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HOW TO SPEAK EASY IN A VIRTUAL WORLD

Whether you're hosting a video call with your team, leading a virtual sales pitch, or broadcasting your brand to the masses, you've got to be ready to speak easy into that camera.

The problem is, no matter how captivating your online content, you're only one glitch away from losing your audience. But hey, don't log off just yet – we've got your back, your front and your best angle. Welcome to our virtual speak easy mini masterclass.

You're live in five

Just as athletes stretch, orchestras tune up and the All Blacks perform the Haka, it's important to get physically and mentally prepared before your big moment. Whether you're a pre-game power-poser, a notes noodler or a 'take a moment to meditate' type, when you're live in five, you 'gotta bring your A-game. Emulate pro performers by breathing and humming to loosen those mouth muscles or try some tricky tongue twisters to warm up your voice, face and jaw. Should you dress to impress? Yes!

Be comfortable and confident but avoid the jingling bangles and stay away from blurry stripped tops. Above all, smile. You'll feel better and so will your audience.

Is this thing on?

Lights, camera – oh. Technology is great – when it works – so make sure you test your camera, mic and speakers long before your audience arrives. Record yourself and listen back using free software apps. Slap a sticky note above your webcam to remind you to look into the lens (not at yourself). Let the natural light fall onto your face, or use an LED webcam light to brighten up those grey days. And, for crystal clear audio, consider a USB mic for crisp vocals, a shock mount to cut background noise, or a pop shield to make sure every single sibilant sound is suitably received.

Bolt on those bells and whistles

Most platforms offer virtual backgrounds which can whisk off your audience anywhere in the world, or frankly, mask the mess of the living room behind you. For best results (because we've all seen colleagues turn into ghosts), position yourself against a plain wall, ensure even levels of lighting, don't be too far from the camera and for all you gesticulators; try not to move around so much. If you're looking for something slicker, a pop-up greenscreen could be for you. Using colour contrasting technology, you can have photos, slides and even videos playing behind you. A wee whisper of warning though – don't wear green if you want to be seen!

Rehearse, refine and work the room

Passive, patient audiences are long gone and online, you have to work even harder to keep your audience hooked. Always rehearse out loud - to the mirror, your spouse, your colleague or even your cockapoo. Reread and refine your words, and use the power of the pause to let your messages land. Break up the virtual podium parade by adding some visual variety; smart slides, slick images and clever two-way conversations. Polling, panels and virtual breakouts are great, but don't just use them to tick a box, for a deeper insight, get them to drive a digital dialogue with your audience. Finally, speak with purpose and passion – and work that virtual room like a pro.

Need more show in your business?

Maybe your audience is bigger than a few tiled team members on a screen? Maybe you're thinking less webcast and more broadcast? Maybe your message is too important to rely on doing it alone? Bring in a trusted 'backstage' team who can spec your tech, virtually stage-manage, create your audience engagement activities, manage your comms and content and of course, allow your speakers to speak easy. If only you knew someone who could help...?

We've been designing devourable, digital content and delivering binge-worthy broadcasts for over a decade. If you're looking to unleash the power of experience for your live, hybrid or virtual events, Brands at Work is here to help.

[Read more of our musings here](#)