



(U) Speak Easy: Dress Rehearsal

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Tips on public speaking... (entire text is UNCLASSIFIED)

Now that you've written your presentation, you need to do a "dry run." You might have a mental picture of how you'll present it, but unless you're a seasoned presenter, there will be wrinkles to iron out.

Find a practice audience to watch you. They will be invaluable in providing feedback. Even if you can only find one person willing to take time out of their busy schedule to view a briefing that they have no interest in, that's much better than no one.

Wear the clothes you plan to wear during the actual presentation. This might sound unnecessary, but if you don't normally wear a tie, jacket, dress or heels, this restrictive clothing might interfere with your ability to point at slides or maneuver. Learn ahead of time how you need to alter your movements so you won't appear awkward in front of your customers.

Gather all your presentation materials and handle them exactly as you plan to during the actual briefing. For example, if you plan to hand out pamphlets to your customers, then hand them out to your practice audience. If you have slides, set up your audio-visual equipment and show them all. Ask how helpful the materials are.

Have people give feedback while you're presenting, not just at the end. If you don't speak loud enough, or you appear nervous, or you sound too much like a salesperson, you'll want to correct it right away, not simply be told this at the end when it's too late to change your style and get more feedback.

Ask for questions at the end. You might think you know everything about the topic, but someone in your practice audience might ask something you didn't anticipate, something that stumps you. Better to be stumped now than later. This will give you time to research the answer so you'll have it when you need it.

Next month: Take-Away Documentation

 **SERIES:**
(U) Speak Easy

1. [Speak Easy : Creating Notes](#)
2. [Speak Easy : Dress Rehearsal](#)
3. [Speak Easy : Take-Away Documentation](#)
4. [Speak Easy : Game Day](#)

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