

Speakeasy Mobile App & Responsive Website

Liam Haeffele, lead designer

Project overview



The product:

Speakeasy is an educational app designed to help *specifically* young adults (but adults of any age are welcomed) in improving their public speaking skills. It is targeted at rising college students who are entering into their first speech classes, and even at young professionals who speak at meetings or present to stakeholders.



Project duration:

June 2023 - July 2023

Project overview



The problem:

An overwhelming 75% of the general population suffers from public speaking anxiety. There is a general understanding and belief that public speaking is a valuable (even necessary) skill, but few resources exist when it comes to formatively practicing in a non-graded environment.



The goal:

Design an app that will allow people to educate themselves on best practices when public speaking, discuss in forums, and to practice their work in front of a real, tangible audience.

Project overview



My role:

Lead UX designer and researcher from beginning to end



Responsibilities:

Conducting screening surveys, designing wireframes and prototypes, high-fidelity designs, usability studies, and deliverables like personas, journey maps, etc.

Understanding the user

- User research
- Personas
- Problem statements
- User journey maps

User research: summary



A larger group of participants were given a screening survey to indicate their experiences with public speaking anxiety. From here, those who responded affirmatively to having a high degree of public speaking anxiety were selected and chosen to participate in two usability studies for the application.

Among them, most participants in the survey suggested that an app like speakeasy would be of tremendous value to someone in a speech class or to a young professional trying to develop. This aligned with secondary research I conducted of most people feeling highly stressed about public speaking.

Persona: Derek

Problem statement:

Derek is a full-time student on the football team who needs a quick & easy way to prepare for speeches on the go because of his busy practice schedule.



Name: Derek

Age: 19

Education: Enrolled in college

Hometown: Tacoma, WA

Family: Parents divorced

Occupation: Full-time student, plays on the football team at school

"It is hard to fail, but it is worse never to have tried to succeed." -Theodore Roosevelt

Goals

- Practice speeches on the go and get advice
- Have an easy way to get homework done despite being busy with the team
- Improve his eye contact

Frustrations

- Due to nervousness, he tends to avoid eye contact during speeches
- Lack of time to practice with all of his engagements
- Never feeling sufficiently prepared

Derek is a full-time college student who is currently a member of the football team at his community college. He is always on the move, and frequently struggles to balance his academics with his extracurriculars. He would enjoy having a way to read forums giving advice on how to give good speeches, and a way to practice giving good eye contact during delivery. A mobile app like this would help him start to feel more prepared.

Persona: Emerson

Problem statement:

Emerson is a busy high school student who wants a way to get speech feedback and advice from people online because of a lack of camaraderie in her public speaking class.



Name: Emerson

Age: 17

Education: Enrolled in high school

Hometown: South Bend, Indiana

Family: 1 older sister, parents

Occupation: work full time

Works part-time at beauty supply store

"Knowledge is of no value unless you put it into practice" -Anton Chekhov

Goals

- Use her laptop to livestream her own speeches and get feedback
- Watch famous speeches with notes of what was done well

Frustrations

- Performance anxiety
- Practicing dozens of times and never feeling like it's enough
- Lack of camaraderie in class
- Teachers rush them into delivering speeches

Emerson is a current high-school student enrolled in a speech class. While she is excited to push herself, she feels the class has moved at too fast of a pace and that the instructor should reduce the number of intensive speeches for an intro course. She also feels like the stakes are high and is always worried about messing up in front of her classmates. She would like a solution that allows her to not only deliver speeches on her laptop, but also watch speeches of note with plenty of insights as to what was done well.

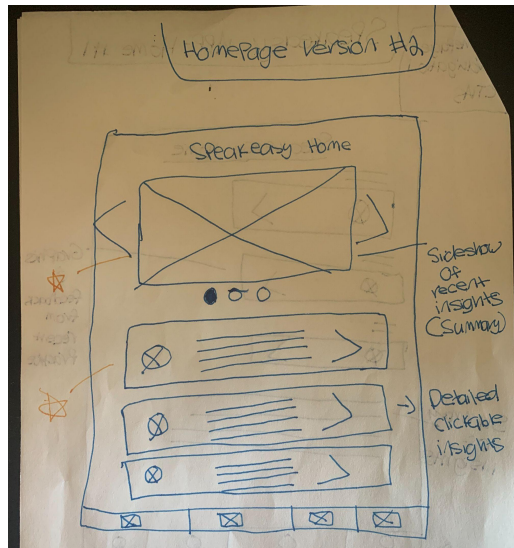
User journey map

To better understand what might lead a user to downloading this app, I tried to think in terms of how I typically felt going into my first speech class and also how a busy person like Derek might benefit from a mobile-centered design.

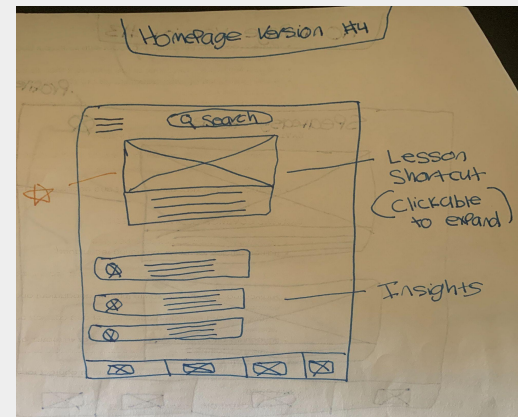
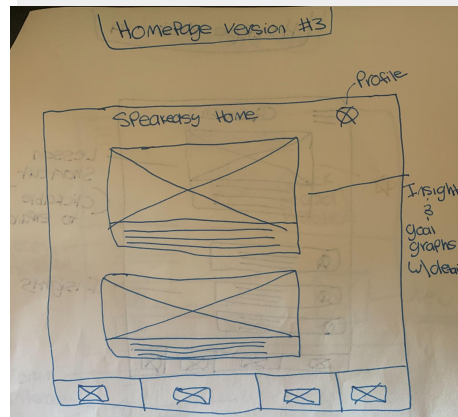
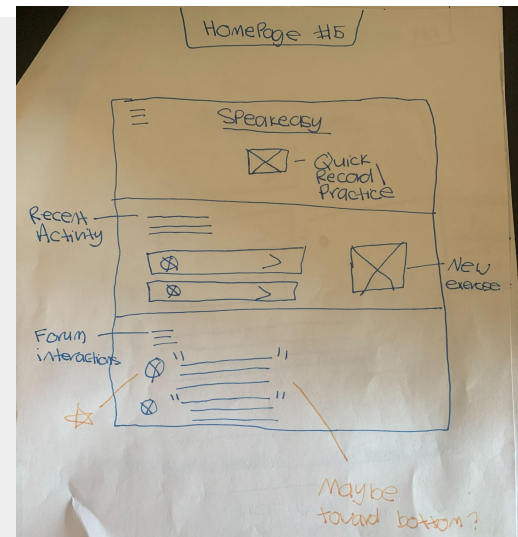
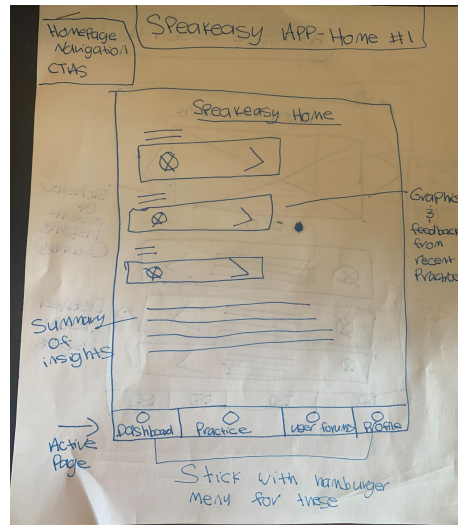
ACTION	Sign up for college speech class	Attend the first day	Go to football practice	Start working on first speech for next week	Deliver speech
TASK LIST	Tasks A. Review professor ratings on website like Rate my Professor B. Ensure timeslot for class works with his schedule C. Sign up, pay any fees D. Get any necessary books	Tasks A. Find his seat B. Introductions to class, professor C. Receive course syllabi outlining major projects of course	Tasks A. Attend & finish practice B. Go home C. Shower, get ready to do homework	Tasks A. Refer to course syllabus B. Review project requirements on first worksheet C. Start brainstorming speech ideas on paper D. Decide on a speech topic	Tasks A. Turn in any supporting materials B. Stand up in front, deliver speech C. Collect feedback from professor
EMOTIONS	Worried, anxious	Overwhelmed	Frustrated, short on time	Hopeful	Nervous, scared, anxious
IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES	Have a consolidated list of speech resources for people to use	Have community forum for advice on speech topics	Ensure mobile app design is quick, easy-to-use at a glance	Ensure all feedback within application gets routed to user's email / push	Have <u>livestreaming</u> feature that allows users to practice in real-time

Paper wireframes

For mobile, the goal was to make something highly scannable with personal insights. I mocked up a couple different styles, from grids to quick widgets and slideshows.



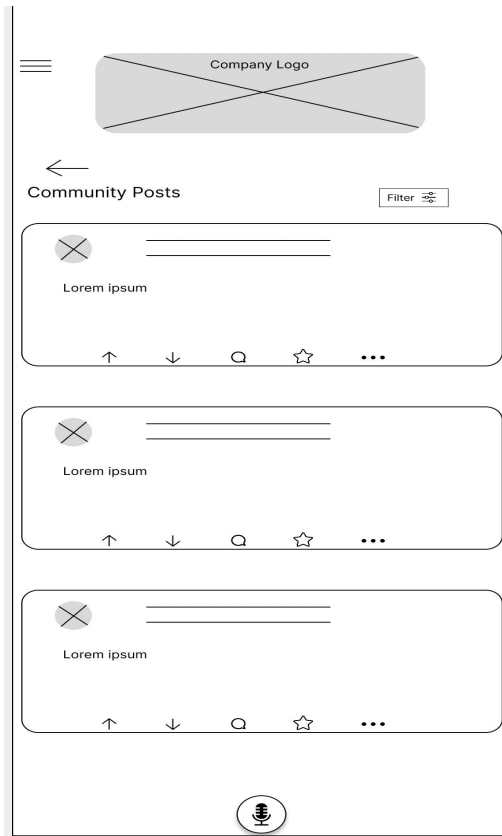
Final
version of
homescreen



Digital wireframes

The rest of the design in general (incl. the wireframes) was informed by a desire to have everything very “central” on the homepage. No matter what a user’s intentions might be for downloading, we wanted all of the core features to be right there, front & center. No menus, no sifting around.

Community forum posts so that users can interact with one another and foster their own communities



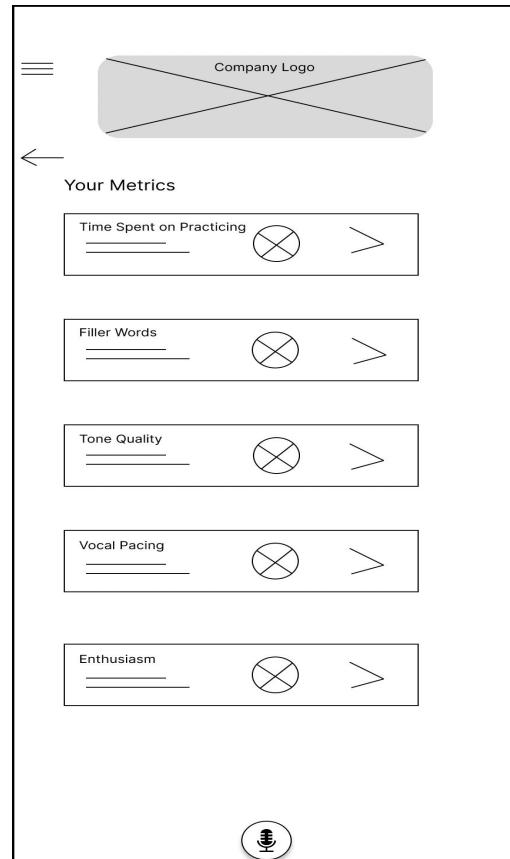
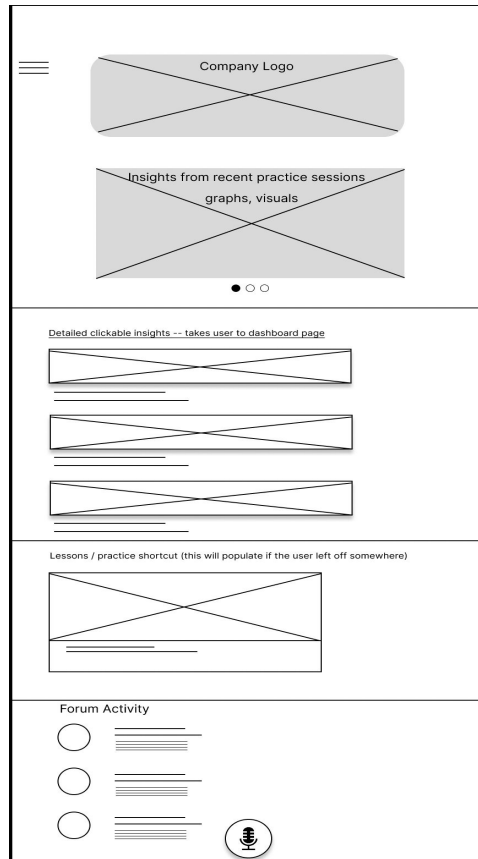
Convenient filtering options for users on the go

Digital wireframes

Again, just making sure all information is concise and accessible enough so that our target user “on the go” can access what they need quickly.



All homepage features centrally located, microphone for quick access to practice modes

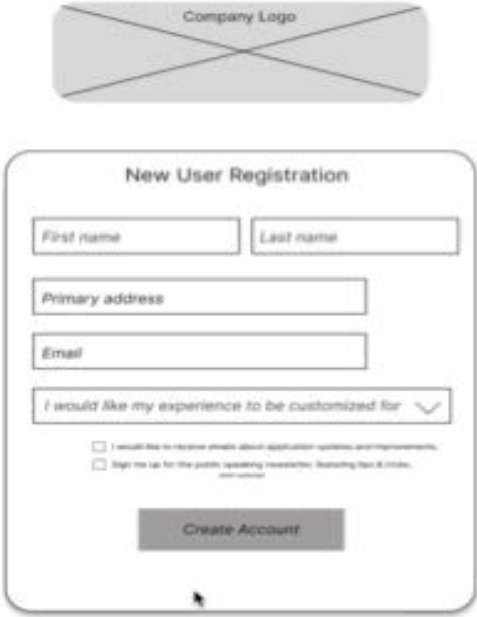


Insights at a glance about recent practice sessions that a user can scan and easily read on mobile

Low-fidelity prototype

[Link to prototype](#)

Within this prototype, I designed for the primary flow of utilizing the various practice modes and reading quick, digestible insights at a glance. The mobile user needs their information quickly so that was the underlying goal within the app's design language.



The image shows a low-fidelity prototype of a mobile application's 'New User Registration' screen. At the top, there is a placeholder for a 'Company Logo' represented by a gray rounded rectangle with a black 'X' across it. Below this is the title 'New User Registration'. The form contains several input fields: 'First name' and 'Last name' (side-by-side), 'Primary address', and 'Email'. Below these is a dropdown menu with the text 'I would like my experience to be customized for' and a downward arrow. Under the dropdown are two checkboxes with their respective labels: 'I would like to receive emails about application updates and improvements.' and 'Sign me up for the public speaking newsletter. Learning tips & tricks, inspiration.' At the bottom of the form is a 'Create Account' button. A mouse cursor is visible over the button.

Usability study: findings

Write a short introduction to the usability studies you conducted and your findings.

Round 1 findings (lofi prototypes)

- 1 Users found the lofi mobile experience a bit cluttered / “listy”
- 2 Visuals like icons, charts could be a bit larger
- 3 No search bar on community forum page

Round 2 findings (hifi prototypes)

- 1 Add subheadings / more imagery to copy-heavy sections
- 2 Incentive for giving good feedback other than goodwill
- 3 Code of conduct section on homepage is lengthy – shorten
- 4 Visibility / stylistic issues – profile icon, slideshow arrows, borders on images

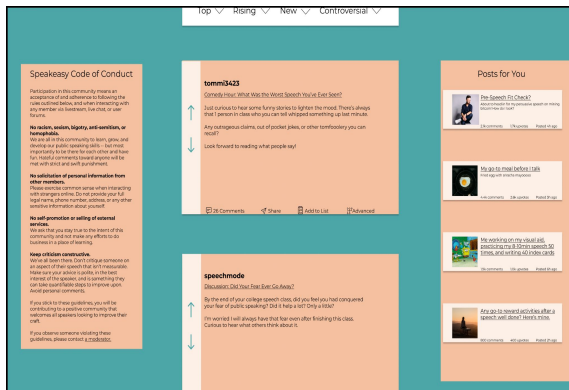
Refining the design

- Mockups
- High-fidelity prototype
- Accessibility

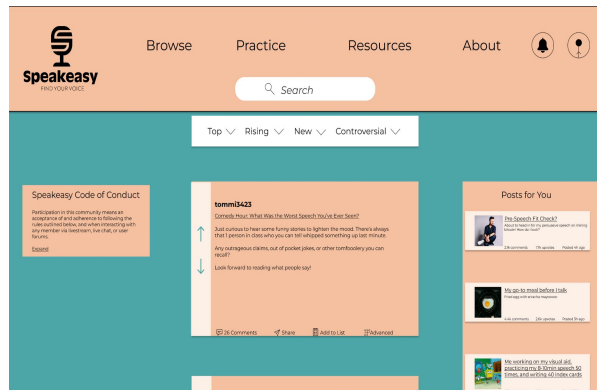
Mockups

Users indicated on the desktop site that the code of conduct is a little copy-heavy and overwhelming, so I tucked it away and added an “expand” button for users wanting to read further.

Before usability study



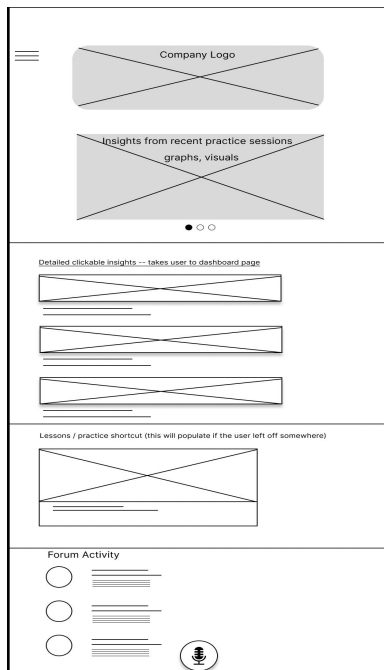
After usability study



Mockups

The low-fidelity testing indicated that users wanted more segmentation between home-screen sections. So, I made the cards / icons larger and increased the font size to stand out more and add hierarchy.

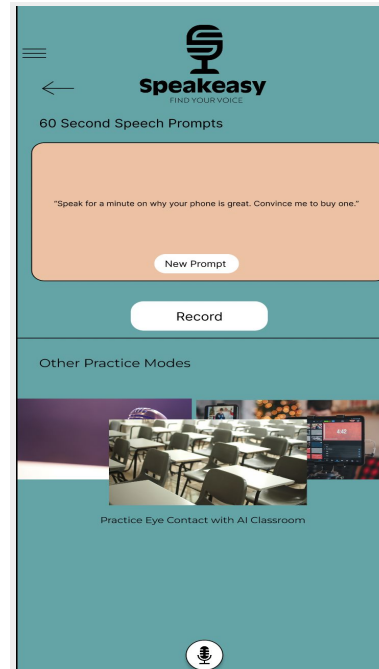
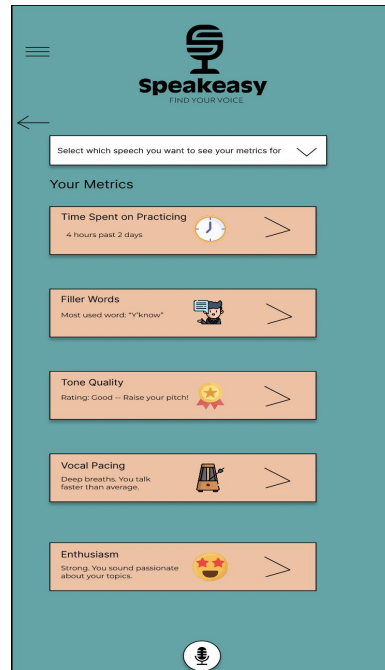
Before usability study



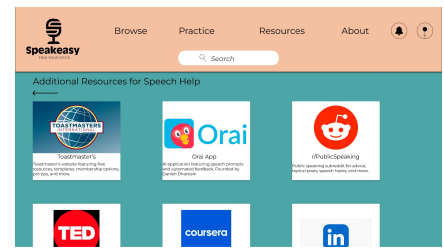
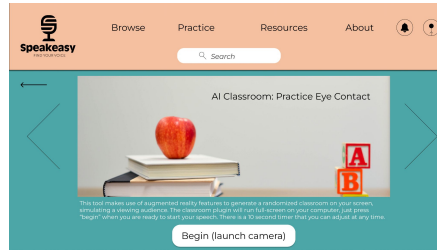
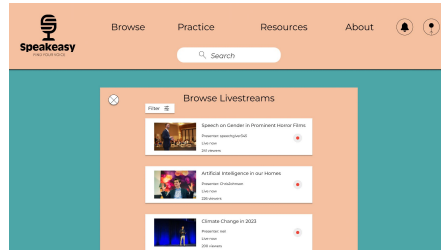
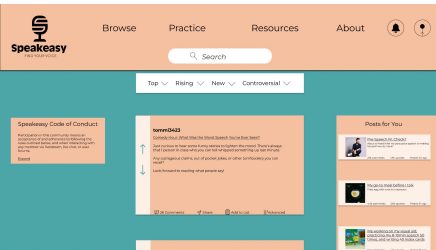
After usability study



Mockups (mobile)



Mockups (desktop)



High-fidelity Prototype (mobile)

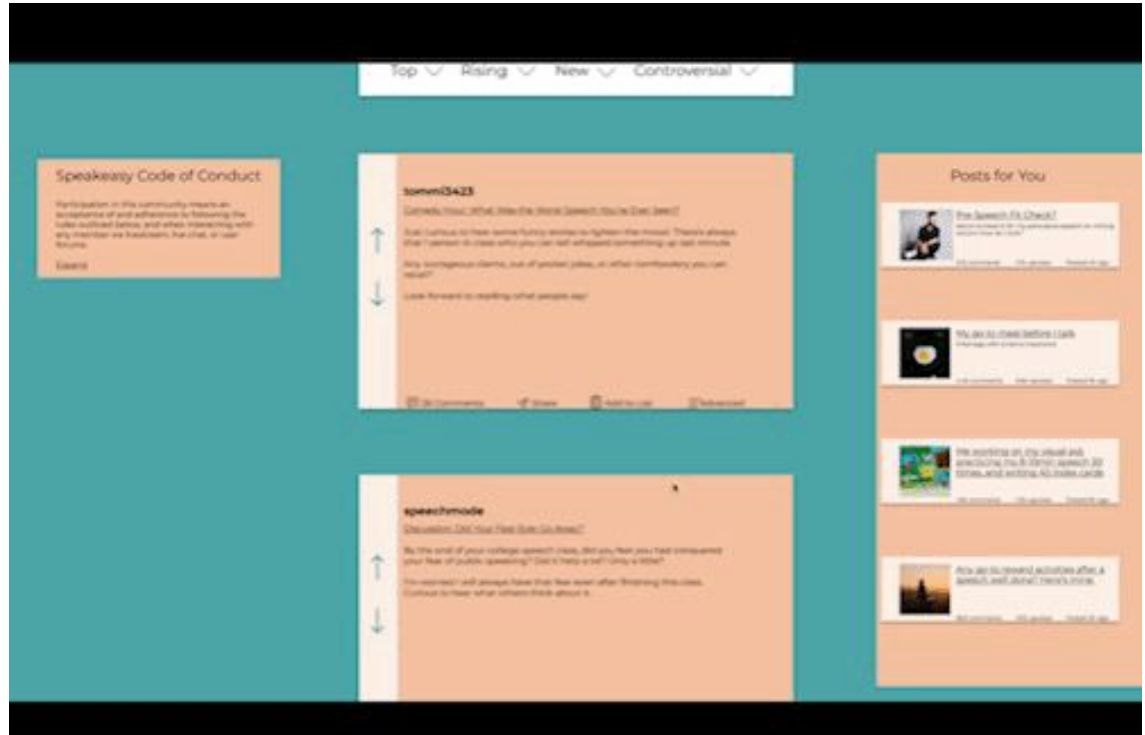
[Link to prototype for
mobile](#)



The image shows a mobile app prototype for 'Speakeasy'. At the top, there is a teal header with the 'Speakeasy' logo, which consists of a stylized 'S' above the word 'speakeasy' in a bold, sans-serif font. Below the header is a white rounded rectangle containing the 'New User Registration' form. The form has the following fields: 'First name' and 'Last name' (two separate input boxes), 'Primary address' (a single input box), 'Email' (a single input box), and a dropdown menu labeled 'I would like my experience to be customized for'. Below these fields are two checkboxes: the first is 'I would like to receive emails about application updates and improvements' and the second is 'Sign me up for the public speaking newsletter. (We will only email you once)'. At the bottom of the form is a white button with the text 'Create Account' and a small circular icon to its right. The entire form is set against a teal background that also serves as the app's main interface color.

High-fidelity Prototype (desktop)

[Link to prototype for
desktop](#)



Accessibility considerations

1

Highly readable text with good iconography to inform the user about navigation and primary flows within the app

2

Unique practice modes in an effort to best account for people with a wide array of impairments, conditions, or fears

3

High contrast design for easy readability and scanning

Going forward

- Takeaways
- Next steps

Takeaways



Impact:

Users shared that the tools present in this design are some of the more creative solutions to alleviating speech fears that they've seen. Additionally, it was shared that the resources section and general brand voice is one that inspires serious goodwill through its messaging and aspiration to help people overcome their phobias.



What I learned:

I learned that although this may only be one tool in the arsenal of reducing public speaking anxiety – it is a tool that, through some intense soul-searching and ideation, proposes solutions that are feasible and strong. Speeches are an overwhelming fact of life, but speakeasy seems like it would help the lives of many young adolescents and adults.

Next steps

1

Resolve the minor stylistic issues users mentioned (change the profile icon to something more inclusive, slideshow arrow size, etc).

2

Add subheadings to more copy-heavy sections (like some of the insight pages with charts & graphs)

3

Add an incentive for users to provide good feedback other than sheer goodwill (points? Redeemable prizes?)

Let's connect!



I so appreciate you taking a look at my "speakeasy" project! If you would like to get in touch with me, below is my information:

Email: lhaeffele14@gmail.com

Site: <https://www.chieflyart.com>