



Keep your audience on the Edge of their Seats!

Tell a Story and Make a Point

This is the most important speaking lesson of all. So why did I put it last? Because there's wisdom in saving the best for last.

Remember the primacy and recency that we talked about before? People remember best what they hear first and what they hear last. Well, you should really remember this.

Throughout the 52 Speaking Tips you picked up lots of ideas to make your stories stronger and to drive your points home.

Bill Gove, the first president of the National Speakers Association, said: "The essence of public speaking is to tell a story and make a point."

When people remember your story, they remember your point. However, it's easier said than done, and you're about to pick up a few thoughts on doing that effectively.

1. Tell your story in the first person, and make it either about you or something you've witnessed.

Listen, anybody can tell a *Chicken Soup for the Soul* story, but only you can tell your story. That's what makes you unique. It also gives you instant credibility and an instant connection, because nobody can say, "Hey! When it comes to your story, I don't really believe you!" Of course they believe you. It's your story. It happened to you.



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2. Don't be the guru of your own stories.

In other words, as you learned before, you should not be the one who always imparts the wisdom or comes up with the cure that transcends the conflict. In fact, stories work best when YOU are the one who learns the cure or revelation, and then passes it on to us as audience members.

So when developing your story, always ask, "What was the succinct lesson I learned, and who or what taught it to me?" Giving others credit for the message is very effective in deepening your connection with the audience. Why? Because it keeps you similar and not special.

So #1 is telling your story in the first person. #2 is don't be the guru of your own story.

Next is something I picked up from Patricia Fripp:

3. Give your other characters the best lines.

Instead of your character being the one who has all the funny lines and poignant lines, like I see a lot of speakers do, give those lines to other characters in your story.

For example, when I was trying to decide on whether to take the raise from my boss or not, or to decide on going out and living my dream of being a professional speaker, I went home and talked to my wife about it.



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And here's what I tell my audience. I say:

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I said to my wife, "Honey, I don't know what to do! What should I do? What should I do?"

And my wife looked up at me with her big brown eyes, and said, "Take the money, fool!" (Laughter)

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I gave her that funny line. Then I give her the poignant line of saying:

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"Craig, this is all you've ever wanted. Ever since we met, this is all you've ever talked about. I don't care how much they try to compensate you. Craig, your dream is not for sale!" That's deep, isn't it?

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She's the guru of my story. She also gets the funny lines and poignant lines. So give your best lines to your other characters.

By the way, this is also a great way to share some of your successes without coming across as bragging. Put your successes in the dialogue of another character.



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For example, instead of looking at your audience and saying, “I was a top scholar athlete of my university, and we won three straight East Coast championships,” and blah, blah, blah and bragging, let someone else say it.

You might come to your audience and say, “You know, I was down on my luck and I went to my friend Maya and she said, “Come on Craig! This is you we’re talking about! You’re a champion, remember? Remember when you won those three East Coast championships? Remember when you were the top scholar athlete? Craig, you won the World Championship of Public Speaking! Come on! This is you!”

See, that takes it from me bragging about myself and simply turns it into a part of the organic story. That’s how you can build some credibility without bragging. Give your best lines, and the lines that lift you up, to other characters.

So there you have it: tell a story and make a point.

We’re at the end of the road here. 52 Speaking Tips – this has been a whole year! This has been a blast for me. I hope you’ve found some value in it as well. If you’ve been putting these tools into practice consistently, I have no doubt that you’re three times the speaker you were a year ago.

But I’d like you to do something special as we come to a close. I want you to simply sit back, relax, and envision yourself having just given an amazing, life-changing speech to an enthusiastic audience.

Imagination really is what took me to the next level in speaking. See them applauding. See them standing. Witness the hope in their eyes. Hear the applause.



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And I want to thank you for taking this journey. Congratulations in advance on the success and the impact of all your future speeches. This applause is for you.
(Applause plays)



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



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- *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*