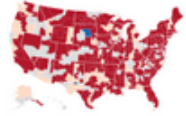


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Public speaking has changed dramatically in the last few years with the shift to online events during the COVID-19 pandemic. As many conferences continue to be virtual, people are adjusting to addressing audiences from their living rooms — and this shift has presented some unique challenges and benefits.

The pandemic brought a “great reset” to the public speaking space, Saana Azzam, a professional public speaker and founder of coaching program MENA Speakers, tells *Fortune*. “Those who have had long careers speaking onstage were not necessarily good at speaking virtually. And rookies, who were very tech-savvy, all of a sudden did great in a virtual format. Even people with a fear of public speaking do well.”

But while it's easier than ever to reach a large audience, being a compelling, informative speaker requires some prep work.

Public speaking is a “learnable skill,” says Azzam, that has been demystified as virtual engagements became the norm over the past two years. But for

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