of getting hired for a new job and becoming a more effective employee at the workplace. Thankfully, you can improve these skills through practice. In fact, public speaking is one of the top communication skills employers look for in a potential candidate.In this article, we will explain what public speaking skills are, their types, how to improve your public speaking and how to highlight these skills during the hiring process.Related: 10 Best Skills to Include on a Resume (with Examples)What are public speaking skills?Public speaking skills are soft skills that showcase how well you can speak and engage your listeners. Influential public speakers have the power to persuade, inform and educate others. It helps you sway opinions, motivate others and become a natural leader. Mastery of this skill can help you advance your career, increase confidence, improve leadership skills, develop vocabulary and ensure personal development.Related: The Career Planning Process: Practical StepsTop 6 public speaking skillsHere are the top six public speaking skills to master:CommunicationBeing able to communicate an idea or thought clearly is an essential skill for public speaking. In order to become an effective communicator, you need to master various elements of communication. You require excellent diction to ensure that the audience understands every word you say. Another critical element of communication is the ability to control your voice and speed of talking. If you talk too softly or loudly, the audience may fail to understand your point. Similarly, if you speak too slow or too fast, the audience may lose interest in what you have to say.Excellent public speakers are experts at adjusting their speech patterns based on the audience's level of expertise. For example, when speaking at a technology conference, you should convey the technical concepts in such a way that even the most non-technical person can understand them. Related: How To Improve Communication SkillsClear articulationGood public speakers pronounce words clearly and use proper grammar while avoiding verbal crutches like "um" and "ah". Verbal crutches can distract the audience from what the speaker is actually trying to say. Public speakers with clear articulation lend more clarity to their thoughts because they have excellent command over the language, use appropriate words and have a rich vocabulary. Apart from reducing verbosity, clear articulation gives you the confidence to speak at small and large meetings.Presentation styleEven the most tedious and technical topic becomes interesting when you present it the right way. This requires superior presentation skills. However, good presentation skill is not limited to creating eye-catching and interesting slides. It also includes facial expression, vocal tone and body language. Using the right presentation style, you can make boring topics engaging and interesting. To make your presentation memorable and capture the audience's attention, start your presentation by introducing yourself or sharing a few industry statistics. Use a joke or story to inject some humour in your speech. Your presentation style should have the power to engage the audience.ConfidenceAnother essential skill of a public speaker is confidence. Often, even good communicators who feel comfortable addressing a small audience may lose confidence when talking to a large audience. Problems like nervousness and stage fright may disappear when you are confident about your skills. Employers often prefer confident speakers because they are more likely to share information in a meaningful and authoritative manner. Your level of confidence impacts how you portray and carry yourself when talking to an audience.PassionCommunication becomes easier when you are passionate about the topic of your speech. Without passion, your communication can fail to educate and inform others. Exuding a level of expertise in your speech delivery is essential to create a connection with your audience. When delivering a speech on a topic that does not excite you, dig deep into the topic and try to find things that might interest you. This helps you address the gathering with authenticity and makes you look like an expert.Ability to connect with the audienceWhen delivering a seminar or addressing an issue during a meeting, you must connect with your audience. For creating a connection, assess your audience's needs. For instance, some people are comfortable with technical terms while others are not. Some prefer a light-hearted conversation, including jokes and humour, while others may prefer a professional conversation. Excellent public speakers create an atmosphere that engages and excites the listeners.How to improve your public speaking skillsHere are the top six ways to improve your public speaking skills and use them to advance your career:1. Practise speakingThe more you speak with others, the more comfortable you become in addressing large gatherings. You can practise your speaking skills by enrolling in a public speaking class. Also, plan what you have to say in advance and read it aloud again and again. Start by reading the speech to yourself. Then read it in front of your family members or colleagues and ask for their honest feedback. Make a video recording of your rehearsal so that you can evaluate your speaking skills and spot any areas of improvement.2. Focus on your body languageBody language is a nonverbal communication skill that supports your public speaking skills. When moving on the stage, always keep your shoulder and spine straight and have a gentle smile on your face. Avoid standing behind desks, tables or chairs when talking to the audience. Use gestures to emphasise a point and move to different areas of the stage according to the flow of your presentation. Your facial expression must match the overall energy and tone of your speech.Related: The Ultimate Guide To Nonverbal Communication Skills3. Work on the tone of your voiceDuring presentations, your audience can lose interest if you use a monotone voice. You should practise various voice modulations and try different pitches to draw the audience. Listen to famous public speakers and understand how they use the tone of their voice to make their presentations engaging.4. Practise diaphragmatic breathingOften, first-time public speakers may suffer from speech anxiety, which results in nervousness and stage fear. To avoid speech anxiety, practise diaphragmatic breathing as it helps reduce anxiety and allows better control over your voice, volume and pitch.5. Make eye contact with your audienceBeing able to engage your audience while delivering a speech is an essential quality of a public speaker. To improve this, ensure you make eye contact with them. Practise eye contact in your home or office when you talk to your friends or colleagues.6. Be self-assuredAudiences easily connect with speakers who look confident. When you are self-assured and confident of your skills, you successfully create an emotional connection that helps in delivering the right idea or message.How to highlight your public speaking skillsIn your workplace, there are a variety of situations where you may apply your public speaking skills. For instance, you can use your skills when introducing yourself in a corporate meeting, making sale pitches and giving presentations. Employers look for candidates with excellent public speaking skills. If you possess these skills, showcase them on your CV and during the interview. Here are two ways to highlight your public speaking skills:1. In your CVHighlight your public speaking experience in the employment history section. Based on the job description, pick up skill words to establish your credentials as a potential candidate. When you use such skill words, your CV becomes ATS-compliant, increasing your chances of qualifying for the next round. You can even list these words in the skills section of your CV.When including these skills in your CV, use the following as an inspiration:Conducted public workshops for 500+ attendeesPresented technical paper in many international conferences and corporate meetingsPresented speech about the company and its productsTrained over 150 corporate trainers through online seminars and classesWorked and collaborated with other employees from different departments to improve the sales pitchDelivered engaging sales pitches to receive client businessMentored and coached mid-level managers on leadership and negotiation skills2. In your interviewThe interview is a great place to showcase your public speaking skills. While you may encounter direct questions related to this skill set, often employers judge these skills based on how comfortably you speak and communicate your answers. When answering an interview question, pause and think before you speak, know when to stop talking and avoid rambling. This makes you come across as a good candidate for the job. Prepare before for your interview and practise the questions you are likely to face.

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