



How to Quickly Improve Your Storytelling Skills

In his classic book, Think and Grow Rich, Napoleon Hill introduced the concept of the Mastermind group. This is a group of like-minded individuals who help one another achieve various goals. This concept has been used by many successful people, and underscores the power of group thinking.

A peer speaking or storytelling group can be helpful, too.
How?

Just like a Mastermind. You can share, evaluate, and encourage group members to greater heights. In short, your peers can help you steer clear of mistakes and problems.

Where can you find prospective members of this kind of group?

Other people who have to present before an audience, work associates, and Toastmasters would be excellent places to start looking. Let these people know what you're trying to create. Explain not only what members can get, but what they will be expected to give to the group. This creates a foundation of expectations of all members, and increase the odds of the survival of the group.

It's a good idea to start small - five people at most. This provides an opportunity for prospective members to express their expectations from the group, and what they can give. It also allows you to find a mutually convenient meeting time, which isn't easy to do.

There are seven keys to making a peer speaking group work for all members:

1. Participants must be **willing to give as well as get**. Far too many groups fail because some members are just there to get, and don't provide the same amount of help to other members. If you give time and undivided attention to others, the group will grow stronger, and you'll get back more than you give.



2. **Be honest.** Let's face it, no one really likes to hear that their story needs improvement, or just isn't working. If they truly want to improve, they'll listen. If another member's story is confusing, or doesn't connect with you, say so. Be respectful, and be prepared to offer alternative ideas. Honesty is important. If you struggle with this concept, ask yourself one question before you offer feedback to someone else: "Would I benefit and improve if someone gave me this type of advice?"
3. **Have thick skin.** As mentioned in the last key, receiving feedback isn't always fun. It's not meant to be. If you want to improve, constructive evaluation is necessary. Before committing to this type of group, really think about this question: "Am I doing this for education, or validation?" If it's the latter, don't bother joining. Education leads to expansion; validation leads to stagnation.
4. **Respect other peoples time.** As obvious as this may seem, it is violated far too often. If one member consistently takes up most of the meeting time, it will cause frustration, and eventually, it will fracture the group. Set a time limit for each person to speak and be evaluated. You can always make exceptions if someone needs special attention.
5. **Record yourself.** Providing the group with a recorded version of your story can help them assist you even more. Being able to hear audience reactions, the effectiveness of pauses, and how you perform 'live' will provide more insight into your style and effectiveness.
6. **Write out your story.** Giving the group a written copy of your presentation can help them offer suggestions about sentence structure, word usage, and overall flow of the story. Remember that some words and phrases may look good on paper, but don't sound good to the ear. Writing your story does take time, but it's well worth that time because it offers another level of evaluation.
7. **Crave feedback.** This is the most important characteristic to bring to your group. If you truly seek improvement, and are willing to help others, you will grow faster than you can imagine. The most successful people tend to be voracious students, they can never get enough knowledge, or improve fast enough. Adopt this attitude and you, too, can rise above the pack.



In a fast-changing world, it's easy to get caught up in fads and trends. However, principles of success work no matter what the latest trends are. The concept of the Mastermind — or peer group — has existed for decades, if not centuries.

Follow the rules laid out above. Find like-minded people and commit to a group. You'll find that the power of many minds can lift you to much greater heights.

ACTION STEP: Take your first steps to create a peer group of presenters and storytellers. Reach out to like-minded people. Share the seven steps in this lesson to create a foundation for your mastermind.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCE: Chapter 10 of Napoleon Hill's [Think and Grow Rich](#), Power of the Mastermind: The Driving Force. This chapter offers greater detail into how to create a powerful mastermind group.

Until next week, always remember you have a story that someone needs to hear.

Other Recommended Resources

1) 52 Storytelling Tips

In 52 weeks you'll learn World Class storytelling tools and processes that enable you to create stories that hold audiences in rapt attention, gain their trust, and compel them to take ACTION!

This series of content-rich lessons begins upon registration, and continues on a weekly basis for one year. You'll receive a weekly email with a 5-minute audio lesson and PDF copy of that week's lesson. This is a manageable dose of storytelling content each week.

You'll be able to upload each lesson and listen at your leisure whether in your home, office, or car.

This weekly program is absolutely FREE! You simply register, open the weekly audio lesson, and, if you choose, upload the PDF attachment which offers a transcription of that week's lesson.

To register, visit: <http://speakingcpr.com/52-storytelling-tips/>

2) 'THE Book on Storytelling'

Public speaking and selling are two of the most essential business skills. Storytelling is the heart of each. 'THE Book on Storytelling' is designed to teach you the fundamentals of storytelling that gets results.

CEOs, salespeople, managers, and others who give presentations can benefit from this book. You'll pick up a series of proven, step-by-step process to discover, develop and deliver your unique stories.

Additionally, it is filled with recommended resources from other storytelling experts - authors, speakers, Hollywood screenwriters and more. This book gives you the tools to dig as deeply into this subject as you want.

When you implement these ideas, your stories will enable you to:

- => Become better-known in your industry
- => Create more opportunities
- => Advance your career
- => Increase your income
- => Reduce the stress and anxiety sometimes associated with creating stories
- => Develop deeper levels of trust faster with your audience

To get your copy, visit: <http://amzn.to/29MJEZF>

3) 'Sell More With Stories' Kindle book series

One of the biggest challenges for salespeople is quickly attracting new clients. For many, this is a daunting task.

Why?

Because old school methods don't work - they fail to quickly break down barriers and earn trust.

If you'd like to double, or even triple, your number of new clients, then the new Kindle series 'Sell More With Stories' is for you.

Read this series and you'll discover the keys to:

- => Quickly earn trust from prospective clients
- => Shorten your sales cycle
- => Create more selling opportunities
- => Work with more qualified prospective clients
- => Enjoy the process of attracting new business
- => Work only with people you want to
- => Feel more confident in networking and social situations

To begin your journey to gain these benefits, get your copy of the first book in the series. Visit: <http://amzn.to/29nlMrn>

4) 'Go Ahead and Laugh: A Serious Guide to Speaking With Humor'

Eleven professional speakers and humorists share over thirty techniques to get your audiences laughing.

Speaker and presentation coach Rich Hopkins analyzes each speech, and walks you through each titter, chuckle, and guffaw. He shows you how to apply each technique to your next speaking opportunity.

If you don't think you're funny, if you don't think your topic could possibly create a laugh - this book is for you - and your audiences that desperately want to Go Ahead and Laugh!

To get your copy, visit: <http://bit.ly/2jrS8K9>

Michael's Raving Fans

"I would **highly recommend** Michael to anyone that has to give a speech. Michael is **the** guy that you have to get and work alongside. I've done a lot of speaking and never had an experience like I did with him to get ready for my Ted X talk. The guy's **amazing**, and I hope to work with him again in the future."

~ Anthony Muñoz, **NFL Hall of Fame**
Founder, **Anthony Munoz Foundation**

"I'm **thrilled with the results** of our work together. Michael **patiently worked with me** to narrow down my stories to a relevant message that tied-in with the theme of the event. I **highly recommend** Michael for presentation skills coaching. He knows how to speak and teach **at a level that few can match.**"

~ Justice Richard Bernstein, **Michigan Supreme Court**

Our attendees were pleased with Michael's ideas about how to develop and deliver a World-Class Story. They left the event with a repeatable process that will help them create stories that will impact and influence others.

Michael helped us to present a **content-rich workshop** that our attendees have come to expect. I **highly recommend** Michael for speech and presentation skills coaching for your group or organization. He knows how to **speak and teach at the world-class level**, which is rare."

~ Darren LaCroix, **CSP and 2001 World Champion of Public Speaking**
Founder & President, **The Humor Institute, Inc.**

"Investing in Michael is one of the **best investments I have ever made.** I speak on the subject of diversity in the workplace, which can at times be a difficult topic to discuss.

Michael taught me a repeatable process that allows me to create a foundational concept, a logical structure, an opening that grabs the audience's attention, and a conclusion that **encourages my audience to take action** that will save them time and money.

Michael is easy to work with, flexible with his schedule, and a wealth of information about the art of speaking. If you need to improve your presentation or speech, I **highly recommend you consider hiring Michael.** It's **one of the best investments** you can make in your own growth."

~ Natalie Holder, Founder, **QUEST Diversity**

"Mike has an easy way of working with you that isn't intimidating... Amazing, insightful feedback... My presentations are now far more interesting and result in **additional sales of my services.** No matter what the level of speaking at which you may be performing, **you're sure to improve with Mike Davis.**"

~ Joanne Westwood, **Westwood Virtual Associates, LLC**

“Michael has completely opened my eyes! I’m performing at an entirely new level. I went into my last event with the utmost confidence thanks to him. He even called me the night before with a few last-minute reminders! If you speak for a living — if your revenue depends on your ability to communicate, you **NEED** Michael Davis!”

~ Brennan Scanlon, Co-Executive Director, **Business Network International**

“Tonight, Michael Davis and Daniel Matthews presented a program for our NSA chapter on ‘How to Deliver Outstanding Presentations.’

“Boy, did they deliver for us! We are a group of mostly veteran speakers, with a few who are new to the business. Michael and Daniel taught each of us so much that we can use to develop our presentations and how to better tell our stories. We learned how to create our presentations in a better format. There was so much that we can use to **elevate our talks** so that we engage our audience.

I highly recommend Michael Davis or Daniel Matthews for your next program.

~ Vivian Blade, President 2014-2015, **National Speakers Association, Kentucky Chapter**

“From the very beginning of time, we have been telling stories. Stories are engaging, motivating, compelling, memorable. That’s why **everyone must read** Michael Davis’ ‘THE Book on Storytelling.’ It is an amazing cornucopia of tips and ideas he has collected over the years from some of the best in the field.

The title says it all. **This is ‘THE Book on Storytelling.’** There are 52 chapters, each a gem. What follows each chapter is a “Recommended Resource.” **This alone is worth the price of the book.** I can guarantee you it is THE best. And I’ve read them all.”

~ Jarold Panas, Co-Author, **‘Power Questions’**

“I just read the whole (‘Sell More With Stories’) collection. Best of the best, it as **a must** for every leader and storyteller!!!”

~ Richar Ruiz, Director of Consulting, **American University**

Michael's Background

When asked how he earned the moniker 'the Storytelling MD,' Michael Davis replies, "Although I greatly admire the work doctors do to earn their MD, I took a different route. I didn't go to school for 8, 10 or 12 years. I have studied public speaking and storytelling skills since 2001. Also, I was born with the initials MD. Combine the two, and you get 'The Storytelling MD.'"

Michael's passion for storytelling and public speaking was not obvious early in his life. As a child, he was shy and reserved – not an indication he'd grow up to be a professional public speaker and presentation skills coach.

This is especially surprising because of an incident in first grade that caused so much embarrassment he became afraid of speaking to groups of any size. That experience carried over into adulthood.

As a young financial planner, his seminars about money were poorly delivered. He was given an ultimatum – "Become a better presenter.... or ELSE!!" This stirred up all of his anxieties about public speaking.

Because of that threat, he joined Toastmasters International in 1994. There he quickly discovered a passion for the art of public speaking. He learned that crafting and delivering impactful presentations is a learnable, repeatable skill.

In the years that followed, he became a voracious student of public speaking and storytelling. He also realized that he loves to help others improve these skills. That inspired him to start the company Speaking CPR.

In 2011, Michael earned the designation Certified World Class Speaking Coach. The processes and skills he teaches help you increase your visibility, create more opportunities for advancement, save you time, and may also increase your income.

To keep abreast of new ideas from the speaking world, he works closely with World Champion and Hall of Fame speakers. He also studies the work of Hollywood screenwriters and professional comics. This expands his knowledge of presentation skills and offers a unique perspective on these topics. Because of his dedication to the craft, Michael is sought by speakers all over the world.

He is a contributing author to three public speaking books, and is the author of 'THE Book on Storytelling' and the Kindle book series 'Sell More With Stories.' He presents public speaking and storytelling skills workshops throughout the year.

Michael also works closely with speakers in the Ted X Cincinnati event, and has successfully coached several speakers in the annual Toastmasters International World Championship of Public Speaking contest. He has been a guest expert on the podcasts: 'Speaking of Wealth,' 'Speaker Match Radio,' 'The Sales Whisperer,' and 'The Business of Story.'

Michael is a candidate member of the National Speakers Association (Kentucky Chapter) and a member of Toastmasters International.