Gesturing can help people form clearer thoughts, speak in tighter sentences and use more declarative language." Hand gestures can **increase your impact when you're** making a speech, or giving a presentation.

If you use distracting hand gestures when public speaking, you will prevent your audience from absorbing what you're saying. Instead, **be purposeful with both of your hands**. Let your audience see your hands — don't just keep them robotically at your side — and let your hands speak.

People often gesture with their head and shoulders (nodding and shrugging are both examples of gestures), but when it comes to presentations and public speaking, it's typically **the hands and arms** that do the bulk of the gesturing.

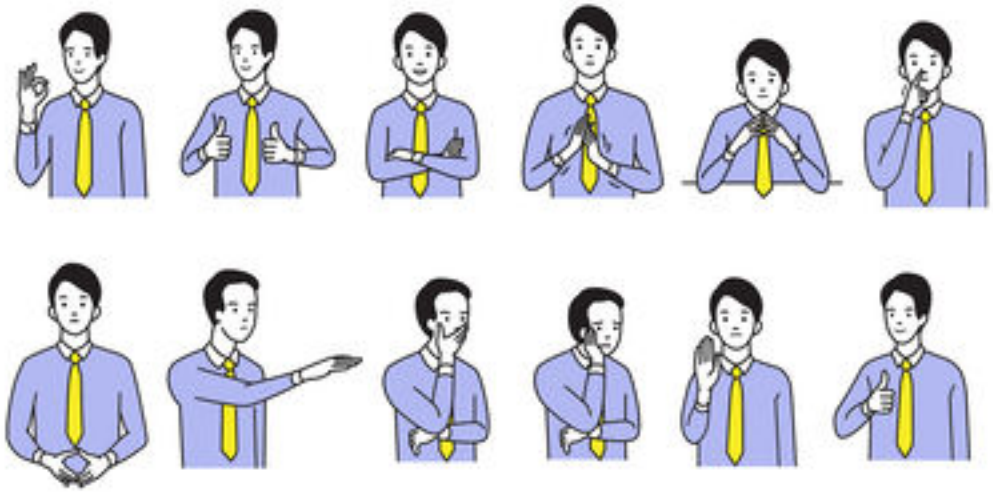
To use hand gestures effectively, avoid distractive movements, **use only positive gestures, and rehearse them thoroughly beforehand**. If we feel nervous, it is often unconsciously reflected in our gestures. You might find yourself tapping your finger, fidgeting, or touching your hair without even realizing it.

Thus, speech and gesture each have their own advantages but work together to enrich the language context. Gestures have benefits for both listeners and speakers. **Gesture facilitates comprehension**, and listeners integrate information from both modalities in their mental representations.

Within your written speech or note cards—use different highlight colors or symbols to remind you specific words/phrases to use a specific hand gesture or facial gesture to enhance the text.

For more ideas, do a search for hand gestures for public speaking and view the videos for ideas, such as the one listed below:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f60IU-tQxMA
Best Hand Gestures For Public Speaking 5:00



Body Language includes facial expression

Eye contact

When you look a person in the eye, you **communicate confidence and belief in your point of view**. One of the most powerful means of communicating confidence and conviction is sustained, focused eye contact. Sustained, focused eye contact makes you feel more confident and act more assertively.

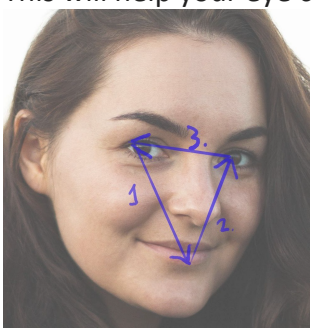
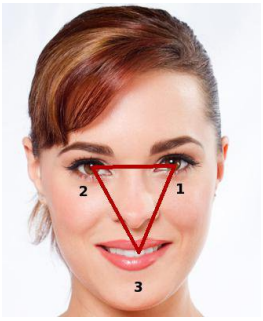
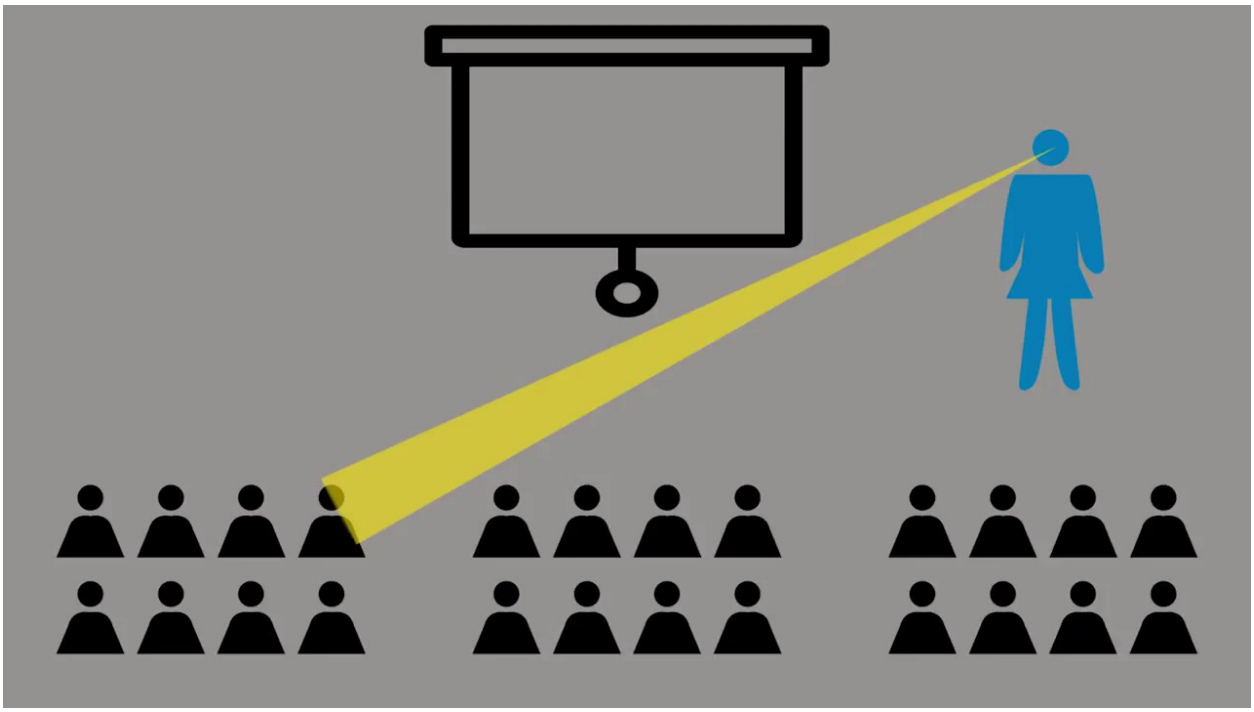
Sometimes, however, looking audience members in the eye isn't easy. That's especially true when you're nervous and self-conscious about your speaking. It's hard to stay focused and present when thoughts about your own lack of skills hijack your thinking.

When giving a speech you will need to spread your gaze around the room. Make sure to give each section of the room equal time and energy. Look at someone on the left side for a few seconds, then someone in the middle, then someone on the right. Don’t forget the people in the back!

Focus your eye contact around the room…

When looking at the back of a large room, it’s okay to focus on a section or a head in the distance rather than try to make direct eye contact with someone far away. They will feel as though you are looking at them even if you are looking at a small group. Scan sections of the room and rotate your gaze around the room so that at some point you have attended to the whole room. Use the “W” shape as you gaze from one side of the room to the other. An effective technique to use is the pinpoint technique. This is where you pinpoint a specific audience member and talk to them for one sentence of your speech. Then you pinpoint another audience member and do the same thing, repeating this technique throughout your entire speech. Using this technique you seem more conversational and the audience will be more engaged.

When speaking to a live audience, you would look directly at someone's eyes. In a video meeting, you maintain eye contact by looking into the camera. So a good idea is to **lower the monitor camera a little** so that you don't have to tilt your head back to gaze up at it.

While you look into the camera lens, envision someone you know – someone you have found it easy to have a conversation with. Speak to them. This makes it easier to keep your eyes honed in on the camera, look into it and think about what lies beyond. Or, place a coloured sticky or a picture of someone you know just above the camera lens. It's easier to focus on a place marker or on an image rather than randomly trying to focus on the black depths of a camera lens.
When doing your speech on camera, use the "W" shape, post several photos on the wall behind the camera. Then, rotate your eye contact, every 5-10 seconds to different photos on the wall as you deliver your 5-minute speech.

When speaking to a live audience, Apply the triangle technique.
"The triangle technique is where **you look at the person's face as an inverted triangle and look at other parts of the face as well as the eye for 5 seconds at a time**," says Wade Brewington.
This will help your eye contact come off as natural.