



**Helping individuals and companies
break out of their comfort zones
to become more successful**

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"The Eyes Have It": Using Eye Contact

Whether you're speaking to an audience of one or many, it's important to make eye contact in order to connect.

Eye contact demonstrates your willingness to connect to the audience on a personal level. It also shows that you are confident and proves that the information resides in your head, not your notes or the slides. When you present, you are talking to individuals, not an impersonal mass of people. You want each person to experience the communication one-on-one.

How long should you maintain eye contact with each person? About 5 seconds, which is about the time it takes to complete a thought. Then move on to another person. Yes, 5 seconds will feel like a long time at first!

If someone is uncomfortable with the eye contact, they can choose to look away.

If you are nervous about making eye contact, you can try this as a starting point: look right above their eyes, at their eyebrows. It will look like you're making regular eye contact and will help you get more comfortable until you can look them straight in the eye.

Here are other tips to help you use eye contact effectively:

- Avoid "tennis eyes" - moving from one side of the room to the other in a repetitive pattern, as if you were watching a tennis match.
- Avoid scanning the room quickly, trying to look at everyone at the same time.
- Aim for eye contact with all sections of the audience on a random basis - no one should be able to predict where you will look next.
- Stand where you can make eye contact with all parts of the room - don't ignore any section or person.

If you practice your eye contact, you will be able to face any audience with confidence.

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