

How To Become A Successful Public Speaker

HOW TO BECOME A SUCCESSFUL PUBLIC SPEAKER

SELECTED TIPS - 62 PAGES!



62 Pages!

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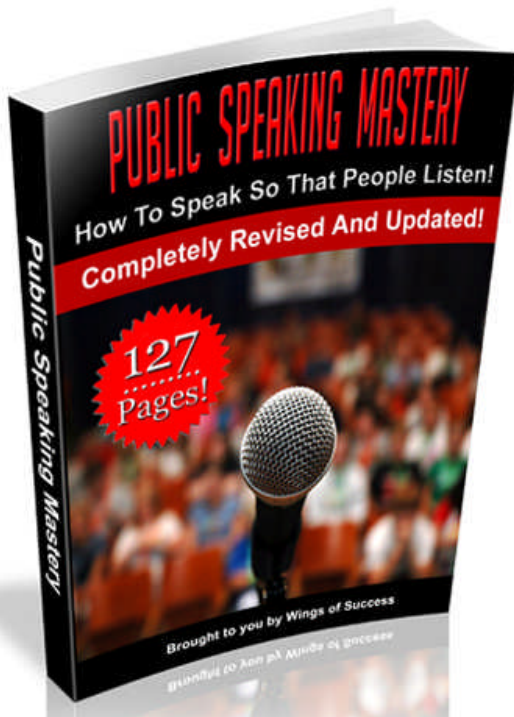
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Public Speaking

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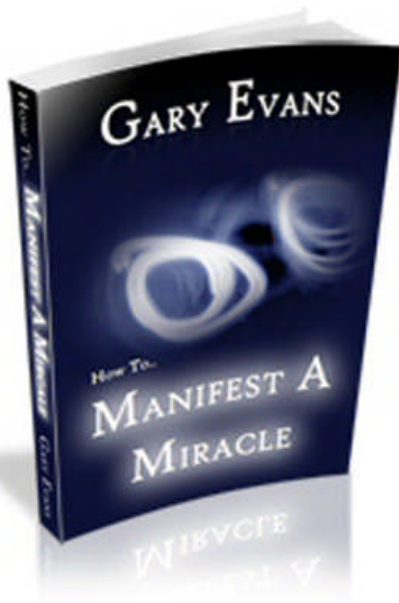
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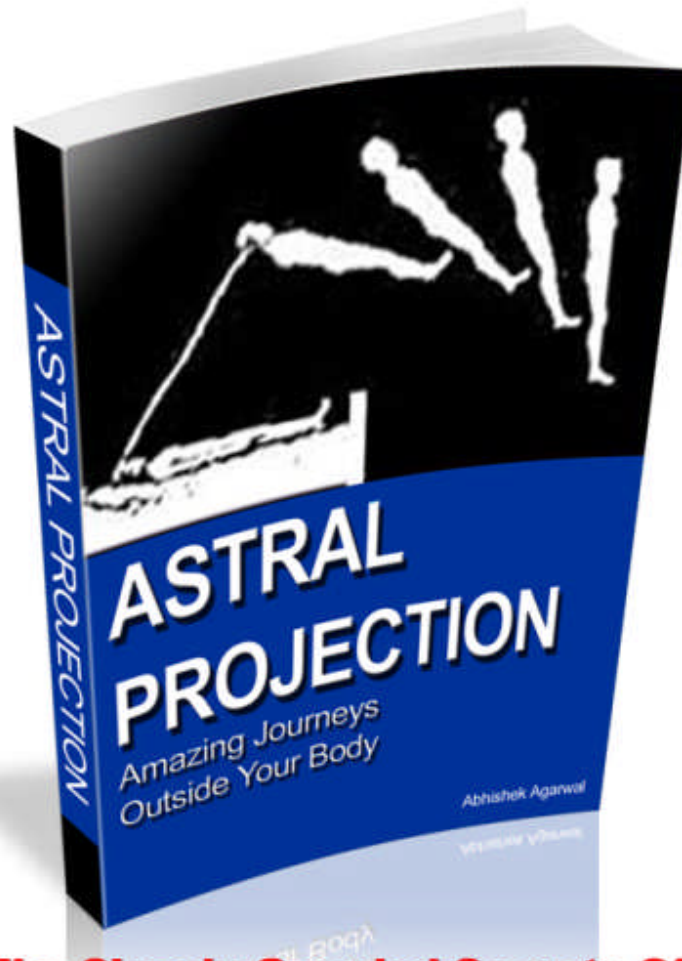
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10 Tips For Professional Speakers

Put your best foot forward every time! One of the reasons that many people fear taking the podium is because they are afraid of being the focal point of everyone's attention and they don't want to make a fool of themselves. There are several things you can do to "fool-proof" your speaking event so that you present well every single time!

1. ***Take the time to prepare well for your presentation.*** Preparation enhances your confidence and it's also an opportunity to refine any weak areas in your presentation.
2. ***Begin and end your presentation on time.*** Arriving late to your presentation is simply unprofessional; not to mention that it won't win you any points with your crowd. Also speaking over time shows your audience that you don't value their time.
3. ***Know your audience.*** The only way you can really relate your audience is if you know who they are. Profile your audience. Are they male or female? What income bracket are they in? Why would they attend your presentation?
4. ***Dress appropriately for your audience.*** Not all speaking engagements require a business suit! There are many places where business casual attire has become the norm. Before your audience even hears your message, they are already sizing you up and this is impacting whether or not they are hearing what you have to say!
5. ***Have a backup plan for visual aids used in your presentation.*** You've selected to use visual aids because you thought they would be helpful in getting your message across. What happens when laptops fail or the room cannot accommodate presentation equipment? Create a plan on how you would handle a situation like that.
6. ***Tone down information overload.*** Yes, you can overload your audience with too much information and if you're not careful, you'll lose them. They'll mentally check out. As a speaker,

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you'll want to present enough information that hooks them into getting more information from you!

7. ***Don't use inappropriate humor.*** Humor can be a tricky thing working for you or against you. You will really have to know your audience in order to use jokes or humor appropriately.

8. ***Vary your speech tones.*** The monotonous speaker will lose their audience within the first 15 minutes. It's okay to be animated during your presentation and in fact, doing so will transmit flair and passion that keeps people engaged in your message.

9. ***Relate your topic back to your audience.*** Basically, stop talking about yourself! Your audience might want to hear a testimony or two, but mostly, they'll want to hear about them and how your presentation can help them!

10. ***Solidify your message.*** Support your ideas with data and evidence and build a solid case for your viewpoints. You can use statistics, testimonies, demonstrations, pictures and more!

Your presentation can be fool proof if you take the time to minimize mistakes. By going through these key points, you can assure yourself that you are well prepared for any challenge that might come your way and you will experience the success you've always dreamed of!

6 Questions That Professional Speakers Answer

In any presentation, there are basic pieces of information that an audience should receive from their presenter. You are the problem solver presenting a solution that will benefit your audience. Even if you are just blessing the newly weds at your best friend's wedding, you will still have questions that must be answered. The presentation should answer who, what, when, where, why and how regarding your topic. In giving that information, your presentation will have clarity and will be on track to give the detail necessary to your audience.

1. Who - Who is your target audience? What would they like to know about regarding your presentation? Do they have any preconceived notions about your material? What are their concerns? Are you addressing the "who" you targeted in your research? When you address the "who" of your message, you are better able to relate with your audience. They will feel like you are speaking directly to them. They will give you their attention because they feel like their needs are being addressed.

2. What - What is the message you want to communicate? What are the issues? What are the solutions? The "what" in your message is the backbone of your presentation. It is your purpose of your message and the reason you are speaking. It is also the reason why people come to hear you.

3. When - When is the recommended time to take action? Is there a sense of urgency in your presentation? Stressing the "when" aspect of your message is especially important when you want your audience to take action immediately following the presentation - i.e. - sign up for a class, sell promotional materials, implement what was learned)

4. Where - Where is the problem located? Where can your audience find the help they need? "Where" signifies direction. This leads your audience somewhere in your presentation. Where would you like to take them? Common "where" statements include "across America today", "in college campuses nationwide", "in the construction industry", and "in families in California".

5. Why - Why should they take action? What are the motivating factors in prompting your audience to take action? The main focus here is inspiration and motivation to take action. Not only do you want them to listen to you, but you want your audience to take action on what you've said. You want to somehow improve their lives and honing your message on the "why" is a critical necessity.

6. How - How can they respond to your message? How can they take action based on what they've heard? This is the learning and teaching portion of your message. This can be the "how-to" section telling them how they can easily improve their lives. This section often incorporates steps to follow.

There are still many more questions that your presentation should answer. As you piece all of these bits of information together, you'll be giving your audience the detailed answers they are looking for. You also present yourself as the credible source of information you want to present yourself to be!

6 Questions That Professional Speakers Answer

This will guide a professional speaker or one who want to become a professional speaker about what are the basic and important questions he/she has to answer in any presentation. By the time you finish reading this article, you will know what and what not to speak in a presentation.

Are you a professional speaker? What do you think is important when you do a presentation? Your presentation should actually present a solution to the audience, which will benefit them. The basic six questions, which you definitely have to answer are who, what, when, where, why and how about the topic you are presenting. If you divide your presentation into these six parts, you definitely can give an excellent presentation. Let me detail you about the questions that you need to address in a presentation one after the other.

1. Who - You should understand who your target audience are, what they like, their concerns, etc. You should also see whether your audience has some preconceived notions about the subject you are going to present to. You should address or answer the "who" of the topic you are presenting to as this will help the audience to relate themselves with the topic. This will make them feel that you are talking to them directly and will start to listen and actively participate in your presentation.

2. What - You should be clear about the message you wish to communicate to your audience. You should address their issues and provide solutions to it. Backbone or the spine of any presentation is "what," that is, the main idea of your speech.

3. When - It is yet another important question, which you must address in a presentation. "When" should be stressed in such a way that audience take some action once they are finished listening to your presentation, which may include signing up for a course.

4. Where - "Where" should give a location where the audience can turn up to solutions for their issues. "Where" denotes the path or direction. Few commonly used "where" statements would include "across the nation", "in the IT industry", "colleges in Los Angeles", etc.

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5. Why - This part should explain "why" the audience should take the action you have just mentioned. Your presentation should motivate them to take a particular action that you have just said a few minutes or hours ago. You should inspire as well as motivate your audience.

6. How - Last but not the least is "how" in a presentation. So far in your presentation, you have spoken about who, what, when, where, why. It is now the appropriate time to tell your audience how they go about taking a particular action. This is where you will have to explain the process for taking a particular action. You can call it as the educating and learning phase. You will have to detail out step-by-step instructions for the process that was explained.

To become a professional speaker who is trustworthy and reliable, it is essential that you incorporate these questions and address the concerns of the audience in your presentation. When you gather the bits and pieces of all these questions, you definitely can give an inspirational presentation.

10 Tips For Professional Speakers

Do you know why many people are afraid for delivering a public speech? When people know that they are the center of everyone's attention, they become cautious that they want to deliver the best and don't want to make a fool of themselves. At times, they succeed in delivering a quality as well as an excellent speech; however, not always. So, how is it possible to give an infallible speech every time. Simple...just follow the tips I've highlighted here and I'm sure people will long to hear your speech.

1. Take some time and decide on the topic you are going to speak about. Prepare well.

Why do you think you will have to take some time for preparation? It is because preparation will boost your confidence level. You might also understand the mistakes that you commit and can refine them.

2. Be punctual as coming late is unprofessional. It also signals the audience that you don't value time. As how you start the speech on time, end it on time. Manage your time efficiently.

3. Gather information about your audience like their income levels, gender, etc. Only when you know who they are, you can actually relate your audience.

4. Choose your attire according to the audience. It is not necessary or a norm that you will have to dress up only in a business suit when delivering a public speech. People will relate you with them when you are inline with them.

5. Are you going to use any kind of visual aids during presentation? If yes, ensure that there is a backup. The main idea of creating visual aids is to help get the message across easily. However, you might encounter situations wherein you might not get enough space to keep your laptop or your laptop might suddenly stop working, etc. Therefore, it is always advisable to have a backup plan.

6. Give as much information as possible about the topic you are presenting. However, ensure that you are not stuffing too much of information as this might make the audience to loose interest in your speech.

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7. It is always a good idea to use humor or crack jokes. However, you have to make sure that the situation warrants for one else people will simply walk away.

8. Like how you animate your presentation, you will have vary your tones too. Using a monotonous voice is not going to make you reach your goal. This will make the audience to loose interest in your speech.

9. Rather than boasting about yourself, talk more about the topic. The information that you give should be in such a way that audience can relate them to the topic.

10. Use statistics, demonstrations, etc. to support your idea. Don't give vague information.

Everyone makes mistakes. One who rectifies the mistakes goes up the ladder. Try to minimize your mistakes each time. You can be rest assured that people will throng to hear your speech if you follow these guidelines sincerely.

Already geared and charged up to deliver your speech, excellent!!!

Easy Ways To Remember Your Material

One of the most common reasons people fear public speaking is that they blank out and forget their entire speech. You can practice and practice and practice and when the moment comes that you need to remember your presentation, everything goes blank! There are ways that you can fool proof your message so that the parts you actually have to memorize are minimal if at all.

This means that you incorporate the use of triggers in your presentation. These triggers can be things like power point slides, props, and story telling that you'll scatter throughout your speech. What the triggers do is prompt you to talk about the next point your trying to make. The triggers can also serve as a trigger to help you remember what to say next.

There are four primary ways to remember your presentation.

1. *The first one is memorizing.* This can work for presentations less than an hour, but if you're teaching a six hour seminar course, you're going to have to find some other way other than memorizing. This is actually one of the worst ways to remember your presentation because there are no safe guards that protect you once you forget.

2. *The next way to remember your presentation is to read a full written version.* People write out their speeches, but reading from the full written text can cause you to sound stiff and unnatural.

Most commonly occurring in business settings (i.e. - at board meetings or company meetings), reading your speech may be necessary. If you have to read your speech, there are things you can do to help you sound natural. Keep in mind the business tone may be necessary, but there may also be parts in your presentation that require the monotony to be broken!

3. *The third way to remember your presentation is to use notes* - a condensed outline form of your presentation. Have your notes on a single page sheet or on note cards. Highlight key points to make in a way that you can easily understand the emphasis that the points need. Having notes does not mean that you do not need to work with your presentation!

4. The last way to remember your presentation is to use visual aids (props) as your notes. Let your visuals and images prompt you to speak. Tell your audience a story about the image you're showing. You can also let your visuals and images do the talking for you. You can post your outline on the screen and say that it's because it will help your audience stay on track with you!

Work with creating mental images of the points you are trying to make. This will help you sound more natural and more "impromptu" with your audience. When you sound natural, you sound genuine.

Utilize one or more of these ways to remember your presentation. Use various ways to "trigger" your memory to say what needs to be said. Use overheads to lead you through your speech as you place keywords on the screen.

Get Rid Of Distracting Body Movements

Your body movement during your presentation has the ability to strengthen the impact of your message or it can seriously be a distraction. One of your goals as a speaker is to look so natural with your movements and with what you say that no one even notices that you are using intonation and inflection or body movement as a means of emphasizing the points of your speech.

What kinds of mannerisms are distracting?

- Swaying to and fro in front of the audience
- Hanging on to the podium
- Finger tapping
- Licking your lips or biting your lips
- Fidgeting with clothes, pockets or jewelry
- Frowning
- Fussing with hair
- Bobbing your head
- Flailing arms at inappropriate times

The movements you make in your speech should be planned or at least controlled by you. Any movement that is not planned could potentially be distracting. Many of the above mentioned mannerisms stem from being nervous about being on stage. Additionally, they could also come just because you don't know you are doing them. Either way, you'll need to minimize and eliminate as many of these movements as possible.

1. Make a video tape of yourself. Do you even know that you are making these movements? Probably not. A video will help you identify which distracting movements you'll need to work on eliminating.

2. Review your video tape for places where you make distracting mannerisms. Make a list of the mannerisms you have and thoughtfully practice your speech without those mannerisms. Rerecord yourself and keep reviewing your tapes until you are satisfied that all the mannerisms are gone.

3. Work on feeling comfortable with delivering your speech. You should feel natural as you speak about your topic. You should feel like you are sharing information with a long time friend. This will come when you've spent many hours practicing, reworking and revising your speech. This will also come because you speak from your heart and let others know the way you feel about your subject.

4. Work on eliminating nervousness when delivering your speech. This will come as you get more familiar with your material. This will also come as you take the time to focus on delivering your message instead of focusing on the feelings of fear and anxiety.

5. You can also review your video tapes for place in your speech that you need to add body movements into your presentation that will make it more interesting. Let your movements show the way you feel. These movements should be natural and can work in your favor as you emphasize specific points in your presentation.

6. Consider this when deciding which body movements to incorporate into your presentation. Body movements should look natural. You can use facial expressions and make eye contact with your audience for maximum effects.

Every movement should be planned during your presentation. You can easily lose your audience with distracting movements because your audience's focus and attention will be turned to these movements instead of what you have to say!

Achieving Success In Professional Speaking

A successful presentation is one in which the audience gains some valuable information regarding the subject that has been spoken about. The audience has to benefit in some way in return for the time they put in. It is a widely held belief that speaking well and good presentations are a result of one's individual intelligence and brilliance. They believe factors such as their charm, cleverness and wit are all that is needed prior to speaking well. To some people, these may be natural however they are often the seed of knowledge, adequate practice and passion for the material being presented.

The audience has needs. These will have to be served during the course of the presentation. It is not necessary for the presenter to be perfect but for him / her to cater for the audience's general desires. Mistakes can be made and this is okay as long as the material being presented is relevant. Several mishaps frequently occur. This may include projector failure, problems with the sound system etc. This is still not a big deal. Humor is welcome but is also not necessary for your presentation to be successful. In this regard, the ability to reach your audience is the measure of one's success and is the indication of true perfection.

The audience should receive two or more vital bits of information. It is not expected that you are knowledgeable on the entire field on which you speak. Furthermore, it is not expected that you will speak for very long periods concerning your subject. This is usually not necessary and a burden for both you and your audience. It is more rewarding to find two or more crucial points and present them in an exciting manner.

Focus on the audience and not on yourself. This will make it easier for you to impart valuable information. A personal testimony may be interesting but you need to have the presentation connected back to the audience. A simple rule of thumb that can be used is to use ten "you's" for every single "I" that you use. This will ensure that your presentation is more in relation to your audience than it is to yourself.

It is important to understand that some audience members may present situations which will be out of your control. A negative member needs not be conquered; faulty audio/video gear can be an interference. There is hardly adequate time to deal with some of the situations that may arise and still present your material successfully. Some audience members may fall asleep, they

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may start talking aloud or their cell phones may ring. This should be ignored in favor of delivering important information.

It might be necessary for you to consider yourself as personal friend to the audience. This will allow you to be more at ease as well as seem natural. It will also be much easier for them to relate to you. Audience members automatically assume that those on the stage are very knowledgeable on the subjects they address. This will help others perceive you to be a leader; however, your points will definitely strike home if your views seem to come from personal experience.

The ultimate goal of presentation is to give the audience a valuable session. You should therefore strive to create a connection between the material being presented and the audience. The needs of the audience are a priority and must be considered.

Creating A Professional Speaking Portfolio

In order for one to be hired for better paying jobs you need to market yourself in a successful manner. You can start out doing this by creating your very own promotional kit. Many speakers feel underpaid or lack frequent employment opportunities simply because they don't market their services effectively. A well made promotional kit will greatly add to your demand and therefore will result in a higher number of well paying jobs.

While selecting a professional speaker, certain criteria are used by the respective meeting planners and speaker bureaus in order to verify if you meet their standards. Among the information they seek is:

1. your content sheet
2. a demo (audio and/or video)
3. a list of products
4. a sample client list
5. testimonials and reviews
6. a personal biography
7. contact information

Additionally, you can write a personal letter stating your reason for interest in the particular engagement and why you would be a great choice for them.

The content sheet is a means for a professional speaker to outline the material that he will be presenting. In this case emphasize on themes that are relevant to the seminar or discussion that will be taking place.

You can compile a short professional video showing your ability and talent as well as feel of what the prospective employer will get in return for hiring you. The content of the video should relate to the subject or material that you wish to speak on.

If you have any books, CDs or DVDs that you produce, you should include them here if they are related to the topic of interest. Make sure the prices are clearly indicated. Furthermore, you can also list any other types of speaking jobs that you undertake as well as their respective costs.

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A list of clients for whom you've worked for can be shown. It is important to note that a number of clients will snub your feedback requests. Either they haven't taken the time to fill out a review form or are simply not interested in doing so. It is still advisable to keep a list of clients who you have worked for.

Reviews and testimonials are a great way for prospective employers to gauge your credibility. Reviews focus on the experiences of others who have worked with you or seen your work. Reviews can be received after jobs have been completed by requesting for feedback. This can be free or paid for.

Your personal biography is a way for you to flaunt your personal qualifications. It should be short and precise and give whoever reads it enough information so that they may have a brief background on you as well as be in a better position to select you as a professional speaker. Your biography should include any certifications that you may have acquired. It may come off as a personal ad and as such can be used to advertise the seminar at hand. It is recommended to attach your picture to the biography.

After going through the trouble of marketing yourself, it is important that prospective employers can contact you. Your contact information should therefore be easy to access in case they desire to contact you.

A professionally made portfolio will help market you successfully and get you enroute to becoming a thriving professional speaker. The importance of well done marketing will thus become evident.

Professional Speaking: Do You Have What It Takes To Draw People?

The most valuable aspect a speaker has in a presentation is whether he can inspire his audience. If the audience leaves unmotivated, the presentation can be considered a failure. Boring speeches and unrefined scripts can be overlooked if the presentation is done well. This fact is based on the amount of stimulation the audience receives by the end of the session. Passion is vital to this cause. In more than 95% of speaking engagements, the audience present may not wish to be there or may believe they have more important matters to attend to. Therefore it is necessary for you to ensure that you draw them into your presentation.

The professional speaker will therefore need to make concrete connections with the audience members individually if he successfully wishes to engage them. The speaker must be able to speak directly into each member's heart and mind while still addressing the entire audience. This will result in a more inspired audience and they will respond to your message.

There are a number of external factors that should be considered during your presentation as they affect whether or not you will be successful. In order to communicate passionately and in an excited manner about a particular topic, your voice tone should exhibit these aspects. The correct tone of voice will further serve to present you as an expert on the subject. The presenter's body language will be closely watched and should thus demonstrate power and confidence.

If your presentation has a personal touch, then the audience will be naturally drawn to your message. This can be achieved by following some of these guidelines.

Every problem has an emotional side and this should be highlighted during the presentation. Factors such as fear, loss, fulfillment, failures, success and others are a powerful way for the presenter to add a personal touch.

If the presenter can have the audience share some of their personal experiences or opinions, a personal touch will be introduced. Sharing incidents that are relevant to the subject will also add a personal touch to the presentation. The presenter can also talk about his experiences or those of people close to him. This may include problems such as those found when implementing solutions, and others.

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Try to make as much eye contact as possible with the audience members. This will give them the feeling that you are addressing them individually. Eye contact will allow you to make a one on one connection, even though a subtle one and is very useful in giving the presentation a personalized touch.

If need be, don't hesitate to provide the audience with additional information outside the scope of the presentation. The audience will therefore view you as their resource on that subject. Address all issues and questions raised. Furthermore, it is important that the answers you supply are straightforward and can be easily implemented.

Your ability to draw the audience into the presentation will enhance your ability to relate with them. An audience that is involved in the presentation is also more attentive and will get something of value after the session. They will be in a better position to make decisions and take action on the subjects and solutions discussed. If you manage to make personal connection with the audience you will be in a great position to inspire them. Your knowledge and passion for the subject will be imparted to them. These are some of the factors that help professional speakers draw their audiences.

Dealing With A Negative Audience

All professional speakers will at some point in their careers come across a negative member of the audience. It is important for the speaker to handle the situation while maintaining a professional appearance. You should keep in mind that there is material that needs to be covered and that is the basis for the presentation. The subject matter needs to be addressed whether the audience is receptive or not. As a presenter, you should adopt an attitude that you are capable of effectively communicating your message and that you can do it in a professional manner. The following guidelines are useful in keeping your presentation on the right track.

A. Knowledge

Prepare adequately for your presentation. Know the itsy bitsy details of your subject matter and not just main points. Your knowledge is a powerful weapon. It will allow you to respond competently to unexpected questions. After preparing, review the subject and pose likely questions that could arise. Eliminate any inconsistencies in your presentation. Have a list of answers in anticipation for some questions that may be asked.

B. Reaction

Remember that you are the master of the subject matter and you therefore have to conduct yourself in a professional manner. Avoid reacting to negative questions or comments. A negative reaction quickly erodes all positive views the audience may have held about you. This will reduce their confidence in you and prevent you from making a personal connection with them. Stay focused on the subject matter.

C. Questions & Answers

Don't leave any question unanswered. If you come off as avoiding hard questions, the audience will lose confidence in you authority on the subject matter. If you can competently answer questions posed by the audience, they will come to see you as their resource. Answering all questions will greatly build your credibility.

D. Control

If you reply to a negative audience with a similar negative emotion, you will lose control of the subject. It is important to remain focused at all times. Emotions should not come in the way of

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delivering the content that you were appointed to present. Control is a characteristic of a developed speaker.

E. Prepare

Once you experience a negative encounter during a speaking experience will begin to prepare you to handle any others that may follow. Rather than focus on the situation itself, learn from it and let it be a lesson to help you deal with any others. Evaluate yourself and how you handled the situation. What lessons did you come off with?

F. Engage

If your presentation does not connect with the negative audience members, they are only likely to stay negative for the duration of your presentation. Your objective as a professional speaker is to create as many connections with the audience members. The subject should vivid in the minds of the audience as a result of your presentation.

Practice the art of reacting in a professional manner. This will enable you to establish yourself as an expert at the subjects you present and also as a leader. Negative audience members should not hold you ransom. Present your subject professionally and regard negative experiences as learning opportunities. This will set you on the path to becoming a professional speaker.

Finding Jobs For Professional Speakers

Once you are well versed in the field of professional speaking, you face the task of finding jobs that suit you.

Initially, you begin by ensuring you are competent at the job. You can do this by speaking at a few seminars without pay. This will allow you to increase your increase while at the same time building a client base. This will result in you being more eligible for better paying jobs since your credibility and capacity to draw audiences will be refined. Additionally, your professionalism will become apparent.

Several places within your vicinity have regular jobs for professional speakers. These include schools, colleges and universities, speaker bureaus, libraries, businesses and non-profit organizations. It is important to offer your services to people in this organization whom you've made contact with.

Additionally, searching online for "calls for speakers" will give you results for employers seeking professional speakers. The keyword phrase "speakers wanted" also leads you to sites that need professional speakers.

Speakers' forums tend to have postings for jobs where professional speakers can get paid. The variety is somewhat limited but enables you to select jobs that fall under the subject matter you're well versed in.

Several organizations hold conferences regularly and therefore post jobs for professional speakers. Examine the conference schedules for these organizations and pay keen attention to those that fall under your subject matter area. The jobs are posted as early as 6-8 months before the speaking engagement begins.

There is regular work available from training companies. For instance, Fred Pryor is a training company that hires a number of speakers to present several topics. Quite often this job involves hectic schedules and a lot of travel but could result in remunerations of up to \$75,000 per annum.

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The NTPA (National Trade and Professional Associations) has a directory that has several beneficial contacts. It retails for approximately \$150 and is released during February every year.

Other directories of benefit are the Directory of Association Meeting Planners. This retails for \$550 and is issued every march. This directory is available in CD format. The Directory of Corporate Meeting Planners is an alternative available in hard copy and costs \$450. These are some of the meeting planners' directories that are useful to professional speakers seeking engagements.

It is highly beneficial to develop peer networks as well as networks with potential clients. Meeting planners frequently hire speakers based on word of mouth recommendations. This will thus make networking worth the time and effort.

The above mentioned are only some of the places where jobs can be found. In order to sell yourself, you will find it advisable to have a promotional kit. This includes various items including a biography, a video demo, contacts, content and testimonials among others. In order to create and sustain a potential client list, you will need to create a marketing policy that will help you achieve this. This list will allow for the use of phone calls or direct mail to market yourself. With this information in mind, you can now look for speaking engagements.

Handling Questions And Answers

Handling questions in your presentation can be a scary time for professional speakers. The fear that someone will ask a question that they can't answer makes this sections one of the most dreaded sections of the speech. This fear is so real that presenters will often cut this area short or avoid it all together to get past this section. Here are some tips that will help you to handle this section effectively.

1. Be a great listener. After spending the entire time talking, now is your chance to respond and interact with your audience. Listen to your audience's questions completely before starting to answer. If you don't, you may respond inappropriately not answering what the person was really asking.

2. Give yourself time to think. Listen to the entire question. Repeat the question to give you some time to respond. You can also add filler phrases like "that's a good question", "that's a popular question" or "that's an interesting question".

3. Acknowledge your audience member for asking the question. People appreciate acknowledgement and starts to create a personal bond between you and the audience. They start to feel appreciated for participation in your presentation and they warm up to your speech.

4. Answer the question. Stay on track and be honest. If you do not know the answer at the time, let them you that you will find out and get back to them. This is an especially great opportunity if your goal is to develop a long term relationship with your audience. Just remember to get back to them as you say you would.

5. Create clean transitions between questions by creating "bridges" to the next question. Ask your audience another question such as "Does that answer your question?" Stay on the question until it has been answered appropriately.

Here are some tips to interact better with your audience during the question and answer period.

1. Ask your audience member to stand when they have a question. One of the primary reasons for doing this is to help the rest of the room hear the question more clearly as well.

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Additionally, you are also able to establish a line of sight eye connection with the person asking the question.

2. Ask your audience to write their questions down on paper. They can either submit this to you or read from their paper at a designated time.

3. If your audience member is shy and does not want to ask their question, create alternative times that you will be available. Your goal is to help them understand the points you are trying to make.

4. Have a paper and pencil for yourself to write down questions that you can't answer. Jot the question down as well as contact information of the person asking the question so you can get back to them.

The question and answer period is a great time to interact with your audience. Many people and instructors like will also say that they learn from this time more than any other section in the presentation. You will also be able to see what exactly your audience has picked up during your presentation. Don't avoid this section any longer!

How Free Professional Speaking Gigs Help You

One of the primary reasons people get into this business is because they want to earn some serious cash. With dreams of stardom and hopes of owning the Mercedes and the million dollar home, they set off in pursuit of getting highly paid gigs only to get knocked down by rejection after rejection. After doing some research they find that most of their starting events will be free speaking events. What?

If "free" is a horrendous four letter word in your career vocabulary, you'll need to learn the importance and value that "free" can really provide. There are tremendous benefits that come with speaking for free including having the ability to promote your back of the room products where you can actually profit. You'll be gaining new experiences and building your clientele list.

1. "Free" still gets your name out there. The more people who hear you speak, the more people there will be to purchase your product and refer you to other people are looking for professional speakers. For example, speaking for free for an organization like a Rotary Club or Elks Club can lead to paying jobs because many of the members who belong to this organization have businesses of their own or are in positions in their careers where they are the decision makers to "hire" speakers.

2. You can still have the opportunity to sell your products at these free speaking engagements. Statistics show that back of the room products account for over 50% of professional speaking profits. Promote your business and promote your products in the same place! At the very least, you will be able to refer them to your website for more information or additionally, to purchase products and books. The more people that hear you, the more opportunities you'll have.

3. Free speaking opportunities are still opportunities where you can create a video tape of yourself. Many speaker bureaus and meeting planners will not hire you without seeing a video tape of your presentation. On top of that, many organizations like the Rotary Club or Elks Club have people who can help you create your video. Can you trade services?

4. Free speaking engagements are a great place to network. Hopefully by now you understand that you have to get your name out there. In order to get your name out there, you'll

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have to be out there. You can still mingle with your audience as well as network with meeting planners for the function.

5. A free speaking event is still a great reason to send out a press release. If you're looking for a reason to send out press releases about yourself or your career, use free speaking engagements. Submit them to local newspapers and various online sites that have a "to-do in your area" section. This is just another way to get the word out about your business.

Speaking for free has its benefits. What you'll need to learn next is how to leverage these free events into referrals and product sales. As you do this, more people will know about you and your business will be well on its way to success!

How To Feel Confident In Front Of Your Audience

The fear of public speaking is one of the top fears that people have. Statistics show that over 41% of people have some level of fear or anxiety with regards to speaking in front of an audience. This fear often manifests as excessive sweating, sweaty palms, increased heart rates, blanking out (memory loss), nausea and sometimes difficulty breathing. There are many speakers who have been in front of audiences for years and they still deal with anxiety to some degree.

Since having this fear often has no bearing on whether you have to do a presentation or not, you'll have to find some ways to overcome your anxiety. The first step is to know that you are not alone and that you can prepare in advance so that the level of fear you feel is significantly reduced. Here are some other interesting statistics.

- Proper presentation and rehearsal of your message can reduce your fear by about 75%.
- Utilizing breathing techniques can reduce your anxiety by another 15%.
- Preparing for your mental state can reduce your fear the remaining 10%.

With these statistics in mind, here are some preparation tips to help you relax and reduce how you feel before going in front of your audience.

1. Know the environment you will speak in. Become familiar with the area by arriving early and walking around. Know how much space you have and the physical distance between you and your audience. As you acclimate yourself to your stage, you will find yourself feeling more comfortable.

2. Know your audience. You should find out who comprises your audience and do some research to find out their likes and dislikes. When they enter the room, greet them and take time to get to know some faces.

3. Know your presentation inside and out. If you don't know what you'll be presenting how can you expect yourself to feel fearless?

4. Implement breathing techniques to help you relax. Breathing techniques have been scientifically proven to invigorate the body and help you get rid of nervousness.

5. See yourself on stage before you actually get there. Replay images of your successful presentation in your mind. If you visualize success, you'll find it.

6. Know that your audience wants you to succeed. Your success means they get what they want and need. If they've paid money to attend your presentation, they have a personal stake in your success. If you're providing training, they have a personal stake in your success. If you're delivering a graduation speech at a local university, the graduating class has a personal stake. Get the idea? Your audience wants you to succeed.

7. Don't draw attention to your being nervous. Many people won't even realize that you are nervous. Most times you will find that while you have your audience's attention, they are really thinking about themselves. They are absorbing what you say and processing that into how that relates to them.

8. Know that there is a purpose to your message. You have a message to deliver. Sometimes it's a cause that you are passionate about. Other times, it may be training that your company needs you to give.

Preparation is the key to your success! Through preparation, you can also overcome most if not all of the feelings of fear that you might have so prepare, prepare, prepare!

How To Market Yourself As A Professional Speaker

The ability to market yourself as a professional speaker is undoubtedly the key to your success. Marketing means that you must advertise your skills and talents. Since many people don't do that, they end up leaving their career to the wind by default. You have to get your name out there. You have to find ways to connect with people who can and will hire you.

1. Network in speaking organizations. If you're not networking, you're not working. Building relationships with your peers and prospective clients is a must do if you're really serious about your career as a professional speaker.

2. Have a business card. As you take time to network and build relationships with people, you'll want to give them something to remember you by - your contact information. Your business card should have a professional look to it. Since it will be the way people remember you, what do you want them to remember?

3. Create your marketing portfolio. Also known as your promotional kit or your media kit, this portfolio will have everything that speaker bureaus and meeting planners need to determine if you are the speaker for them or not. Your portfolio consists of the following elements: a content sheet, a demo video of previous speaking engagement, your bio, testimonials from previous engagements, a price list of your products and resource materials you sell, a sample client list, and your fee schedule.

4. Develop a website. With so many people and businesses flocking to the internet for information, you'll want to have this as a means to market yourself. You don't have to have a website with all the bells and whistles. While your website should look professional, you can still get a started website with low to no monthly costs. Use your website to be an additional location where you sell your resource materials as well as offer information about your topic.

5. Use online social networks such as LinkedIn and MySpace to begin making connections with your industry peers. You can also use speaker forums as a place for additional resources, sharing speaking tips and tricks as well as getting to know other people in your field.

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6. Create and use a direct marketing strategy. Send mailers and postcards to past clients as well as prospective future clients. While many speakers aren't hired as a result of their mailers, they are still an easy way to keep your customers in touch with your business. Additionally, direct mail pieces are relatively inexpensive to create and send and as a result, they are a great way to canvass organizations and get the word out that you are available for hire.

7. Market yourself through articles and product materials. Using other resources as a means for getting your name out will help to spread your name like wild fire! Think of it this way, you create the article one and include a short 2 - 3 sentence bio and you'll have that work for you for as long as it's available!

The way you market yourself will determine whether you will have a great career or not. Start using these avenues of getting your name out there and start to get noticed by meeting planners and speaker bureaus. Start marketing yourself today!

How To Tell A Story In Your Professional Speaking Presentation

Telling stories is a fun way to humanize your topic. The story brings the "real-life" element into your topic making it more relatable to your audience. Telling stories are also a great way to change the pace of your presentation. Here are some tips to help you incorporate story telling into your presentations.

- ***Stories serve many purposes in your presentation.*** They can be used to highlight and clarify a specific point you want to address in your presentation. Stories can also reemphasize those points in your message to stress their importance.

- ***Stories should be relevant to your topic.*** The stories should also match the audience's needs and wants in terms of intelligence levels, experiences, and other demographic data such as age and occupation. The stories should be relatable to your audience and easy to understand.

- ***Telling a story can change the pace of your message.*** Stories can serve as a mental break for your audience so they can process the information they've been given.

- ***Humorous stories are great presentation openers and can set the tone of your message.*** Tell about problems and errors that you've made. Audiences like self-effacing humor because they can see themselves making the same mistakes or having the same issues.

- ***Get rid of unnecessary details of your story in your presentation.*** You can potentially lose your audience with all those details and if they serve no purpose, then get rid of them.

- ***Use short humorous stories in your presentation.*** If your story is too long or you take too long in getting to the punch line, your audience could tune you out.

- ***Tell where your story happened.*** Give your audience concrete information to think about and draw their own mental image in their mind.

- ***Use things that your audience is well associated with in your story.*** Your audience should be familiar with all the details of your story to they can remain hooked into it, however,

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only be as detailed as is common knowledge. Specific knowledge or "insider information" will not be relatable to most people since only a few people know about it.

- ***Let your words work for you.*** Emphasize adjectives and verbs so that they are more interesting to your audience.

- ***Rehearse your story telling.*** Every word counts and leaving out details can impact whether the story relates to your audience or not.

- ***Get the emotions involved in your storytelling.*** Hook your audience into your story by playing on their emotions.

Storytelling is not a difficult element to add to your professional speaking presentation. By practicing, you will be able to add more stories to your presentation to liven it up and change the pace. You will find that your audience will become more engaged in what you're saying because they can mentally relate better to your information. As you tell your stories, they will have mental images playing in their minds. They will also see themselves in the stories you tell and have it relate better to them. Start by adding one short story and then grow your story telling abilities from there.

Organizing Your Professional Speaking Presentation

You may have just been asked to make a presentation by your boss or maybe, you're starting on a new professional speaking career. Whatever the case may be, starting your presentation means you'll have a ton of details to organize into a relatable format for your audience. Here are some tips on how to do just that.

One of the most difficult aspects of making your presentation is getting started. You may be feeling overwhelmed even if you've been working with your materials for years. Maybe you're looking for a way to simplify your research process. In any case, the first step is to jump in there and get started.

1. Research your material. Collect and read as much information as possible. Make some notes and also look at the validity of the information you are collecting. Is the information outdated? Is it relevant to the actual subject you are going to talk about? Start taking notes and highlighting potentially key points of your presentation.

2. Once you feel you've gathered enough information to present, review your notes and select the information you are going to present. Look for key ideas that support the purpose of your talk. Decide how deep you will go when presenting your information? Consider your audience. What do they need to know to take action on your subject? How much detail do they actually need? Consider also, the length of the time you'll have for your presentation.

3. Organize your key ideas into an outline form. Start with the key points you will make and add two to three supporting elements to it. When you speak, you will be leading your audience from point A to point B. You're taking them somewhere even if it's only in their minds. Does your outline show a path to take? Is it relevant? Adjust your key points until you do lead your audience to where you want them to go.

4. Decide how you will present your organized information in your presentation. What visual aids can you use to strengthen your points? Is there data or research that you can bring into your presentation? How can you vary the delivery of your message? Your presentation will be more interesting if you do more than just talk. People can easily tune out of your message especially if it's during a meal or immediately following one.

5. Organize your presentation outline to incorporate your visuals and method of delivery in your presentation. Review what it looks like on paper. Your outline is like your map for success. Is your map clearly defining the information you want to say? Are there any weak points where the information is not as strong as you'd like it to be? If it's not, revise and review and keep doing this until you get your map the way you want it to be.

Organizing the material for your presentation is a process. As you take your audience from lack of knowledge to having knowledge, your background work is to create an outline map of your journey. This map is the key to your success and the only way to be successful is to have a plan of action. Start today in creating your map of success!

Practice Makes Perfect!

Professional speakers rehearse their material. Killer presentations don't just fall out of the sky! They're worked on and fine tuned and honed to perfection right up until the time that they are delivered into the hands of audience members. As a result, presentations like these are effective at reaching many people!

Rehearsing your presentation is your key to delivering a successful presentation. Even if you've been doing the same presentation for years, you'll want to practice the different aspects of your delivery in the fine tuning process of rehearsing. Here's what you can do to have successful practice that will make your delivery a success every time.

The first step is to write out your speech word for word. Write it as you would say it or would intend to say it. Include every piece of information including what you would say about your visual or audio aids. Every word you put on paper will impact what your audience picks up in your presentation.

Read your written speech out loud. Tape record yourself to get some idea of what your presentation sounds like. Note the length of your presentation and also if the points you want to emphasize are actually the ones being emphasized. Refine and retune your message until you are confident the message you are sending is the one you want to send. Also, practice speaking your presentation the way you would want to say it - with passion and enthusiasm. Yes, enthusiasm does have to be practiced.

Condense your written speech into outline form. Once you've created your written speech and you've taken the time to revise it, the next step is to turn your written speech into a condensed outline with notes. You don't want to read your speech to your audience. You want to speak spontaneously and make your presentation flow. The key is to have notes that are easy to read. Remember to also make notes about the flow of your enthusiasm levels during the presentation.

Once you've created your notes, tape your spontaneous speech. In this recording, review the timing of your presentation. Listen for the number of times you've said filler words like "umm", "er" and "ah". Work on eliminating these words and re-record yourself until you speak smoothly

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and confidently. Also work on presenting your speech with the emphasis and passion that you intend to deliver it. Working the emotions of your audience will help them feel more connected with you and your material.

Practice your presentation in front of a practice audience. The primary goal of this section is to get constructive feedback. You will want to find out if you made your points clearly and accurately. You will also want to know if you were speaking too fast or too slow. You'll also want to know if there were too many of those distracting words in your presentation. A secondary goal is to gain more confidence and feel more comfortable in making your presentation.

Rehearsal is the key to your success as a professional speaker! Practicing more than just your topical information, you'll need to practice the method of delivery you choose. Here's to your success!

Professional Speakers Polish Their Message

One key to delivering a successful message is polishing the message you already have. You will find that your audience can better understand what you have to say when your message targets specific key points rather than vague generalities. Since your audience is looking for information that will benefit them, they will need the specifics on how your topic can be used in their lives! Here are some ways to polish the great message you already have!

1. Make it interesting. As simple as this sounds many beginning professional speakers fail to engage their audiences simply because their message is not interesting. This doesn't mean that what they had to say had no value, but rather the message did not inspire anyone to take a sincere interest.

2. Stay on track. Even the best professional speakers can get off track in their delivery. This adds confusion to the basic message they were trying to communicate and could hinder anyone receiving the message at all.

3. Make your message clear and concise. You can overload your audience with detailed facts. While you do want to be precise and give accurate information, too much information will literally boggle their minds! If you have a lot of details that you want them to have, use a separate handout and refer to that. Doing so will make it easier on your audience to digest the wonderful news you have to share.

4. Make your message effective. Do you have a goal with your presentation? What actions do you want your audience members to take once they are done hearing you? Your presentation should lead your audience down a path to take action on the things you want them to do. Consider yourself to be a tour guide leading them to key highlights of information within your presentation. Your presentation should always conclude with an action step whether it means taking a test or buying reference products and materials.

5. Make your message personal. While you speak to a group of people, your message is tailored to each and every single person in your audience. You can connect with them individually by relaying personal situations they might find themselves in. You can connect with them by bringing in the emotional aspect (i.e. - fear, inspiration, dreams) into your presentation.

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The bottom line of your presentation is to connect with your audience one on one while addressing the entire group.

6. Check the "political correctness" of your message. You can lose or offend your audience if you don't pay attention to the political correctness of your message. Talking about sensitive subjects like money, culture, and even type of language used requires you to exert sensitivity concerning your audience.

Delivering the best message comes with the diligent attention and care to the details of your presentation. Take time to refine and hone your message so that you can have confidence that you've presented your information well and on target. Be specific about what you say and engage your audience to ensure that you are the answer to their problems! Professional speakers take the time to polish their message!

Successful Transitions For Your Presentation

Having a smoothly flowing presentation relies on having successful transitions as you proceed from point to point. Even your transitions do need some level of planning. As your audience processes the information you present in their minds, jerky transitions become hard to follow and comprehend. You could potentially lose your audience in a transition without even realizing it and by the time they catch up to you, they'll have missed 2/3 of the next point you're trying to make. Here are some examples you can easily implement into your presentation to make it a success!

- **Use bridge words or phrases.** These are words like "finally", "however", "in addition", "moreover" and "meanwhile". This bridge helps your audience to stay connected with your message. These words or phrases represent linkages between the points you make.

- **Use the same word or idea twice.** You can say, "A similar idea is that..." or "this is what people see... this is what people think...".

- **Ask a question.** Engage your audience and emphasize the points you are trying to make. "Was there ever a time when..." "How many of you..."

- **Refer back to information previously stated in your presentation.** "Remember when I told you earlier..."

- **Review the points you'll be making or the point you've made.** Itemize them one by one. You can say, "There are 5 important concepts to know..."

- **Use a visual.** Use a prop to finalize your point or even introduce the next point you are going to make. Insert a humorous cartoon or image for your audience to focus on.

- **Use a pause.** Give your audience a moment to think about what you just said. You can also introduce a dramatic pause for evoking emotions.

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- **Use physical movement or a change in the tone of your voice. Walk to different parts of the stage.** Use different gestures or postures to emphasize what you mean. Change your tone of voice as you are speaking.

- **Use testimonials or a personal story.** Let your audience know what other people are saying about what you're talking about. Make your points more relatable by telling your audience how you or someone else handled the issue or problem.

One of the most common mistakes that professional speakers make is that they don't use transitions in their presentation. You could potentially lose your audience because they aren't processing your information as quickly as you want them to. Another common mistake is that the transitions used are too short. Transitions are processing times for your audience. It gives them a chance to catch up to where you are at in delivering your message. The last most common mistake made with using transitions are that the same transition is used over and over again in a presentation. Vary your transitions and your presentation become more interesting.

While only representing a small portion of your presentation, transitions are powerful tools you can use to keep your audience tuned in to what you have to say. If you're not seeing the success you'd like to see with your audience, consider working on improving your transitions.

Ten Sources Of Income In Professional Speaking

One of the best features of having a career in professional speaking is that you can benefit from multiple streams of income. You don't only have to rely on your paid public speaking career to bring in the cash. You can sell other products and services. You can work other areas that require using professional speakers. The key is to leverage your skills and talent to produce an ongoing stream of income that can withstand the drought seasons in your public speaking career.

1. ***Sell your knowledge via books and articles.*** You can self-publish for maximum profit or you can seek out a publisher and get paid royalties. Your articles can be highly sought after by trade publications especially if you are a well-noted person in the industry.

2. ***Sell your knowledge via a training system package.*** Create a training system using CDs, DVDs, a training manual and any other parts that you'll need. Package the system and sell it for a profit.

3. ***Get sponsored by a company.*** Get other companies to sponsor your speaking fee for being mentioned in your presentation. Sort of like advertising, this partnership has ongoing, long-term benefits for every speaker that makes use of them.

4. ***Get paid as a speaker.*** As simplistic as this sounds, at some point in your career, you've got to get out and make an attempt to get higher paying gigs. Don't lose the "free" aspect of your career because they do go a long way. The more famous you get, doing good Samaritan efforts such as speaking for free make great news items for press releases.

5. ***Get paid as a speaker through speaker bureaus.*** Speaker bureaus help to connect speaker with meeting planners. Get listed with these bureaus to help promote your professional speaking career.

6. ***Get paid for the use of your "voice".*** Do voice overs or recorded speeches or advertisements as a source of income.

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7. **Get paid for telephone seminars.** Many people are doing live webinars or telephone seminars in their businesses. Make contacts with people in the businesses that do them. It's the same thing as doing a speech except that it's on the telephone.

8. **Get paid by creating a paying podcast.** Podcasting is a new form of media that is quickly gaining popularity. Podcasting is like hosting your own speech online in an MP3 file so your audience can listen over and over again.

9. **Work for training companies.** Companies like Fred Pryor can be great interim sources of income that help you gain confidence as a speaker.

10. **Get paid via your website.** Add complementary affiliate programs as well as Google AdSense to your website or blog.

All of these sources of income represent ways to spread the word about your professional marketing career. Additionally, they also can represent ways that bring in income when your career isn't where you want it to be. You can start adding these sources one by one to your revenue stream. You'll see first hand the benefits that each one has as well as what works for your business and what doesn't.

The Real Message That Professional Speakers Send

Are you really communicating what you think you are? There are two basic messages that are included in any speaking engagement - the verbal message and the visual message. As a professional speaker, your message should be effectively communicated in all aspects of both these areas. Whether you are a novice speaker or have years of experience, you'll want to find out about what you're actually saying and adjust your delivery for best results. In doing so, you'll deliver winning presentations every time!

The first message type is the verbal message. First off, your verbal message should be clear and concise. Your discussion points should be detailed and well supported by data, testimonials and perhaps even visual aids. Discussion and transition points should flow and lead your audience from point A to point B.

Supporting this verbal message is the message you send with using the tone of voice. The tone of voice has the ability to liven up your topic. Emphasize highlighted points with excitement and enthusiasm. A quiet, somber tone of voice can bring seriousness to identifying problems you present when you present your solution. A loud, booming voice can emphasize definitive statements.

The second type of message is the visual message. These messages (along with the message you send using your tone of voice) are often inferred messages that aren't directly spoken but they still have lots to say about you as a leader and the message you bring.

The environment that you hold your presentation in impacts your message as well. The room itself can be a distraction and you can lose your focus and worse yet, you can lose the attention of your audience. Details like the room temperature (too cold, too warm) or noisy traffic (beeping horns and emergency vehicle sirens) may seem like they are out of your control, but you do have some control. Other environmental considerations include the appearance of the room. Is it professional? Is it warm and cozy? Does it enhance the message you want to convey or does it take away from it? It behooves you to minimize as much as possible all of these types of distractions from your presentation.

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Another visual presentation you make is the one with your personal appearance and attire. Your audience doesn't know you. If you say that you are a professional, do you look like it? You don't have to have the Armani suits or the Dolce & Gabbana dress, but you should at least look like the professional you claim to be. Men speaker should avoid loud colored shirts. Leave those shirts at home for the night out. Women should dress conservatively. You don't have to be wearing a burlap sack, but low-cut blouses and high skirts don't belong here. Your goal is to create credibility as a professional.

There are many other messages that your audience picks up during the course of your presentation. They know exactly how you're feeling about the topic you present by the enthusiasm in your voice. They already make assumptions regarding your credibility as a true professional. Don't take chances and send the wrong message!

Using Humor In Your Professional Speaking Gig

If using humor in your professional speaking presentation, understand this. People will pay more to be entertained than they will to be informed. Look around you and you will see that the top industry is the entertainment industry. Encompassing sports events, comic acts, movies, television and music, the entertainment industry steadily received trillions of dollars worldwide.

Humor accomplishes many things in your presentation. Here are some things that humor can do for you!

1. ***Humor helps you connect with your audience.*** Make yourself more relatable with your audience as they begin to see that it's not all about the information. Humor draws your audience to you because people are naturally drawn to positive things.
2. ***Humor makes you more approachable and likeable as a speaker.*** Your audience will see you as being more down to earth and again, relatable.
3. ***Humor creates interest in your topic as well as yourself.*** Humor just makes things interesting to follow. People like to laugh.
4. ***Humor helps to keep the attention of your audience.*** Your audience tunes out because they get lost in your presentation. By using humor, it'll be harder for your audience to tune out because they will want to hear your humorous story.
5. ***Humor strengthens point and ideas you want to highlight in your presentation.*** Funny stories are memorable and can strengthen the point of your message. Television sitcoms are famous for taking real life situations and presenting them in a humorous fashion.
6. ***Humor removes hostility in your presentation.*** If there were any ill feelings towards you or your message, humor lightens the mood of your audiences and disarms negative emotions.
7. ***Humor helps connects pieces of information in your topic.*** Work humor into the transition points of your presentation. In that way they will be the bridge that connects the points of your message together.

8. ***Humor helps paint mental images in the minds of your audience.*** Self-effacing humor is often relatable to your audience because they can see themselves having those same situations.

9. ***Humor makes your presentation more memorable.*** People remember when they laugh. They'll remember funny stories or funny instance during your presentation.

10. ***Humor lightens a heavy topic.*** People can only take so much of heavy topics. You don't want to make your audience feel depressed even if your topic discusses a very grave matter.

11. ***Humor can bring in better evaluations and more product sales.*** Humor warms your audience up to you. In doing so, your audience will be more open to purchasing your back of the room products as well as give you a better review.

12. ***Humor will make people happy.*** People want to enjoy your seminar. They want to have a good time and they want to be happy. Humor helps you achieve that.

Humor can add so much variety to an otherwise dull, information only presentation. Helping to connect you with your audience, humor is a great addition that can bring you better speaker reviews and increased revenue. Add some spice to your message by incorporating humor!

Using Props In Your Professional Speaking Presentation

People learn and retain information in different ways. As a professional speaker, you must also learn to incorporate as many different ways of engaging your audience in order to reach as many people as possible. In fact, you have an obligation to use anything and everything it takes so that more people can relate your message to their life. This means at one point in your career, you'll have to use props as part of your message.

A "prop" is any object that is handled or used while you are on stage. Props can be many different things such as flip charts, demonstrations, overhead projections - images, photos, and videos, and even other people. These props enhance the message you are trying to convey to your audience and can also help people connect with your ideas.

Props help your audience to get engaged in your presentation. They help to warm your audience and draws attention to the points your making in your presentation. They are visual illustrations that often are better able to convey the message than your spoken word can. It's one thing to hear a new idea, but when people see your idea visually, they can develop a mental image in their mind and become visually oriented with what you are trying to say. Visual presentations often make your points interesting and it breaks up the monotony of only hearing you speak. For this reason, props can be used to add variety to your presentation.

Prizes and giveaways make excellent opening props. Often done with large audience presentations such as in large arenas, props are a great way to open your audience. It fires up your audience bringing excitement and anticipation for what you are going to speak about. The prizes may or may not be related to your message. You can use them as icebreakers or even as a way to draw excitement and attention to your support material sales at the back of the room.

Props can often be used as the "impromptu" portion of your presentation. When used correctly, your props can have your audience sitting on the edge of their chair as they strive to see what you are doing at the front of the room. As you talk about your props, your audience won't feel like you are reading a speech, which brings us to the next point. They can also be a substitute for notes since they automatically prompt you to describe the reason for introducing the prop in the first place. You can essentially go through an entire presentation just using props!

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Props have a valuable role in your presentation. Visual images are more easily remembered than the words you speak. On top of that, showing your audience the points you are trying to make can say more than telling your audience those same points. You know the old saying that a picture is worth a thousand words! Props can also help to invoke excitement and rev up your audience as you warm them up for your presentation! Begin to use props in your presentations and see how engaged your audience becomes!

What Does The First Year Of Professional Speaking Look Like?

Unless you're already a celebrity, you'll have to work through building your professional speaking career from the ground up. This does mean work, but if the topics you plan to be speaking on are your passion, this will not be a chore to do! Also, depending upon how fast you are able to build connections and establish your reputation as a speaker will determine how fast you pass through this phase of career building.

The first phase of building your career is filled with getting the word out that you are available for hire as a professional speaker. You'll also gain experience as you speak for free. Yes, that's right - free. Your goal is build a database of clients and testimonials concerning your work before you hit the big time. One resource stated that you should plan on speaking for free for at least 200 hundred times to build a successful reputation and foundation of experience. The reason for all of this is that many speaker bureaus and meeting planners want speakers with experience and an established reputation in the field they're in. As of now, you are working on creating your future success!

Here are some things you can do as you begin your professional speaking career.

1) List the topics you can speak on. Join a social network like LinkedIn (known as the social network for professionals) or forum and list those topics there.

2) Write some articles on these topics and post them on the free article websites. You can also post articles on your own website and add them to social bookmark sites. Whoever reads your article will see your bio at the bottom of each article and you'll promote yourself as a speaker for these topics!

3) Get as many free speaking engagements as possible. Check with your local library or the Chamber of Commerce. Get feedback from your free speaking engagements and start compiling a list of these.

4) Take a professional picture of yourself. People want to feel connected to you and personalizing your website by adding your picture to it is just one of the ways. Additionally, you'll need a professional photo for your portfolio

5) If you're an expert in a trade, write articles for your industry's trade publications.

Sometimes these publications will ask for a short (1-2 sentence bio) where you can list "professional speaker" as part of your career listing. One benefit is that you can also get paid writing.

6) Get online and create a blog or website about the topics that you cover. Utilize social networking to build relationships with potential clients as well as peers in your industry. Promote yourself as a professional speaker and a thought leader in your industry.

7) Add a tagline to your email signature. Whoever gets your emails will see that you are a professional speaker for hire.

8) Research the industry for pay rates and start developing a fee schedule for your speaking engagements. We mentioned earlier that you should expect to speak for free, however, speaking for free could easily turn into a paying job for you. What would you charge?

9) Create a demo video of a speaking event you've done. You can use clips from several of your speaking jobs (including the free ones).

During this first phase, you're basically building your professional speaking portfolio. You'll need this portfolio to go after higher paying jobs with speaker bureaus and meeting planners. You're already working towards your future success!

What Makes A Great Professional Speaker?

People think that you have to have all this skill and talent to become a professional speaker, however, there are other important factors that determine your success. Technically, you can say and do all the right things. You can have the right information and present it in an organized format, but your true success will be found in your ability to connect with your audience rather than presenting a speech well. People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care!

Here are your real tools that you'll need to have that will spur you on to success! Making a mistake at the podium doesn't mean failure. Your biggest mistake is not reaching your audience with the message you have!

1. Your attitude speaks through and through. Why are you presenting this information? Are you here because it's a job requirement or a way to make money? The attitude you take concerning the material you present will show through in your presentation.

2. Your passion communicates more than you'll ever say! Passion brings a professional speaker's material to life for their audience. Your audience will know if you are passionate about what you're speaking about or not. Moreover, they will need to draw on your passion to move them into taking action.

3. Your ability to empathize with the needs and wants of your audience will make you a success! You must have an ability to respond in a split second to the needs of your audience. In order to do this, you have to start interacting with your audience to get a feel for where their hearts and minds are concerning your message. You'll have to think quickly on your feet and be able to adjust your message and you'll have to become sensitive to "feeling" out your audience.

4. Your ability to make your message easy to understand and implement will help you reach more people! The easier your solution is, the easier it will be for your audience to take the action you're recommending in your presentation.

5. Your physical energy communicates the passion and life in your message. Excitement is contagious. So is monotony. You've got to get your audience excited about what you'll be

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presenting. This requires having the physical energy to rev up your audience as you speak excitedly, move about the room excitedly and present your material in an exciting manner.

6. *You must love in order to become a success.* This is the heart and soul of true charisma. A general love for what you do, the topics you speak on and the people you're speaking to are needed elements to your speaking career. This love will pass on even when you are talking about the latest theory in quantum mechanics!

These little talked about characteristics will be the true foundation of your success! More than technical skill, these soft skills are the real tools you'll need to get bigger paid speaking jobs. These tools are the elements that will draw your audience to you. If you take the time to work on building these skills, your success will be inevitable.

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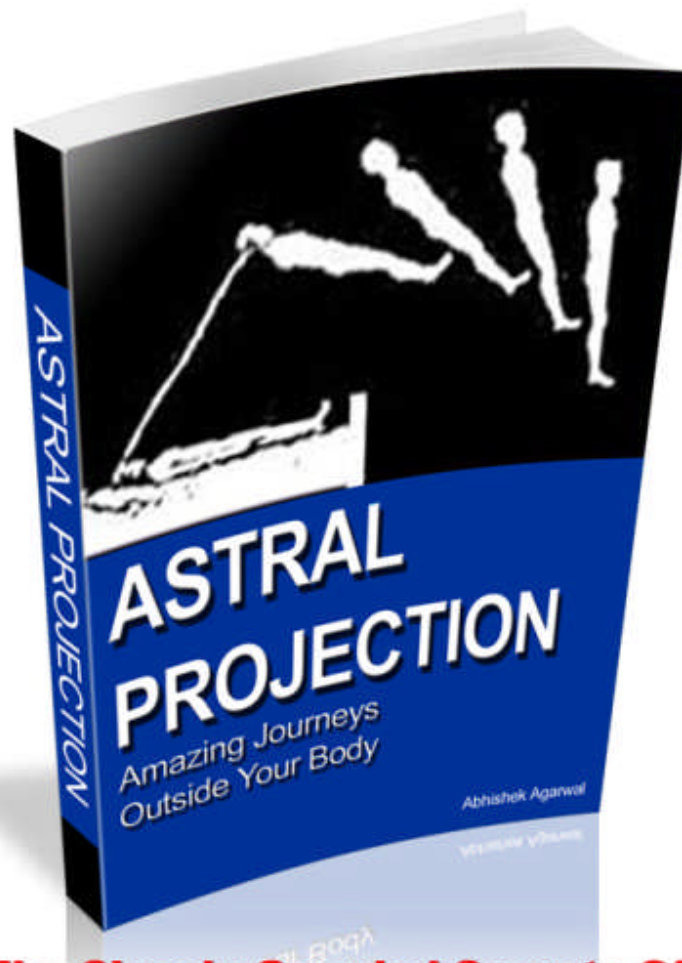
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