



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

Training | Coaching | Speaking
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How to Use a Microphone Like a Pro

If you have the option of using a microphone for your next presentation, use it. You will be able to speak at your normal volume while also allowing the audience to hear you without difficulty. Here are five tips on how to use a microphone effectively, without it being distracting:

1. Practice.

If you've never used a microphone before, using it flawlessly for the first time in front of a live audience will be difficult. Instead, make the time to practice so you can get used to the sound of your voice coming through the speakers; it may sound strange to you at first. And be sure to test out the microphone in the actual space to make sure there is no speaker feedback (that awful, high-pitched whistling sound that will have your audience scrambling to cover their ears).

2. How to Wear a Clip-On Microphone

Clip it to the center of your shirt or jacket where it can pick up your voice regardless of which way you turn your head. The rest of the unit can clip to your waistband or slip into your pocket, with the wire coiled so it doesn't get in your way. Practice wearing the microphone so it doesn't distract you from your presentation. Once while competing in a Toastmasters Tall Tale speech contest, I jumped across the stage as I was shaken out of my car and taken into an alien space ship (yes, this was a TALL TALE). The microphone flew out of my pocket and across the stage while the rest of it was still clipped to my jacket lapel. I kept speaking while I walked over and picked it up; thankfully, it kept working!

3. How to Hold a Handheld Microphone

If you're using a handheld microphone, remember to hold it close enough to your mouth so it picks up your voice. Practice holding your notes or the remote in your other hand without hitting the microphone and producing a resounding "thud."

4. Check the Battery

Before you use a microphone, check the battery. Nothing is worse than having the battery die in the middle of your presentation and not knowing where to get a replacement. Ideally, someone in the room should have an extra battery handy and know how to change it.

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5. Turn it Off

Always turn the microphone off when you're finished speaking or at break time. This sounds obvious, but sometimes people forget to switch it off. In a class that I attended in graduate school, a teaching assistant who forgot to turn off his clip-on microphone walked down the hall, cursing out the professor who had sent him to the department office to fetch some handouts. The entire auditorium of students – and the professor – heard him. That's what we refer to as a "career-limiting move."

If you follow these five tips, you'll be able to use a microphone like a professional. And it will be easier for your audience to hear you and understand your message