

Tips for a Confident Wedding Speech

by Ruth Bonetti

Good news! As you prepare for your big moment, the wedding speech, you need not dread shaky voice, dry mouth, or shaky hands. True, surveys have found that anxiety about public speaking is the Number One Fear in society above those of flying, dying and bankruptcy. It's normal, but you are not defenceless. Here are some simple preparations which you can do in the privacy of your car while driving to the reception or in a quiet bathroom just before the speeches begin.

All those unsettling symptoms are a result of that basic survival mode Fight-or-Flight response. Unfortunately, it's not a good look to fight or flee at a wedding. Instead, channel the adrenaline into energy by tapping into the frontal lobes of your brain and all those unpleasant symptom fall away. How? It's simple and can be done quite subtly while socialising.

Breathe deep and slow, while placing a casual hand on your forehead. This also releases brain fog, that "It's on the tip of my tongue" blockage. Another advantage is that this simple gesture links to the stomach's emotional stress-release points, calming queasiness.

Dry mouth? Stress can cause dehydration. Of course, you'll want to celebrate with a few beers now those vows are safely exchanged. But water is the fluid that your body needs, and especially your vocal folds, so they can resonate and vibrate with positive projection. It also helps us to think fast on our feet. Think ahead and increase your water intake in the days before.

Shrill or thin voice? Warm-up your voice by humming a romantic song to your new bride as you drive to the reception. This counters any tendencies for high-pitched, thin tone. If you feel an instinct to pace the floor in the minutes before the speeches begin, don't curb it; this instinctive reaction gets blood circulating, so turn it to positive use by from table to table, welcoming your friends and relations.

The Best Man is telling those embarrassing anecdotes about your past love life; the best thing you can do is to laugh along, for this opens your throat ready for strong projection.

And now the MC turns to you. It's time. Wait a few moments for the room to quieten – while you recall that arresting first sentence that you've practised in the weeks before while driving to work.

Stand tall. Take another slow, deep, vitalizing breath.

Smile – for this helps your voice to resonate and project.

Be yourself. Enjoy your confidence in the spot-light.

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BYLINE

International Keynote and seminar presenter, Ruth Bonetti is author of 10 books including *Don't Freak Out – Speak Out; Public speaking with confidence* (published by Words and Music), which is also available on CD and E-Book.

This, and Ruth's complimentary fortnightly E-Zine *Crisp Confidence Communiqué* is available on her website <http://www.ruthbonetti.com>

Ruth learned to conquer the platform jitters in her long international career, presenting in Europe (she speaks German, Swedish and French), Australia and America, where her seminars were repeated by popular demand.

During her humorous and interactive presentations, audience members learn to be fantastic on their feet – to speak out with confidence.

Her keynote presentation *Take 5 Tips for Confident Presentation* is content-rich, humorous “infotainment”; her practical, do-able techniques, memorably highlighted with her clarinet playing and singing create COMMUNICATION CONFIDENCE.

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