

# The 10 Knows-Knows of Public Speaking

This is a list of ideas to help you be a successful public speaker. They not only apply to the pageant, but any speech you may have to give.

1. **Know the requirements.** It is important to know what is expected of you in any given speech. For the Personal Introduction you are required to say YOUR NAME, HOMETOWN and YOUR AMBITION or SOMETHING INTERESTING ABOUT YOURSELF. Remember, you can say more, but you cannot say less. The same applies if you have a speech in a class. It is important to know what the teacher expects your speech to cover.
2. **Know your material.** Practice, Practice, Practice! When you arrive on pageant weekend, you should already have your personal introduction completely memorized. Practice at home in front of a mirror and also in front of an audience. See what your family and friends think. Make sure your introduction doesn't exceed the allowable time (30 Sec) frame set by the rules and regulations.
3. **Know your audience.** It is important to know who you are addressing for a speech. At the pageant, you will be addressing the judges and the audience. It is important to look at each judge as well as the audience at some point in your Personal Introduction.
4. **Know your sound.** After you practice your Personal Introduction in front of people, ask them for honest feedback. When you speak, make sure you add voice inflection and have solid word pronunciation. You do not want to come off sounding monotone or rushed.
5. **Know your tempo.** Most people, when nervous about public speaking, speed up. If you are one of these people, be aware of it and practice talking at a slower pace. Remember to breathe and take your time. You do not have to get your whole Personal Introduction out in on breath.
6. **Know your body language.** Some studies state that as much as 93% of all communication is nonverbal. How you present yourself on stage speaks a lot about your confidence, attitude and personality. Be sure to use great posture, stand up straight and hold your head up high with confidence. Be proud of who you are and what you are accomplishing.
7. **Know the length of your speech.** You want to capture your audience's attention for the entire time you are on stage with your Personal Introduction. The easiest way to lose an audience is by speaking too long. Be concise and to the point. Like many speeches there is a time limit for the Personal Introduction. The time limit is 30 seconds. If you go over that time, points will be deducted from your score.
8. **Know how to use a microphone.** You want to hold the microphone about 2-4 inches away from your mouth and slightly below your bottom lip. You want people to hear your words, while at the same time not cover up that great smile. You will have a chance to practice using a microphone at the workshop and again at rehearsal on pageant weekend.
9. **Know what you need to improve on.** If someone gives you feedback, take it seriously and incorporate it into things to work on when you practice at home. Maybe you sound flat, maybe you talk too fast, or it is just as simple as making eye contact. Know where you are strong and where you need to improve.
10. **Know how to recover.** The best public speakers mess up from time to time. If this happens you happen to stumble while delivering your Personal Introduction stop and take a deep breath, collect your thoughts and pick up where you left off. Try to avoid vocal pauses such as "um" and "like". This is your chance to show your grace and poise under pressure.

**But above all else,  
KNOW that you can do it!**