

8 Ways to Push Through Anxiety to Become a Better Storyteller

Try these tips for becoming a better storyteller.

1. Choose the Appropriate Time and Audience

Be mindful of who you are telling your story to before you start. Also, think about the timing of when you tell a story. For example, you shouldn't be telling stories with adult content when there are children present.

Although you don't want to overthink things and make yourself too anxious about being appropriate, you need to consider these issues as well.

2. Use a Hook to Engage the Listener

When you start telling a story, do you begin with boring details? Do you start out describing what you had for lunch that day? Don't be surprised if people quickly tune you out if you don't hook them right away.

The best way to engage your listener is to provide a hook that makes them want to know more. You might say something like "You would never believe what happened to me today," or "I have the craziest story to tell."

Draw your listeners in right from the start so that they are waiting for what you have to say. Your job as a storyteller is not just to describe events but to make them interesting enough to be worthy of a story that you want to tell others.

3. Keep It Concise

There is nothing worse than listening to someone ramble on with a story that seems to have no end and no point. If you tell these types of stories, you might soon find your audience nodding off.

Keep your audience interested and intrigued by sticking to important details and making your story as concise as possible. Use colorful words to convey your message instead of going into excruciating detail.

4. Highlight Emotional Elements

Engage the listener's emotions. Whether you evoke happiness, sadness, surprise or anger, eliciting [emotions](#) helps to keep the listener attentive.

Your story will also come alive if you include emotional elements. Rather than just sticking to the facts, be sure to talk about how you felt and how others felt, as a result of the events that took place.

5. Don't Rush

If you have social anxiety, you might be tempted to rush through your story to get it over with. Try to practice telling your story at a reasonable pace. Go slow so that your listeners have time to digest what you have to say.

If you aren't sure whether you are speaking too fast, try recording your voice or taking a video, or even asking a family member or friend about your rate of speech.

6. Poke Fun at Yourself and Nobody Else

Saying funny things about yourself during a story is a great way to make your listeners comfortable. But don't poke fun at those around you. Don't tell stories that make others feel bad about themselves or have to stick up for themselves. Telling a story that gets a laugh at the expense of someone else shows thoughtlessness and selfishness.

7. Vary Your Rate of Speech and Volume

In addition to making sure that you aren't speaking too quickly, you should also try to vary the rate of which you speak. Speed up for the exciting parts and slow down to add drama.

You can also speak quietly or loudly in different parts of the story to add emphasis to what you say. Just make sure that you don't speak so quietly that others have trouble hearing you.

8. Ask Listeners to Imagine

Part of your job as a storyteller is to paint a picture for your listeners. Ask them to imagine something specific in your story. "Can you picture me..." is a good phrase to get you started.

Remember that even the greatest storytellers practice beforehand. Don't be afraid to practice your story multiple times before taking it out in public. You will [gain confidence](#) and also have a chance to iron out any of the issues noted above.