



Craig Valentine's
52
Speaking
Tips

Keep your audience on the Edge of their Seats!

The Visual Before the Verbal

So often when it comes to storytelling, speakers have one character give a line of dialogue and then the other character responds with another line of dialogue. Those speakers are on the right track. After all, at least they're using dialogue and not all narration, right?

However, the biggest piece of the conversation between those characters is missing. What is that piece? It's the visual reaction the characters should give in response to what was said by the other character.

I have a quick story about me losing in a humorous speech contest at the club level, which is the lowest level at which you can lose. Then I say to my audience ...

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And I'll never forget a seasoned Toastmaster named Allen Mish came up to me afterwards. He said, "Craig, you can win the world championship of public speaking!"

I said, "What are you talking about? I just lost a humorous speech contest at the club level!"

He said, "That's okay. The only thing wrong with your humor speech was that it wasn't funny."

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Welcome back. Now those are good lines of dialogue; however, it's what happens in between those lines that's important. When Allen said to me, "You can win the world championship of public speaking," what do you think I was thinking to myself? As if I can think to anyone else. I was thinking, "How in the world can you say that?"

Guess what? That's exactly the expression I should show on my face before I respond verbally. That's what happens in real life, right? We give our visual expression, whether we plan to or not. Then we give our verbal response.

So instead of just responding with, "What are you talking about?" I have to pause for a moment and shoot the character a crazy look, as if to say, "What are you talking about?" with my facial expressions. Then immediately after I start the look, I give the line.

Make no mistake about it. It's the look before the line that counts. So show the visual reaction before you give the verbal response. That's what brings that scene to life.

Now do you have to do this with every line of dialogue? Absolutely not! If you did, you'd be making funny faces all day long, but you should definitely do it with the most important lines of dialogue, the lines that would really cause some kind of visual reaction.

In fact, in that short story, there's another line that you heard that requires a reaction. When Allen says, "The only thing wrong with your humorous speech was that it wasn't funny," I need to show my character's reaction visually to that as well.

In that case, the visual is a look that says, "Oh, gee, it's got to be funny, huh?"



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When you're in your next story, never forget what my good friend, Darren LaCroix says. "Reactions tell the story." Reactions tell the story. He's absolutely right.

Give the visual reaction before your verbal response, because it's the look before the line and the look after the line of dialogue that counts. This, in itself, I'm telling you will make your stories so much more visual and so much more real. And believe me, you'll uncover lots of humor as well.

Until next week, keep speaking up.



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Craig's Top 10 Recommended Resources

1. <http://www.edgeoftheirseats.com/>
2. <http://www.createyourkeynote.com/>
3. <http://www.dynamicdeliverydevices.com/>
4. <http://www.learntoownthestage.com/>
5. <http://www.wcspeaking.com/>
6. <http://www.askcraigvalentine.com/>
7. <http://www.audioforspeakers.com>
8. <http://www.resourcesforspeakers.com>
9. <http://www.thebookonspeaking.com>
10. <http://www.automateyourspeaking.com>

Craig Valentine's Background & Results

Craig Valentine, MBA, an award-winning speaker, management trainer, and speech coach, has traveled the world helping speakers breathe life into their presentations. He has spoken in the United States, Taiwan, Canada, Jamaica, Qatar (Doha), England, Bahamas, Hong Kong, and China. In 1999 he won the World Championship of Public Speaking for Toastmasters International after competing with more than 25,000 contestants from 14 countries.

- *The conference was this past weekend and with your "virtual coaching" I was able to give my own "Killer Keynote". I stood on that stage and gave the speech I had always dreamed of giving-- they laughed where I wanted them to laugh -- they teared up where I wanted to touch them the most -- they came into the scene of my stories -- they heard my message and believed. It was a wonderful moment for me and I will always consider it a gift. Now I would be lying if I said I didn't enjoy the standing ovation at the end...Susan Lamb-Robinson, Speaker; Toronto, Canada*
- *"I now deliver better presentations in 20 minutes than I did in 60 minutes; moreover, my closing ratio has increased 350% thanks to the lessons learned in The Edge of Their Seats Storytelling Home-Study Course. Craig's 9 Step Formula has changed my*



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life. "Kevin D. Gross, MBA, President, Alumni Connection.com
www.AlumniConnection.com

- *I learned more from you in one hour than I have in years of giving speeches. You are a master of your game. Thank you for inspiring me to find my own voice and greatness as a speaker!! Thank you! Pele Raymond Ugboajah; Author, Speaker, Business Coach; DreamBanc, L.L.C.*
- *Craig Valentine is one of America's finest speakers, 1999 World Champion of Public Speaking and author of what I consider to be the bible of public speaking, "Nuts and Bolts of Public Speaking". He's also got several audio and DVD's on the subject. Craig was the driving force and the biggest reason I made it to the World Championships last year in Calgary. The two days I spent with him, in his living room, in Baltimore, completely changed the way approach public speaking...Martin Presse, 2008 Finalist for World Champion of Public Speaking*
- *Hey man I know you are busy but I wanted to bring you up to speed on us. We just returned from San Francisco where we spoke at the national convention of NAMI. It was great. No notes, we both spoke for about an hour. Based on all the comments they liked it. There were a number of people there who had heard us before and they were amazed at the changes we made. Thanks! Bill Neely; www.billandtena.com; Courage in Crisis*
- *Thank you 1000 times over. I just came home from Niagara, what a fantastic time I had. All of your techniques worked. I offered 7 free, 1 hour consultations if booked today offered only in January. I not only booked those I had a line up afterward. Sarah Hilton; Speaker on Mental Health, Toronto*
- *Thanks for your changes...I gave the speech last Monday and everyone raved about it. Thank you so much for your help. I went in very confident, knowing it was a very good speech thanks to your advice and changes. In fact, they hope to get me back again and several said they want to find out where else I am speaking so they can come hear me again. Christine Duvivier; Managing Director, Impact Partners*