



Managing Public Speaking Anxiety

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Process of Communication

- ▶ Throughout history people have put a high value on public speaking
- ▶ Public speaking spreads ideas and influence around the world
- ▶ Public speaking skills are necessary to everyone



Communication Apprehension

Communication Apprehension

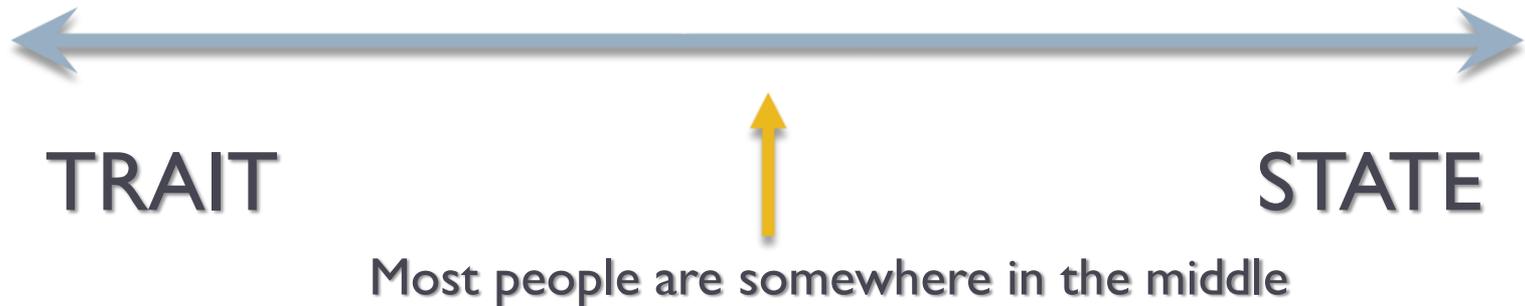
- ▶ Delivery makes most people anxious
- ▶ Have a good mental attitude
- ▶ Everyone has “stage fright”
- ▶ Use it to your advantage



Communication Apprehension

▶ Two types

- ▶ Generalized (TRAIT) - a fear of communication generally, regardless of the specific situation
- ▶ Situational (STATE) - a fear of one or more specific communication situations



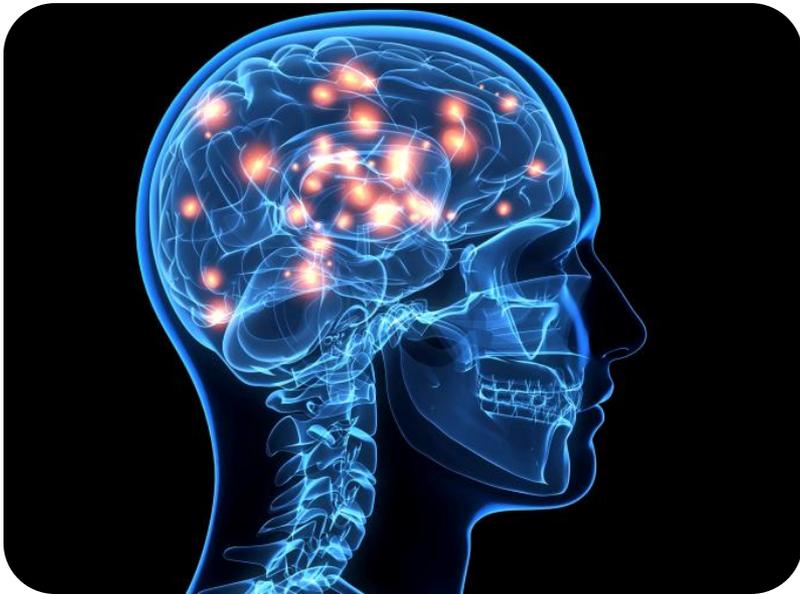
Communication Apprehension

▶ Two schools of thought on communication apprehension

▶ Genetic predisposition?

▶ Communiobiology

▶ Learned behavior?



Communication Apprehension

- ▶ Public speaking probably most anxiety-provoking communication situation
- ▶ Large body of research
 - ▶ McCrosky, Beatty
 - ▶ PRCA-24, PRPSA
 - ▶ Bruskin
 - ▶ Current Research
 - ▶ 3 out of 4 persons

Ranking People's Worst Fears...



Seinfeld Death Clip

Seinfeld - Season 4, Episode 23 – *The Pilot*.

Episode aired 20 May 1993



“According to most studies, people's number one fear is public speaking. Number two is death. Death is number two. Does that sound right? This means to the average person, if you go to a funeral, you're better off in the casket than doing the eulogy.”



Treatment Approaches

From Dr. Kim McCall

Treatment Approaches

- ▶ **Skills training**
 - ▶ Organize and deliver a speech
- ▶ **Relaxation Exercises**
 - ▶ Isometric and Deep Breathing
- ▶ **Cognitive Methods**
 - ▶ Talk yourself out of stage fright
 - ▶ Reduce unrealistic expectations
 - ▶ Develop self concept and self esteem
 - ▶ Visualization
 - ▶ Systematic Desensitization



Good news and bad news!

Communication Apprehension

- ▶ **Communication apprehension has some advantages**
 - ▶ It energizes you
 - ▶ It helps you think more rapidly
 - ▶ It helps you to speak with vitality and enthusiasm



Communication Apprehension

▶ Using your fear

- ▶ Move

- ▶ Be fully prepared

- ▶ Feel confident

- ▶ Keep going

- ▶ There is a relationship between practice, improvement, and nervousness.

- ▶ The more you speak, the less you will be nervous.



Communication Apprehension

- ▶ **How to control nervousness**
 - ▶ Be thoroughly prepared for EVERY speech
 - ▶ Think positively about the experience
 - ▶ Use the power of visualization
 - ▶ Nervousness is usually not visible to the audience
 - ▶ Don't expect perfection





Tips and Tricks

Communication Apprehension

- ▶ **Tips to deal with nervousness**
 - ▶ Be at your physical and mental best
 - ▶ Quietly tighten and relax muscles prior to speaking
 - ▶ Take a few slow, deep breaths before starting to speak
 - ▶ Work especially hard on your introduction
 - ▶ Make eye contact



Communication Apprehension

▶ More tips

- ▶ Concentrate on communicating with the audience rather than on your nervousness
- ▶ Use visual aids
- ▶ Pick a topic you like, know and care about
- ▶ Analyze your audience
- ▶ Don't call attention to your nervousness
- ▶ Don't be afraid to make mistakes



More Tips and Tricks

- ▶ Reframe how you think about communication anxiety
- ▶ Reframe how you think about public speaking
- ▶ During practice incorporate movement, gestures and vocal variety
- ▶ Practice speech introduction multiple times
- ▶ Be prepared to make mistakes
- ▶ Arrive early on speech day. Don't sit until you have to.
- ▶ When sitting, practice deep breathing
- ▶ Calmly accept you have anxiety
- ▶ When speaking, move and use gestures



More tips and tricks

- ▶ During your presentation look for audience members with supportive facial expressions
- ▶ Your audience wants to be educated and entertained
- ▶ Have 15 second conversations with each audience member
- ▶ After your speech, focus on the positive NOT the negative



Question????



- ▶ Do I have communication apprehension?



