

# IELTS Speaking Masterclass

## DEALING WITH NERVES

Most people feel nervous before an oral exam. This is normal. Although stress is a personal thing and can affect different people to different degrees, here are some tips on how to reduce nerves before and during your IELTS speaking test.

### Think positive

Stress is caused by the way you think. If you imagine a negative experience during your exam, for example not being able to understand the questions, you will start to panic a little. It is important to realize that you have no idea how the exam will go until you take it. It could be much easier than you expect. Before you go into the exam, try to remember a test that you took in the past which was much easier than you had expected.

### Exercise

Try to get a good night's sleep before the exam and start the day with a healthy breakfast. Doing some exercise is also a good idea – go for a run, walk or swim. This will take your mind off the exam and help you to relax.

### Meditate

On the day of your exam, you will have a lot of thoughts about the test – How will it go? Will I understand the questions? What will I do if I fail? What will I say if the examiner asks me ....? Find a quiet place to sit for 15-30 minutes. When a thought or image comes into your head, try to observe it and feel the tension in your body. The thought and tension will disappear and you will start to become a little more relaxed. Do not try to stop thinking. Just observe your thoughts like you are watching a film.

### Think about the examiner

Try to be aware of the examiner's perspective. A professional examiner has been in this situation hundreds of times and does not want you to fail. You are certainly not the first nervous candidate. If you step back and think about the 'big picture', you will relax more.

### Focus on the questions

If you try to focus on the questions, you won't have time to get stressed. If you don't understand or didn't hear something, ask the examiner to explain or repeat the question.

### Imagine a conversation

Try to think of the exam as a conversation with an acquaintance of yours, especially for Parts 1 and 3. If you go into the exam thinking that you are going to take a test, you will put more pressure on yourself.