Public Speaking Tips

It’s natural to feel some nervousness before presenting to an audience. Here are a few ideas for keeping that nervousness to a minimum:

- Practice. Practice. Practice! Rehearse out loud with all equipment you plan on using. Revise as necessary. Work to control filler words; Practice, pause and breathe. Practice with a timer and allow time for the unexpected.

- Know the audience. Greet some of the audience members as they arrive. It’s easier to speak to a group of friends than to strangers.

- Know the room. Arrive early, walk around the speaking area and practice using the microphone and any visual aids.

- Relax. Begin by addressing the audience. It buys you time and calms your nerves. Pause, smile and count to three before saying anything. ("One one-thousand, two one-thousand, three one-thousand. Pause. Begin.) Transform nervous energy into enthusiasm.

- Visualize yourself giving your presentation. Imagine yourself speaking, your voice loud, clear and confident. Visualize the audience clapping – it will boost your confidence.

- Realize that people want you to succeed. Audiences want you to be interesting, stimulating, informative and entertaining. They’re rooting for you.

- Concentrate on the message – not the medium. Focus your attention away from your own anxieties and concentrate on your message and your audience.

Remember: A ‘Speaker Ready Room’ will be available – whether you want to run through your notes one last time, take a few minutes to gather your thoughts, or just find a quiet spot to relax before your presentation.