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# Extremely



Extreme Toastmasters #595201  
District 30, Chicago

## 24 Ways to Improve Your Presentation Skills

By Club President, Jason Peck



1. Speak. Seems obvious right? But if you suffer from a lack of confidence, the only real way to conquer your fear is to face it. You need to speak and speak often. Really, what's speaking in front of a group of people going to do? Nothing, that's the big secret. The ground won't open up and swallow you. You're not leaping out of a plane onto a big spike. Participate in your club(s), give speeches, take part in table topics, take part in contests if you can, work through the Competent Leader manual as not only are there opportunities to give speeches in there, but you also have to give feedback to your club (hence, more opportunities in front of an audience).

2. If you have to give presentations at work, you should read the book *Presentation Zen* by Garr Reynolds and the blog of the same name. I think he has three books out now.

3. Download, read and implement *Really Bad PowerPoint* by Seth Godin. Go to <http://www.sethgodin.com/freeprize/reallybad-1.pdf>

4. Grab the book *Lend Me Your Ears* by Dr Max Atkinson. This is an outstanding book and contains great information on rhetoric and how politicians wield words in their speeches.

5. Speak, speak, speak. But also, make sure you get good quality feedback. You cannot possibly implement every-

one's opinion. Darren La Croix, 2001 World Champion of Public Speaking, suggests looking for patterns. One man's comedy, is another man's tragedy.

6. Check out *Speak Schmeak* by Lisa Braithwaite: some great contrary views to received Toastmasters/public speaking wisdom. It's good to see things from a different view and not get stuck in a rut.

7. Learn to use humor in your presentations. If you don't think you're funny, can you at least be humorous? Seek out the funny in your club. Don't worry about jokes; focus on capturing your own sense of humor.

8. *Speaking about Presenting* is the blog of Olivia Mitchell, based in Australia. She provides great insight on her blog. There are fantastic articles there. (And she's fun to have pizza with too!)

9. Read a book, or four, on writing screenplays. They have fantastic advice on creating great stories. I recommend *Writer's Journey* by Christopher Vogler and *Story* by

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