

Speak and Grow Richer!

How you can profit your career, business and income through public speaking. By Fred Schafer

Most business people understand that marketing, sales, networking and a belief in the value of their product or service are essential to success. Conversely, most business people admit they do not enjoy and oftentimes avoid public speaking.

Arguably, however, there are fewer more effective ways to market and demonstrate your credibility than public speaking. The bottom line is that professionals can propel their status and income faster through speaking than perhaps any other method. Plus, once the skills are in place, speaking can become one of the most enjoyable and profitable aspects of your work.

Here are 12 tips you can use to profit from speaking:

- 1) **Use your passion** as fuel for your speaking. If you are not excited enough about what you have to offer then you will not be interesting. Good speaking is driven by the need for people to hear about you and/or what you do. Your passion should make you want to shout it from the rooftops!
- 2) **Start writing your “speech”** today. The key to confidence in anything is knowing you are prepared. Imagine you are asked to speak one month from today for 30 minutes at a lunch for a local service organization. What will you say? A possible starting title could be, “What you need to know, etc. For example, “What you need to know before starting a fitness program and the biggest mistakes most people make”.
- 3) **Structure the outline first.** The basic outline is; strong opening with a “hook”, brief introduction of yourself, your premise (The problem you will solve), your purpose (solve the problem), short story illustrating problem and solution, reinforce why they need the solution, tell them how to get it, invite them to take action and enthusiastically predict the favorable outcome.
- 4) **Write it out word for word at first.** Especially your introduction and closing. As you continue to write/rehearse you can cut sentences down to three words. Eventually you can replace those three words with pictures. This method was practiced by Mark Twain who was better known for his great public speaking than his writing.
- 5) **Start with low threat audiences.** In other words, if your ideal audience is professional associations, start out speaking for anyone who will halfway listen so you can practice without harming your business. By talking to the quilting club you can probably get a free lunch and learn how to make quilts!
- 6) **Do not expose your fear and nervousness.** Never start off your speech telling the audience how nervous you are and how you fear public speaking. As crazy as that sounds professional people do it all the time. That puts the focus on you and makes the audience stressed.
- 7) **Rehearse the entire speech out loud at least three times.** Do not rehearse in front of a mirror. Using a mirror makes you more “you” focused. The BIGGEST mistake speakers make is not rehearsing their entire talk in private. Yet rehearsing privately helps you relax publicly.
- 8) **Develop your life stories.** Original and personal stories from your life are the best tool you have to connect with others and bring energy, emotion and humor to your speeches. Plus, it is what people remember most. Work on 2-3 stories from your life that were turning points that you can tell in 5-15 minutes. And be sure there is some funny in them. Remember, “No funny, no money”!
- 9) **Make it about them.** Include more “you’s” and reduce the “I’s” in your talk. You are talking to a room of individuals who need what you have. Your job is to bring them a bit of valuable information and a bit of encouragement. That is it. If you do that, you have succeeded! When we focus on ourselves we become fearful. When we focus on our audience, we become courageous.

10) **Study speaking.** Speaking is ultimately selling. If you are not out speaking, you are being outsold by others. Read the top ten books you can find on speaking over the next 12 months. That is less than one per month. This can increase your income by at least 10% in the next year.

11) **Be creative.** If you've secretly always wanted to be a rock star, speaking may be your chance! Rather than conform to others expectations and your fears, decide to break free and give your audience the authentic fun-spirited you. With that in mind, limit any power point to charts, graphs and pictures. Power point is a crutch. You are speaking to persuade people at take action on an idea. Would you use power point to ask for a date or in a marriage proposal? Get real and speak from you heart. Have fun and your audience will better buy from you!

12) **Accept that you may be a disaster sometimes.** I have bombed more times than I want to admit. It happens to everyone. Every master was once a disaster. Just keep at it, you will get better!

Fred Schafer is a 30 year public speaking veteran and has been professional speaking for the past ten years. He has given keynote speeches on high performance leadership, business breakthroughs and superior safety, health and wellness at hundreds of conferences from Alaska to Florida. He is also the author of two books and resides in Redding, CA. To learn more about him please visit www.fredstrikes.com