



## American Translators Association

*The Voice of Interpreters and Translators*

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# ATA Client Outreach Kit

## Skills Module

### Building strong speaking skills

Practice your presentation aloud several times, with or without an audience before the scheduled event. Time yourself, and be careful to stay within your allotted time. Ask a friend or family member to videotape you while you speak and critically assess your presentation.

#### Here are some useful pointers:

- Work on eliminating hesitation devices—"um", "er", "em"—by tuning into your own speaking habits.
- Listen for any empty phrases ("you know," "like," etc.) and axe them.
- Practice speaking SLOWLY, pronouncing every word. Your delivery will naturally accelerate in front of a crowd.
- Pay attention to your posture while you speak. Project confidence in your professional skills by standing tall and looking out directly at the audience.
- Run through your PowerPoint in advance—several times!—to master potential technical pitfalls. You should know your slide sequence inside out.
- Know at least the outline of your speech by heart to give a more fluent presentation.
- Print out a copy of your PowerPoint presentation with comments (just in case technology goes on the blink).

Remind yourself as you prepare, and once again just before you start speaking, that what you are going to say is of great interest to this audience and will help them enormously. (This happens to be true and can help calm the jitters.) Odds are you know far more about your topic than anyone else in the room.