



The Stuttering Playbook



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Declare

Declare that you a Person Who Stutters. Whether in an open space or in a private meeting room, let your colleagues know that you stutter in a way that is most comfortable for you.

Instruct

Instruct your colleagues and employers how to deal with you when you have the floor. Encourage patience. Discourage interruptions. Above all else, don't ask for respect. Command it.

Brainstorm

Brainstorm ideas on how to communicate if you're having a bad day verbally. You can do this with your colleagues, employers, or on your own. If you choose the latter, be sure to share your ideas and invite feedback.

Invite

Invite questions and comments. Not everyone is going to know about stuttering. Don't fault them for that. Open the floor. After all, education is the enemy of ignorance.



Examples

Declare

Instruct

Brainstorm

Invite

"I'd like to let you all know that I stutter."

"I am a Person Who Stutters. Please wait for my brilliance."

"I stutter."

"That's my superpower. What's yours?"

"When I speak, please don't interrupt or finish my sentences."

"Please do not laugh, scoff, or show impatience."

"For future reference, I will give a signal if I need help."

"I may need a screen – phone or laptop – to share my ideas."

"Let me use headphones when I speak."

"Allow me to email or GChat you to communicate further."

"I invite you to ask any questions you have."

"Nothing is off limits."

"Make sure I have time to talk to you before you ask."

"I have an open-door policy in regards to questions and comments."

Source:
National Stuttering Association

Facts About Stuttering

1

The 1% Club

It's estimated about 1% of the world's population stutters, though about 5% of children go through a period of stuttering.

2

Early Development

Stuttering usually begins in childhood, between the ages of 2 and 5 years.

3

Differences in the Brain

Stuttering is associated with differences in the brain; it is not just a behavior that children learn or pick up from listening to other people who stutter.

4

Majority vs. Minority

As many as 80% of young children who begin to stutter ultimately stop stuttering. Those who continue to stutter into the school-age years are likely to continue stuttering in some fashion throughout their lives.

Myths About Stuttering

1

People who stutter are not smart.

Reality: There is no link whatsoever between stuttering and intelligence.

2

Nervousness causes stuttering.

Reality: Nervousness does not cause stuttering. Nor should we assume that people who stutter are prone to be nervous, fearful, anxious, or shy. They have the same full range of personality traits as those who do not stutter.

3

It helps to tell a person to "take a breath" before talking.

This advice only makes a person more self-conscious, making the stuttering worse. More helpful responses include listening patiently and modeling slow and clear speech yourself.

4

Stress causes stuttering.

Many complex factors are involved. Stress is not the cause, but it can certainly aggravate stuttering.



Be Assertive (Repeat After Me)

I will be taken seriously.

I will be treated with respect.

My stutter does not define who I am as a person and/or as a professional.



Icebreaker Time

What types of setbacks have you faced, or do you face?

How do you, or wish to, address them with others?



Icebreaker Time



Introduce yourself
to the person next to
you.

Tell them about
a disability of
yours and some
information you
want them to
know.