

## Public Speaking Tips

- **Prepare:** Decide how you feel most comfortable delivering your speech. You may choose to use your position paper text as your opening speech or you may write out some key points. In time, you may feel comfortable speaking without any written notes at all. If you plan to use a word or phrase that is unfamiliar to you, make sure you learn its meaning and how to pronounce it properly.
- **Practice:** Rehearsing your speech is the best way to perfect your public speaking skills. Try practicing in front of a teacher, a parent, or fellow Model UNers from your class or club. When you listen to a speech, provide constructive feedback rather than criticism. When someone critiques your speech, accept the feedback graciously and use it as a tool to strengthen your public speaking.
- **Consider your audience:** Make your speech appropriate to the age and experience-level of the other delegates at the conference. Remember that the beginning of the speech should captivate your audience and make them want to hear more.
- **Eliminate unnecessary "filler" words:** Fillers are words and phrases such as "umm," "well," "sort of," and "like". These words take away from the message you are trying to convey. Some additional fillers to avoid are "so," "you know," "I think," "just," and "uh."
- **Use meaningful pauses:** Leaving a moment of silence between sentences can be a powerful public speaking tool. Pausing after an important point or before answering a question will help to hold the audience's attention. A pause can also give you time to formulate your next statement.
- **Breathe:** Try to breathe from your diaphragm – the organ below your lungs that controls your respiration. You are breathing properly if you can see your abdomen rising and falling with each breath. Try to inhale and exhale completely.
- **Pace yourself:** Don't talk too fast or too slow. Remember that most speakers have a tendency to talk too quickly.

- **Choose a powerful posture:** Be aware of your posture when you speak. Slouching, tilting your head and crossing your arms or legs will take away from your message. Stand up straight, relax your shoulders, plant your feet firmly and keep your knees unlocked to help you communicate confidence.
- **Project your presence:** Speaking in a low to medium volume can help to project authority, but make sure that you are speaking loud enough to be easily heard. Focus on speaking with enthusiasm and energy.
- **Gesture:** It is worthwhile to use your face, hands, arms and body to help you communicate as long as your motions do not distract the audience from your speech.
- **Connect with your audience:** Glance at your notes rather than reading them so that you can make eye contact with the other delegates. It is often helpful to speak directly to individual members of the audience.
- **Get to the point:** Speak concisely so that your audience does not lose your main arguments among less-important details. Try not to speak in circles. Instead, go straight to your most important point.
- **Be positive:** Rather than criticizing another point of view, critique it in a constructive way. Always provide alternatives and be sure to back up your arguments.

**YES, YOU CAN!**