



How to Properly Prepare to Share Your Story

Imagine a tennis pro walking onto the courts at Wimbledon without warming up. She just starts playing her match.

How about a soccer player who runs onto the field without stretching and preparing his body?

Wouldn't make much sense, would it?

Their minds and bodies would not be ready for the strenuous task ahead, and they wouldn't perform at their best. In order to get mentally focused and physically prepared to play at a peak level, these athletes need to warm up.

The same can be said for speakers. If you don't get yourself into 'playing shape' you won't give your best performance.

What do the best speakers and storytellers do to get themselves ready?

Hydration. In order to work at their best, your vocal chords need to be hydrated. The time to begin this is the day before you speak. If you wait until right before you walk on stage, it's too late. The body needs time to absorb the water and lubricate your vocal chords.

Water is by far the best liquid to ingest. Some fluids to avoid are caffeine and alcohol, as they tend to dry out the vocal chords. Milk or milk products should be avoided because the mucous created makes clear diction more difficult.

One other idea is to avoid cold beverages. These tend to tighten and restrict the vocal chords.

Breathing. Breath, or lack of it, can make or break your presentation. If your air passages are clear and your lungs completely filled with air, you will enunciate better, you'll have greater vocal range, and you will have more energy to get through your talk.

The late speaking coach Ron Arden pointed out that your lungs are somewhat pear shaped, so it's important to open up the top half as much as possible. He suggested the 4:8:4:4 exercise:

Breathe in for 4 seconds; hold it for 8 seconds; exhale for 4 seconds; wait 4 seconds.

And then repeat the process five times. You'll find that your lungs are more open and you're better prepared to speak.

Music and exercise. Music can energize you and exercise helps burn off excess nervous energy.

What music works best?

Any type that pumps you up and gives you energy. You should avoid funeral dirges or country songs about cheating spouses, lost jobs, or dogs running away.

There's nothing wrong with these types of songs, they just tend to set a less than stellar emotional tone for your audience.

There are many types of exercise that work well: jumping jacks, pushups, and walking up and down stairs. I've even danced before walking on stage. This is a great tool because it combines music and exercise.

Try out different types and find one that works for you.

Ask yourself Four Questions five minutes before you speak. I learned this from World Champion speaker Darren LaCroix, CSP.

To get centered on the audience, ask these four questions five minutes before you go onstage: -

1. **What is my purpose for this story/speech?**
2. **Will I have fun?**
3. **Am I present, in the moment, or am I distracted?**
4. **If this was the last speech I ever gave, how would I give it?**

In addition to getting your mind and body ready to speak, these tools will help you better manage your nerves.

Feeling nervous is OK, by the way. Allowing them to control you isn't.

Darren LaCroix has thoroughly researched the history of speaking, and discovered that despite the overwhelming feeling of fear and stress that speaking can create, no one has ever died from giving a speech.

Technically, that's not true. The ninth President of the United States, William Henry Harrison, died from pleurisy and pneumonia after giving his inaugural address in a storm of snow and freezing rain.

Like many men, he was stubborn and he didn't wear adequate clothing that day. He caught a severe cold that developed quickly into his fatal illness.

It should be noted that this really wasn't the fault of his speech; it was the foolish speaker who didn't listen to his mother and dress properly for his inauguration. But, I digress.

Just like an athlete who needs to prepare for an important contest, you should prepare your mind and body before you speak. Use the ideas presented in this lesson and you'll increase your odds of presenting at a peak level.

ACTION STEP: Test each of the four methods in this lesson. Find the ones which work best for you. With repeated use, you'll develop the habit of being prepared so that you can give your best effort every time.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCE: Your recommended resource this week is not a specific book or audio program. It's a suggestion to research Amazon.com to find material about exercise, nutrition, and proper breathing. These subjects, when combined, can make you a better presenter AND help you feel a better sense of well being.

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

For additional resources, see below....

Other Recommended Resources

1) '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>

2) '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>

3) **‘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>

4) **Your Weekly Dose of Public Speaking Medicine**

Pick up insider secrets about public speaking. I've bottled up the wisdom gained from Hall of Fame and World Champion public speakers, business leaders, comedians, an award-winning Las Vegas headliner and a highly-sought Hollywood script-writing consultant. Their unique ideas are presented in content-rich, easy-to-implement videos.

Devote five minutes per week to these videos. You'll pick up World Class public skills that enable you to create speeches that hold audiences in rapt attention, gain their trust, and compel them to take ACTION!

This series of videos continues on a weekly basis. You'll receive a weekly notification that the latest video has been posted to You Tube. This is a manageable dose of in-depth content that enables you to build one skill upon another.

These videos are absolutely FREE! To watch the first video, and subscribe to my channel, [click here](#).

5) **Are You Committing These 7 Common Storytelling Mistakes?**

The ability to tell business stories that inspire action can be your most valuable business asset. World class presenters often use storytelling 'tools' that are subtle, but make a huge difference in how you experience their narratives.

It takes a combination of skills to craft and deliver stories that make an impact. Likewise, it takes several mistakes – some blatant, some not obvious – to create a forgettable storytelling experience. There are seven common storytelling mistakes that are difficult to spot, but can be overcome.

To discover these common mistakes, download your complementary copy of the report: **'Are You Committing These 7 Common Storytelling Mistakes?'**

To receive your copy, [click here](#).

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**

"Michael Davis **exceeded every expectation** and was **one of the best coaches** I ever worked with. His quiet professionalism, and unsurpassed knowledge of storytelling helped make my Ted X Cincinnati talk **extremely powerful**."

I would recommend Michael, as a story and speaking coach to **anyone with a high stakes talk to give**. Michael will help you take your speech from **good to great!**"

LTC (Ret.) Scott Mann
Green Beret, Storyteller, Trainer, Coach, Author

"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



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 speaker and public speaking coach.

As a new financial planner, his seminars were poorly delivered. He was given an ultimatum – “Become a better presenter.... or ELSE!!” 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. He also realized that he had a gift to help others improve these skills. That inspired him to start the company *Speaking CPR*.

To keep abreast of new ideas from the speaking world, he works closely with World Champion and Hall of Fame speakers. He has developed relationships with other experts - a leading Hollywood scriptwriting consultant, professional comics and an award-winning Las Vegas headliner. They've expanded his knowledge of speaking and presentation skills. 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, as well as the new book 'Living a Wealthy Life.' Michael is the author of 'THE Book on Storytelling' and the Kindle book series 'Sell More With Stories.' He's been featured on podcasts like: 'The Business of Story,' 'Speaker Match Radio,' and 'Speaking of Wealth.' He has spoken for many groups, including: General Electric, Johnson & Johnson, the Ohio Association of Community Health Centers, and the Greater Cincinnati Human Resource Association.

Michael also works closely with speakers in the Ted X Cincinnati event, and has successfully coached competitors in the World Championship of Public Speaking.

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

He lives in Blue Ash, Ohio with his family and boss of the house, Sky the Chihuahua.