

5 EASY TIPS FOR YOUR CONFIDENT NETWORKING 'INFOMERCIAL'

By RUTH BONETTI

Networking functions are a pleasant way to meet interesting people and potential clients. We enjoy the lunch, the motivational speaker sends us home walking on air. But there is a downside; those cruel moments when the microphone is passed from person to person for each to give their 30-second network infomercial. You know the sinking feeling in your stomach? As the microphone reaches your table your mouth feels full of cotton wool; your brain is as blank as a crashed computer screen. After your 'spot', you collapse into your seat, shaky, mortified that your voice wobbled and that you rambled on.

These simple, practical tips will help you speak out clearly and confidently!

1. BREATHE!

Some slow, deep breaths while placing a casual hand on your forehead releases brain fog, that "It's on the tip of my tongue" blockage. This channels adrenaline (the breeding ground of the jitters) into energy by tapping into the frontal lobes of your brain. Plus: via meridian flow to the stomach's emotional stress-release points, this simple gesture calms queasiness.

2. DRINK SOME WATER

Stress causes dehydration, and hence dry mouth. Maintain your water intake in the days and hours before. Water enables your voice to resonate and vibrate with positive projection. It also helps you to think fast on your feet, as messages from the brain are carried in fluid. But, here's an important tip: before speaking in public, spoon out those ice-cubes from your glass, or pour a cup of warm water from the tea urn. Cold constricts your throat whereas warmth relaxes and enhances voice resonance.

3. FAKE A SOCIAL YAWN

Have you ever opened your mouth to speak and your voice seems to stick in your throat? This is easily countered. A discreet social yawn with your mouth closed opens your throat so your voice will project effortlessly.

4. HUM FOR A PLEASANTLY PITCHED VOICE

Driving to the venue, warm-up your voice by humming along to the radio. This safeguards from high-pitched, shrill voice timbre. Hum in the relative privacy of the bathroom before the infomercial session begins. Should other women overhear, they will be envious of your apparently nonchalant confidence!

5. SMILE

A positive smile gives your voice rich resonance. It not only warms your voice, but also the audience warm to you!

The mic is in your hands. Wait a few moments for the room to quieten – while you recall that arresting first sentence that you've practised for days while driving to work.

Inhale another slow, deep, vitalizing breath.

Smile. Enjoy your confidence in the spotlight.

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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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