




## TECHNICAL AND INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

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Technical skills are important when it comes to good sound in production, but interpersonal skills often make just as much difference, says freelance sound engineer, Aston Fearon.

When giving the presenter the mic for their presentation I generally like to have a conversation with them. As well as putting them at ease by being personable, having a chat with them also ascertains how comfortable they are using a mic and presenting on stage. Most times I find for example; that if someone cannot be heard when using a handheld mic it is usually because of poor mic technique. Poor mic technique is often due to nervousness and/or inexperience and both these things can be removed by the sound engineer- by providing a bit of rapport and familiarisation. If they are wearing a headset mic it is a good idea to ask if it's comfortable for them- otherwise they may need to adjust when they have walked away and it may no longer be positioned in the same place.

If no rehearsal has been scheduled and the presenter wants to have a brief informal rehearsal, I always try to let them do so if possible. This lets them get comfortable with the microphone and when they are done I can advise on any improvements on mic technique.

Presenters have enough to think about when they walk on stage so I try and explain what will happen so that they know beforehand- namely that I will unmute them when they go on stage and mute them when they finish; and that they won't have to press any buttons themselves. Having these conversations often puts them at ease and avoids them trying to switch on the mic when it's already on.