

Hi everyone

The Olympic Games have begun and as a result, I have found myself captivated by sports that I don't normally follow. Are you having the same experience?

On the day that the Olympics began I was a guest judge at a speaking contest for an inspirational group of people. Each of the contestants demonstrated the qualities of Olympic medallists with their focus and dedication to achieving their goals.

This month's article - Jumping Speaking Hurdles - was inspired by what I witnessed at the contest.

I welcome your feedback on the article so feel free to leave a comment at the [end of the article](#) or on [Infinite Growth's Facebook page](#).

Last month's newsletter prompted many positive comments. Thank you to those of you who contacted me with your feedback.

Have a great month!

Until next time
Maria



About Infinite Growth

[Infinite Growth](#) delivers [workshops](#) and [coaching sessions](#) for individuals and teams in:

- [Presentation skills](#)
- [Business writing](#)
- Communicating effectively with [clients](#) and [colleagues](#)

Infinite Growth also offers [Communication Packages](#) and a [Self-Study Business Writing Program](#).

[Contact Maria](#) to book a complimentary session to discuss your business communication needs.

Jumping Speaking Hurdles

Have you ever been paralysed by fear? Many people find public speaking such a frightening thought that they will do almost anything to avoid it.

What if you had more hurdles in life to jump than most? Would that be a good reason why you should not work on overcoming your fear of public speaking?

I was recently asked to be a guest judge at a speaking contest for a special group of people. Many of the contestants have Down Syndrome yet none of them allowed their 'disability' to deter them from performing at their best.

I love the expression that I heard in a client's organisation which works with people with disabilities:

Don't 'dis' my ability

The contestants lived that expression. Many of their speeches highlighted their need to be heard as individuals and as a group.

Each person who participated in the contest had overcome their own fears of public speaking. By participating in a structured program and learning from each speaking experience they were able to perform well on the day - in front of family, friends and total strangers.

Speaking in front of a group with the added pressure of participating in a contest is daunting for most people. Yet these inspiring people made it look almost effortless. To arrive at that point, they had made a commitment to overcome their own individual hurdles.

Speaking hurdles

As with any speaker, the hurdles these speakers had to overcome included:

- Channeling their nervous energy
- Structuring their speeches to appeal to their audience
- Using their voice effectively
- Overcoming distracting mannerisms
- Speaking within their allocated time

As a judge at the contest, I was impressed by each speaker's ability. Deciding who would be the winner of the contest was difficult.

Their achievements reflected a quote by Susan Jeffers: *Feel the fear and do it anyway.*

Each contestant had overcome the fear of public speaking to stand and deliver stellar performances.

How you can overcome speaking hurdles

The first step is to make a commitment to improve your public speaking and then take action to do so.

Here is a selection of articles on [presentation skills](#) providing answers to common questions and tips that may assist you:

- [Seven commonly asked questions answered](#)
- [Structuring your speech or presentation](#)
- [Improving your speaking voice](#)
- [Designing effective PowerPoint slides](#)
- [Timing for a presentation](#)

Imagine the possibilities if you could overcome your communication hurdles - in particular, public speaking. Would it mean a promotion, new clients or the confidence to communicate more effectively with your colleagues?

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Need a speaker, coach or trainer?

If you would like assistance with your next presentation or would like to book Maria for your upcoming event [contact the Infinite Growth office](#).

Maria has a [range of topics](#) which she speaks on as well as a [variety of programs](#) that she provides for individuals and groups.

[Find out what clients are saying about Maria's presentations and programs.](#)

Contact Maria on **02 9687 7084** or reply to this email to discuss your requirements.

If you know someone who could benefit from this newsletter feel free to forward it to them.

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