

# Draw a blank during a speech? Recover

During a presentation, if you lose your train of thought, get back on track with these tips:

- **Repeat your last sentence.** That usually will trigger what you planned to say next.
- **Ask the audience for help.** You can ask them to tell you the next item you have listed on the agenda or handout. You can also ask them to tell you what you said last. The audience will likely appreciate being involved, and it is a great way to gauge whether they

are tuned into your presentation.

- **Stop talking altogether.** Take two steps back, inhale deeply, smile and collect your thoughts. Then take two steps forward and proceed.
- **Don't apologize or make excuses.** You'll just delay your recovery and draw attention to your mistake. Compose yourself and move on.

— Adapted from “Ten Quick Tips for Outstanding Presentations,” Ed Sykes, [www.thesykesgrp.com](http://www.thesykesgrp.com).

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