10 Simple Backstage Tips
To Transform You

FROM
A SPEAKER
TO
A STAR

FEARLESS COMMUNICATORS
FEARLESS COMMUNICATORS is a New York City based dynamic, global, public speaking coaching business committed to working with individuals and organizations making a global impact. Clients include HBO, Google, Bank of America- Merrill Lynch, Yale, The Juilliard School, and the Wharton School of Business. Private clients include Industry Leaders, CEO’s of start up companies, UN Diplomats and social activists. Fearless Communicators launched A Fearless Force: Public Speaking for Visionary Women Leaders in May of 2016 with a commitment to creating 40 events in 40 cities all over the world.
There you are.

[Standing offstage.]

You can barely hear the roar and rustle of the crowd because all you hear is the thump thump thump thump of your beating heart. Your hands are sweating. Your mouth is dry. Your name is called and you walk the twenty feet to center stage like a deer in headlights. You land on center stage. Look out at your audience and your mind draws a complete blank.
That is the performer’s NIGHTMARE.

I believe the biggest culprit to an ONSTAGE Panic Attack is the failure to properly warm up. Yep it’s all about preparation. This POCKET GUIDE contains 10 of my favorite backstage tips that will have you transform from cold and stiff to awake and alive so you can stand center stage and deliver your presentation...

LIKE A STAR!
1. CONNECT to your BREATH
The most important thing for you to do when you’re on stage is breathe.

I’m going to write that again.

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING FOR YOU TO DO WHEN YOU’RE ON STAGE IS BREATHE!

Most people are very shallow breathers and breathe to their upper chest. You want to stand with your feet hip width apart, hands at your side and inhale deep into your belly. If you notice that your chest is moving too much, then you’re breathing shallow. You want to make sure that your belly is what’s moving in and out.
UNLOCK your KNEES

The most important thing for you to do when you're on stage is breathe.
Now notice when you’re standing if your KNEES ARE LOCKED. 90% of people will lock their knees when they’re initially standing. In the military they tell you if you lock your knees you pass out! One big culprit of an onstage panic attack is LOCKED KNEES. It makes your breath shallow and causes you to hyperventilate. SO DON’T LOCK YOUR KNEES.
3. CONNECT your BREATH to MOVEMENT
Now that you’re connecting to deeper breath, we want to connect your breath to simple movement. Inhale and exhale on an S sound and move your head in a circular motion starting to the right for a count of 8 and then to the left for a count of 8. Do the same things with your shoulders moving them in a circular motion forward for a count of 8 and then backwards for a count of 8.
4. CONNECT your breath to MORE DYNAMIC MOVEMENT
Now that you’re awakening the body we want to incorporate more DYNAMIC movement with sound and your body. One of my favorite exercises is to count out loud as you shake your limbs. You shake your right arm for a count of 8, then your left arm for a count of 8, then your right leg for a count of 8 and then your left leg for a count of 8. Repeat as you decrease the counting

7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1.

You want to make sure that you are counting OUT LOUD so that your voice connects to the body. You will notice that your voice gets naturally louder when your body is moving.
EXERCISES

ARTICULATION

5 EXERCISES
There are certain sounds that can cause us to trip up when we speak and when that happens it’s very easy to get self conscious. Here are 5 of my favorite theatre tongue twisters. You want to do sets of four as quickly as possible. As a bonus do them then in reverse.

Tongue twisters are very useful to warm up your articulators.
6. SURRENDER

PERFECTIONISM
It’s never going to be perfect.

Perfection is a fallacy. You’re not a robot; you’re a human being. If your focus is perfection, then it’s all about you. If your focus is on CONNECTION, then it’s all about your audience. Surrender the need to be perfect and focus on making a difference.
create a MANTRA
...before you walk onstage to connect with your audience. Create a phrase that you can repeat to yourself that is positive and will focus your energy. Before I walk onstage as an actor or speaker, I raise my hands in the air and say “I LOVE YOU.”

I repeat this phrase as I focus on connecting to a deeper breath and envisioning a supportive and engaged audience.
8. Set an INTENTION
Most of us project our insecurities onto our audience and imagine that they see what we don’t like about ourselves. No wonder we freak out. Standing in your positive mantra, allow yourself to set an intention for how your speaking will impact your audience. Here are some options, feel free to pick 1-3. Powerful, Compassionate, Generous, Loving, Funny, Confident, Present, Kind, Knowledgeable, Engaged, Alive, and my personal favorite, ELEVATED SPARKLEATION.
9. Land on CENTER STAGE
Most people false start when they speak, because they start speaking before they’ve landed in their starting position. Take the time to land in your starting position, unlock your knees and connect your first breath to a powerful thought. This thought can be both your mantra and/or your intention.

Take a full breath.

Start speaking.
Your last breath is as important as your first.
When you finish speaking, don’t forget to take a moment and breathe again. Allow yourself to be fully acknowledged by your audience. It’s always awkward when someone finishes and they run offstage. Let us thank you and love you. You deserve it.
This is by no means definitive, but these 10 simple tips are proven tools that I have used, and have imparted on my clients to use, to channel their fear into **EXCITEMENT**! Excitement and Fear are twin emotions - the same feeling the only difference is context. This pocket guide is a practical tool to ensure that next time you speak you’re excited, share fearlessly and convert your audience into raving fans.
EDUARDO PLACER, CEO

Eduardo Placer is a Keynote Speaker, Social Entrepreneur and Global Community Builder. He is the CEO and Founder of Fearless Communicators. He was a professional actor for 15 years, working all over the country in over 38 plays and musicals. Eduardo has a BA in English from the University of Pennsylvania and an MFA in Acting from University of California, San Diego. #nobigdeal #nailingit #werk #yas