

EXPERT SPEAKER



5 Steps To Grow Your Business
With Public Speaking

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To the brave souls who share their messages and, in doing so, change the world.

Contents

[Preface](#)

[Introduction](#)

[Chapter 1: Welcome to the New World of The Expert Speaker](#)

[Chapter 2: Becoming a Highly-Paid Expert Speaker](#)

[Chapter 3: From Pain Island to Pleasure Island](#)

[Chapter 4: Step One: Define Your Audience](#)

[Chapter 5: Step Two: Create Your Offer](#)

[Chapter 6: Step Three: Craft Your Speech](#)

[Chapter 7: Step Four: Win Stages](#)

[Chapter 8: Step Five: Monetize Your Message](#)

[Chapter 9: What Is Holding You Back from Becoming a Successful, Highly-Paid Speaker?](#)

[Chapter 10: Your Message Matters](#)

[Acknowledgments](#)

[About the Author](#)

Preface

You are here because you know the power of public speaking to deliver your message to the world. You know how it can position you to serve the audiences you want to help. If you're like me when I started out as a public speaker, you don't know where to start or how to get booked. You are passionate about your message, but you're unsure of how to break into the speaker circuit and land speaking gigs. You're ready to take the stage, but you just need a strategy to get booked.

If you are already a good speaker you know that taking your speaking skills to the next level will have event planners paying you for your epic keynote speech. You may have already experienced the power of speaking on stage and the effect it has on the audience. By the end of your precious minutes on stage, people will know you, trust you, and want to work with you. If you have a business that could use more clients, public speaking is the fastest way to grow your business.

Ever since I was a kid, I wanted to be a performer. I've always loved the theater. I was doing Broadway musicals as a little kid and got into improv comedy in college. At that time, I didn't know there was a business around training, coaching, and keynote speaking. I never wanted to be a professional actor, but I always loved to perform. I figured I'd join a community theater and would be happy. I was delighted to discover that through public speaking I could make a living performing and helping people at the same time.

I practiced personal development. I learned about business. I wanted to share the personal development and business lessons I had learned with people in a fun and engaging way. I thought that if I could figure out how to attract a crowd, I could then figure out how to get someone to pay me. Maybe I could actually earn a living doing this.

I spent ten years building my business around speaking, helping entrepreneurs, and living a great life in the process. My wife and I love to travel, and since my business was designed to be location independent and time flexible, we were able to travel to over a dozen countries while I continued to run my business from my laptop. Eventually I was making six figures, and I became the number-one trainer at Learning Tree International out of 721 trainers around the world. My calendar was full of speaking and training engagements, and I was traveling a lot, which was great, until it wasn't. You see, I wanted to travel with my business, until my wife, Elaine, got pregnant.

Uh oh. "I'm going to be a Dad!" Now traveling to work seemed like a bad idea. I thought I would need to shut down my speaking business and find a nine-to-five job so I could be home with my family. I didn't know what I was going to do. I didn't want to lose all the skill and knowledge I had built, and I didn't want to leave the world of speaking.

I decided to cut way back on travel and turn down speaking gigs that were out of town. I started to focus on my local market: Ottawa, Canada. And instead of just offering keynote speeches at \$2,500 to \$5,000, I started to offer training and coaching programs to small business owners at \$50,000 to \$100,000 or more to support their sales, marketing, and leadership challenges.

While the pay was good in the small business coaching and training, I missed the art of public speaking. I decided to offer a small group of extraordinary entrepreneurs the chance to work with me to craft a speech and market that speech to book paid speaking gigs. Naturally, using the strategies I had developed to grow my own practice, I helped these speakers craft a talk that would attract their ideal clients. The results were phenomenal.

Chris Kidawski, better known as the Body Hacker, helps high-performing entrepreneurs lose weight quickly and easily and keep it off (he helped me lose thirty pounds in two months!). He was one of the first clients of my public speaking training company that would later become the Expert Speaker Institute. When he joined our program, he was so full of knowledge and skill and wanted to share it with the world through speaking, and he wanted to raise his rates. Before having his signature speech, he was charging \$80 per hour. After his signature speech was filmed, he was able to charge \$7,000 for a six-month program that got even better results for clients. The speech gave him the clarity and the authority needed to attract premium clients willing to pay premium fees. That means he gets to help more people and experience more abundance.

Chris said to me, “I never thought it would be this easy” after he got a random call from Yvonne from New Mexico who saw the video we produced of his signature speech, shared by a friend of hers. On that one call, in less than twenty minutes, she signed up for his \$7,000 weight loss program, and she immediately started getting amazing results with Chris. That’s why I do what I do, helping speakers create effective speeches that inspire the audience to take action, and I help them spread that speech to live stages and across the world through online video. So, when gifted people like Chris have a message that can help people, it’s my mission to help get that message to the right audience.

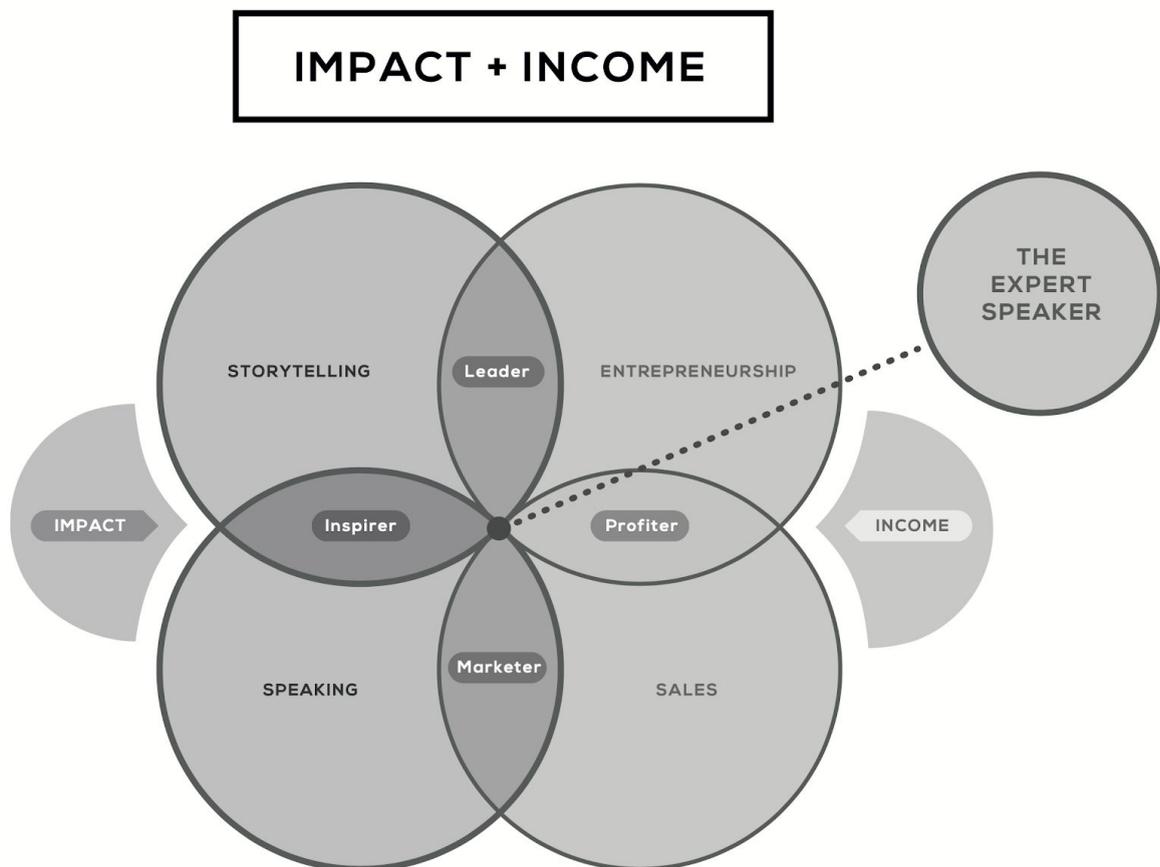
Now, let’s focus on getting your message to the right audience so that you can become a highly-paid speaker and serve a lot of people in the process.

Introduction

When you choose speaking as a business, you are choosing a lifestyle. You might imagine the speaking lifestyle as some speaker circuit where you see a map with pins and you're going from pin to pin. Yes, people do that. But it can also mean that you're speaking via a webcam for your webinars and online courses and creating videos for your YouTube channel.

It could also be that you're going to give four speeches a year and the rest of the time you'll pay the bills by coaching a program. You will figure out what that ideal lifestyle looks like for you and how speaking fits in. For me, it's running a world-class training company for gifted speakers with a mission to make the world a better place. I speak occasionally at events that I love and host live trainings in my hometown or foreign retreats if I am traveling with my wife and two kids. That's the lifestyle that I live now, by design. And it's a speaker-driven business: it's webinars, it's coaching, it's training, it's occasional keynotes.

In this book, *Become a Highly-paid Speaker: 5 Steps to Grow Your Speaking Business*, I will show you many more ways to quickly generate revenue from speaking, even if it's a free speech. If you're already booking paid speaking gigs, this book will help you maximize every opportunity and turn every speech into requests for three more speeches. If you haven't booked your first paid speaking gig, I will show you how. Remember, the most opportunity to impact lives and to earn income does not come from speaking fees alone. The speaking fee is small compared to all the revenue opportunities available to you as an expert speaker.



An expert speaker combines four skill sets—storytelling, speaking, sales, and entrepreneurship—to maximize impact and income.

Impact = storytelling and speaking: You can inspire an audience with great speaking and storytelling. You can have an impact on their hearts and minds. You can even inspire them to take action and make change from hearing your message.

Income = entrepreneurship and sales: I define entrepreneurship as solving problems profitably, and I define sales as helping people make the right decision. You can do both without public speaking and storytelling (but where's the fun in that?). And you will have an uninspiring and less impactful business.

When you combine entrepreneurship and storytelling, you are a leader. When you combine entrepreneurship and sales, you are a profiter. When you combine speaking and sales, you are a marketer. When you combine speaking and storytelling you are an inspirer.

Combine them all and you are an expert speaker.

You are about to learn the secrets of the most profitable speakers. What you learn may shock you because the speaking business has changed dramatically over the last few years. Gone are the days of high speaking fees and speaking tours. There are more profitable speakers than ever before, who have taken advantage of new tools, technologies, and business models to create even more impact and profit than ever before.

You may be new to speaking. If you are, this book will lay out a road map for you to design the lifestyle, impact, and profit model for your business. You may choose to center your life and business on speaking (keynotes, training, workshops, group coaching, retreats, facilitation) or you may use speaking as a powerful marketing channel to position yourself as an expert to your ideal clients and industry peers.

If you are a seasoned speaker, prepare to expand your mind to what is possible in your business and lifestyle. When you apply the strategies and tactics laid out in this book, you will dramatically increase your profits and reduce your workload. If you've been in this business for some time, you know the lifestyle can be glamorous. It can also be a lot of hard work. This book will show you that there is a better way. Are you ready to evolve your speaking practice to increase impact and profit?

This book is for you if:

- You have a message you want to share
- You want to figure out how to share your message in a sustainable, profitable way
- You want to give speeches to generate revenue and attract clients
- You love to attend conferences and seminars, and you are regularly investing in coaching and masterminds
- At conferences you watch the speaker, secretly thinking to yourself, I could do it. I can. I should be on that stage.
- You are asked to speak and feel drawn in this direction to share your knowledge
- You are uncertain about what to charge and how you would get more speaking gigs
- You want to speak, but you're not sure where the stages are
- You're wondering what you should speak about because you have so much content

- You would be so happy if you could predictably land speaking gigs and consistently get new clients every time you spoke, because your business would grow and you would get to travel, speak at cool places, and meet cool people as a speaker

My goal with this book is that you start making an impact and income from speaking, today. By the time you complete this book, you will be able to:

- Know what to charge when asked to do a workshop
- Know how to consistently get paid speaking engagements
- Learn how to get invited to talks, like TEDx, and be ready to perform!
- Know exactly what you offer and what to charge when you are asked to speak
- Know how to get appointments with decision-makers so that you can land the gigs you want
- Know how to get premium clients asking to work with you every time you give a speech

Chapter 1

Welcome to the New World of the Expert Speaker

Are You REALLY an Expert?

What do you think of when you hear the word *expert*?

- more knowledgeable than me
- master of a certain topic
- a leader
- experienced

Maybe you don't feel like "the expert" in your field. Or perhaps you don't feel like an expert at anything. I want to give you a new definition of expert that may fit for you: *If you know more than me about something that is important to me, then you are an expert – to me.*

I'm not an expert in iPhones and iPads, but to my mother-in-law I am. I can fix her iPad. I am her iPhone and iPad expert because I know enough to be helpful. Conversely, I consider Iris, my mother-in-law, a master chef because her cooking is so amazing. But would she consider herself an expert? Maybe not. She's an expert to me.

You are an expert to the people you serve, and you are an expert to the people who are searching for your help right now.

Are you the best in the world? Probably not. But you may be the best in someone's world. Are you two steps ahead of someone? Perhaps you've been in the business a few years and you're helping someone just starting out. Or perhaps you have had a divorce, and you now help people going through divorce. That makes you a *relevant* expert to the person you are two steps ahead of, because your experience is similar to theirs. It is not uncommon to have an ideal client profile that fits the description of a past version of you. In other words, we tend to be very good at helping people who are currently in a situation that we were able to overcome.

You Don't Need to Be the Expert. You Need to Be an Expert

Here are the facts:

- you have a gift that can help people
- you feel called to serve by sharing the message in that gift
- you are very good at what you do

Are you the best expert in the world? Yes, as long as you define the world to the people who resonate most with you.

If you are like me, you want to share your gift, what you're good at, with others. You don't want to spend so much time on marketing and sales; you probably just want to do more speaking. As an expert speaker, here's one thing to understand: your job is not to be a speaker. You're already good at telling your story and sharing your message. If you had a speaking opportunity tonight you would crush it. The difficult part of the speaking business is

getting the gig. And so, I want you to put on a new hat. You've got the speaker hat on right now. Take the speaker hat off and put on a different hat called "speaker marketer." You are the marketer of a speaker, and you're the speaker: you're the brand. Your job is to market yourself.

Marketing Is Communication That Gets Clients /

Sales Is the Process of Helping Your Customer Make the Right Decision

Now you are in the business of marketing and selling a speaker. That speaker is you. You are both the speaker and the speaker's agent. Your job as a speaker's agent is to find and book gigs for your speaker clients. As you consider yourself the agent and client, you will be that closer to regularly landing speaking gigs and sharing your message to the world.

Don't Call Yourself a Speaker

Event planners aren't looking for speakers for their event; they are looking for experts to speak at their event. It's a subtle difference but important for how you think about your brand. This is especially useful if you are using the stage to drive clients into your business. If your prospects see you only as a speaker, then they can only imagine hiring you to speak and may not be aware of all the other powerful services you offer. Consider yourself an expert who speaks rather than a speaker with a message.

There Are More Speaking Opportunities Today Than Ever Before

Opportunities to speak are all over the place. Whether it's a keynote speech, a workshop, a seminar, or speaking to a camera or on a podcast, when you speak for multiple people listening "live" or for those who will listen to a recording, no matter the platform, there are ample opportunities to share your message, make an impact, and get paid!

We are going to cover how to define your audience, how to craft your speech, and how to attract people to buy from you without any high-pressure sales tactics, and how to get appointments with decision-makers for training, consulting, coaching or paid speaking engagements.

- I will lay out two different sales processes: The first is how to sell yourself to the event planner. The second is selling the audience to hire you for your services or to buy your products. These processes are a proven way to sign clients after you speak and to carry forward the momentum from your talk. You can imagine it, right? People are coming up to you after your presentation, waiting to speak with you directly. How do you make sure that you know what to say in that moment to help them make the decision to hire you?

Summary

- You are an expert to the people you serve, and you are an expert to the people who are searching for your help right now.
- You are the marketer of a speaker, and you're the speaker. You are the brand. Your job is to market yourself.
- Consider yourself an expert who speaks rather than a speaker with a message.

- There are two different sales processes: The first is how to sell yourself to the event planner. The second is selling the audience to hire you for your services or to buy your products.

Chapter 2

Becoming a Highly-Paid Expert Speaker

Lewis Eisen is a certified expert speaker and an expert in better policy writing for employee policies. His process is similar to the six-figure engagement I mentioned earlier. Lewis says, “We’re going to come in and do a one-hour training on how to write respectful policies,” and this is his foot in the door for ongoing implementation with the organization. He goes in to speak and he is preaching to the choir. The policy writers hear him, and they say, “This is brilliant. I wish my boss was here to have heard what you just said, because that’s exactly what my boss needs to hear,” but the boss is off doing something more important.

The job that Lewis has now is to turn the room of employees into evangelists who go to their boss to say, “We need to hire Lewis.” Lewis is systematically owning that process by saying to them, “Here is a piece of paper to pass around the room. At the top I want you to write down the name, email, and phone number of your boss. Then each of you write down three reasons why you think the boss should hire me. I will follow up with him directly. You can add your name unless you prefer to be anonymous.”

He continues, “And in addition to that, I’m going to offer you a 360-audit of your policy writing as it stands now, and I’m going to make a specific recommendation for you for a roadmap forward at no additional charge.” He provides them with a detailed three-year roadmap. And he says, “Here’s what you do to implement this into your company. By the way, based on my analysis of your current resources, you don’t have the necessary resources and skills to implement this yourself. But the good news is I can implement it for you. It’s only \$100,000 a year. Here’s the contract that I’ve already prepared for you. All you have to do is sign here; it’s renewable annually.”

That’s turning a \$2,500 speech into a \$300,000 engagement. He can do ten engagements like that per year. It’s a \$3 million business model.

Lewis knows their procurement processes and their buying processes. He is already on their list of suppliers. Lewis put himself in the absolute best position to take this project because he knows the organization. He just did the audit and the people love him. He’s got a stack of paper from the employees to prove it. This is the roadmap. This is how you get a \$300,000 speech. Celebrities can’t do that. An expert service provider like you can.

The Speaker Dream

You’re standing backstage, and the crowd’s going wild. You hear the emcee introducing you and rattling off all your accolades and accomplishments. Then your name is announced and the crowd roars. The music kicks on. You go out onto the stage as the powerful speaker that you are. You rock the house. You’re channeling your wisdom. The jokes are coming, and the words are flowing. At the end of your speech, you get a standing ovation. And when you come off the stage, there is a crowd of people wanting to talk to you and have their picture taken with you.

In the back of the venue you see the event planner, smiling and leaning up against the wall with the knowing look of, “That was the best speaker we’ve ever had. Hiring this

speaker was the best thing we've ever done." You walk up to her, and you ask her one question, "Did I exceed your expectations?" She says, "Beyond my wildest imagination."

She hands you an envelope. You know what's inside. It's the biggest cheque you've received as a speaker, because they keep getting bigger. You take the envelope and say, "Thank you," and you're on your way. You wheel your suitcase out to the limousine that is waiting for you.

You sit in the limousine that's taking you to your flight home. You open up the envelope and a smile lights up your face when you look at the cheque amount. You take out your phone. You see emails coming in from fans at the event. Your assistant emails you, saying, "We already have three requests to book you at another speech based on your speech tonight; you must have really knocked it out of the park." You put your phone away and say, "I done good" in the back of a limo.

A speaker's lifestyle is spending 98 percent of your time on all the things that have to happen to get you on that stage. If you're lucky, 2 percent of your life is actually on the stage as a speaker. That means you're making cold calls, creating marketing materials, shooting videos, editing videos, learning social media, and creating online courses.

The glamour and the fame and the gigs are great. But you have to be willing to do the hard stuff because if you're in the business for the fame and the money, you're going to realize that's much less frequent than the struggle and the work. You have to enjoy the journey and the process.

I'm going to share with you my journey and struggle. I will tell you how I grew beyond dreaming of being a speaker and the days of watching speakers on stage, thinking to myself, *How did they get this gig? That person just made \$10,000 in thirty minutes, like, that's crazy. If I could do that just once a month. That would change my life!*

I am not a born gifted speaker with speaking gigs coming easily to me. If I was, why would you come to me for advice? I started out like you did, with a dream, a message to share, and a desire to learn.

When I was a kid, our family moved around a lot so I developed the skill called "making friends." I thought telling stories and telling jokes was a good way to do that. I never went to the same school two years in a row until high school. The skill of meeting new people was like a learned survival skill.

I like to act, and I was in theater in school. My first acting experience was the musical *Annie*. I was Dog Catcher Number Two. Then I was in *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, singing, fixing up the lighting, and putting on makeup backstage. These were all fun things for me as a five- and six-year-old little boy in California. When we moved to Illinois, I joined the speech team, which combined my love for performance with my drive for competition. *I've got to give a better speech than the other guys so I can win first place*, I thought.

On the high school speech team, I became a speaking coach at the age of fifteen, helping the younger students improve their speaking skills: say it this way, don't say it that way, hold your hand like this.

I joined an improv comedy troupe and actually founded two different improv comedy troupes in university. We travelled across the United States. Improv comedy teaches you to be able to perform on your feet. As you can imagine, someone in the audience throws out a word, and you go right into it your act. You have to be funny on demand. You might be funny among friends, but when you are a speaker, it's more difficult because you don't have the luxury of banter to demonstrate your wit. As a speaker, you have to set up and knock

down your own jokes. There's always a setup and then a punch line. The setup is: where are we going with this, and the punchline is usually a hook. You actually plan the jokes.

On a side note, I studied humour, and it's actually an evolutionary survival tool to demonstrate to your mate or potential mate that you are intelligent. You can attract someone by laughing and playing, making jokes, understanding their jokes, and pointing out things that are funny and interesting.

Speaker tip: if you want to make money, you've got to be funny. Nobody needs a downer. People really don't want to be taught, either. They want to learn and be entertained.

I can clearly remember sitting on the couch watching an infomercial with motivational speaker guru Tony Robbins. I see this man, larger-than-life, commanding the attention and the admiration of stadiums full of people. All he's doing is pressing air through his lungs, vibrating his vocal cords to vibrate air molecules traveling into the ears of people listening, and their lives are being transformed. That's all we do as speakers: we're vibrating air with our throats and changing people's lives while doing so. It's like magic.

While watching Tony, I'm thinking about what happens when I share a couple of jokes with people. My words are changing their body chemistry: their dopamine is increasing, and their cortisol is decreasing. We're improving our relationship. We're bonding. And all I'm doing is talking. So, I'm watching how Tony is commanding the audience, and I say out loud to the TV, "How did you get there? How *do* you get there?" That's what I want to know.

I started to study the journey and the origins of famous speakers. I studied Brian Tracy, Jack Canfield, and Les Brown, among others. They are famous, and they command huge fees for speaking. They fill stadiums full of people. And then there are the speakers you have never heard of before. The tens or hundreds of thousands of people who are making great money, impacting their world in a big way. My guess is that you're in that group. I know I am. We are the best for the world that we've chosen to serve.

My mother was a teacher, and like most kids, I admired my parents. I hoped that I would be a teacher one day. One thing I learned growing up was that teachers don't make much money. My family was not poor, but money was always an issue. It was always tight. "Save it. Don't spend it." I wanted to break out of that mindset by becoming rich. Since I believed that teachers rarely become rich, I decided there's no way I could be a teacher. I thought I have to be a businessman or a stockbroker or something. Due to my naiveté, I thought stockbrokers have dollar bills coming out of briefcases and this was how rich people got rich. My dad always said I could do whatever I wanted when I grew up, as long as I was either a doctor or a lawyer or an engineer. My dad is an immigrant, and he wanted the best for his child, which was a safe and secure job.

When I told my parents that I wanted to be a speaker when I grew up, they said, "Well, I don't know if you're going to be able to make a living at that," and for about five years, I proved them right.

Since it was a struggle for me to make a living as a speaker, I treated it as a side hobby, a hustle that meant taking a day off work to go and give a speech. While running my actual business, I would land a speaking gig. This happened because of the business model I chose when I started out, which I would not recommend to any speaker. It's the get-paid-to-give-talks business model, or the speaker-fee driven business model. I'll explain how it worked.

First, though, I'm going back in time to tell you about how I grew my businesses. You see, in order to be a successful speaker you need to have a business, with sales, marketing, product (your speech), customer service, and a brand. It can't be a hobby (unpaid, for fun). To make the biggest impact you need to have a real business with customers and competitors.

I started half a dozen businesses before I was in my mid-twenties. I grew each of them by hosting events where I was the speaker. I would advertise and attract people with wine and cheese or cookies and hot chocolate. People would come to the event where I would give a presentation. I would tell the story of why me and why now and how I started this business. New customers would buy my products and services. This talent for speaking was my strength, driving business to my company for about eight years; however, I never really called myself a speaker until I was paid a speaker fee.

My first paid speech was for a twenty-five-dollar Starbucks gift card for speaking at a retirement home about conflict resolution before an audience of five people. I could not have been more proud of my first “paid” speaking engagement. But as you might imagine, you can’t pay rent with a Starbucks gift card.

For my first speaker business card, I had visited the websites of a dozen speakers and copied all of their topics, pasted them into two columns, and added my name. Majeed: Speaker on -topic -topic -topic -topic -topic. When someone asked me one day, “Can you speak on conflict management?” I looked at the back of my card and conflict management was not there (note to self: add conflict management to the list). I said, “Yes, I can speak about conflict management.” He said, “Great. I am the manager of a retirement home. The people in the east wing don’t like the people in the west wing, and they’re not getting along with each other in the cafeteria. Can you please come and give an inspirational talk on getting along?” And I said, “Well, of course I can.”

I was twenty-three years old. I came up with an idea to put two bags of tea in a Ziploc bag and I put together a bunch of these as my prop for the speech. I said to those who showed up: “There are two teabags in each Ziploc bag, one is for you and one is for your mortal enemy from the other side of the building. Your job is to have a cup of tea with someone who you don’t get along with. Just see how similar that person is to you.” That was some of what I said to the five people there. One of them was sleeping most of the time.

I gave that speech like I had a stadium full of people. I was roaring and shining and zipping around the cafeteria, sharing my views on conflict management and elderly residents getting along with each other. At the end, I got a few hand claps, a few coughs, and a twenty-five-dollar gift card to Starbucks. I could say I was a paid speaker then.

I made \$150 for my next paid speaking engagement, which was a half-day workshop on networking for new immigrants to Canada hosted by the Catholic Immigration Center. Networking was one of the topics on the back of my business card. You can imagine that three months later, one \$25 gift card plus one \$150 speaking engagement was not adding up to pay the bills.

Eventually, I was paid \$500 and then \$1,000 and \$2,000 to give a speech. My annual income went up each year from \$20,000 to \$40,000 to \$80,000 to \$140,000. The majority of my income was coming from consulting and coaching, not the speaking fees. But the speaking was the key to my success because it positioned me as an expert in front of my ideal clients.

I gradually made the connection that all of my clients (not half of them, not two-thirds, but every single one) signed up for coaching or consulting after hearing one of my speeches. Imagine the client experience of having a good first impression of seeing me speak. *Hey, here’s a guy who’s given a speech. He must be some sort of a leader, some sort of an expert, giving a speech.* Then, maybe the next step is they come up to me afterward and we have a conversation, or maybe they go home and go to my website. Later, my phone rings. They say, “Hey, I saw you speaking last week, we’ve got a project, I think you might be a pretty good fit for it.”

The right speech for the right audience will lead to consulting engagements, training engagements, coaching engagements, or any number of significant results for you personally and professionally.

This book is going to teach you how to design an integrated marketing strategy that will attract your ideal client every time you speak, and additionally, help you land those paid speaking engagements in the first place.

There came a point in time when I knew I had to pursue speaking as a career. I was working in a sales job where I was miserable, picking up the phone, cold calling, and saying, “Would you like some support with backing up your data and recovering your data?” Meanwhile, I was thinking, *I am meant for more than this; the data backup and recovery sales job is just not for me.* One day, we had this team meeting with the whole company of forty-five people, and I volunteered to give a speech. I remember that moment because it had been a year or so since I had done any speaking. I got in front of the whole company, and I told them about the sales process. First, we do this, and then we do that and that; I delivered it with passion. There I was, like Tony Robbins again, in a stadium, in front of my forty-five colleagues. While I was speaking, I was thinking, *I’ve got to be a speaker; I love doing this.* Afterward, people were shaking my hand, patting me on the back, and saying, “That was a great presentation.” And then I was given the greatest gift at the end of that week. I did not recognize it as a great gift at the time. I thought it was horrible. I got fired. I was fired because I shared my dreams and my vision with the owner of the company. He told me, “That is a great dream. Nothing about your dream has you selling data backup and recovery services for my company. So, I’m going to let you go.”

That’s how I was thrown into being a full-time speaker. I lost my job! At the time, I was embarrassed to have been fired and scared to be unemployed again. But this time, it was different. This time I knew I wanted to make it in the speaking business. So, I set out to figure out how to make money by speaking.

I attended a meeting of the Canadian Association of Professional Speakers (CAPS) which has a pre-qualifier that you have completed ten paid speaking engagements to become a member. That gave me a goal to get ten paid speaking engagements. I had my \$25 Starbucks gift card and they counted that one. I had my \$150 half-day training, and then I did a couple gigs here and there. At the time, I didn’t know the Rate Negotiation Formula™ that you’ll find in this book. The truth is that I failed many of those negotiations, which means I did not land the gig.

Finally, I got my ten paid speaking engagements, and I joined CAPS. I met with one of the senior guys who had been in the business for about twenty years. He took me out for coffee and gave me this advice: “Majeed, don’t quit your day job. No offense. Nothing wrong with you, not that you’re not a great speaker, you are a great speaker. What I’m telling you is this is a business that takes a long time.” He explained to me how speaker fees work. He said, “If you want to speak at the big conferences on the big stages, they book speakers twelve months in advance. That means, if you’re going to get the gig, they’re going to sign a contract with you to speak a year from now. So how are you making money in the next year?” I said, “I don’t know.” He said, “Exactly. Don’t quit your day job.” That was how he saw it, because he was using what I call the old business model for speaking.

The Old Business Model Is Get Paid to Speak

The New Business Model Is Speak to Get Paid

The first six years of my speaking career, I pursued speaking engagements that paid me a fee to deliver: keynotes, training, workshops. The income was inconsistent and marketing was anything but scientific. I had no idea what I was doing. I just knew that I liked to give speeches and I was good at it. I started getting better and better at landing speaking gigs. I started getting referrals and repeat business, and slowly my business took off.

What made the biggest shift in my business was when I started consciously thinking about attracting coaching, consulting, and training clients from the audience when I spoke. I believe this is the new, more sustainable model to succeed in the speaking business today.

To understand the change in tides in the speaking industry, you must understand the recent shift in how we gather and assimilate knowledge. Twenty or thirty years ago, information was not abundantly accessible, and people knew that to have the best information they needed to pay for it. They were flying to attend conferences where good money was being paid for an expert to come out and share the latest and greatest information. Today, information is still very important but now we all have instantaneous access on our phones. There is no lack of information. Now we need someone to help us integrate it all, to curate and facilitate the knowledge and the learning of that information. This change explains why we now have an increase in the number of coaches whereas twenty years ago, there were few.

For event planners, the problem used to be figuring out how to get the latest, greatest information to satisfy their conference delegates and attendees. And without the marketing channels then that we have today, it used to be only local events you heard about. Now we know about events going on in Europe, in Asia, and all across North America.

The new problem for the event planner is how to get attendees to their events with so many happening all around the world. There's a different kind of paid speaker, a celebrity. Celebrities are getting all of the speaker fees because so many event planners are turning to this thinking: *I will get a celebrity to come to my event, and everyone will come because they've seen them on TV and they'll want to get their picture with the celebrity.* For noncelebrity speakers, the fees are few. There are still some expert speakers being paid, but you need to add something to your expertise, which is performance. Be an entertaining, engaging, funny expert.

The one thing you have over the celebrity is other ways to monetize your message (i.e., your products and services). The celebrity might get \$50,000 to give a speech, and you might speak on that same stage for free and make \$100,000 because you have a \$10,000 coaching package that ten people in the audience decide to buy. That's a big opportunity!

Even though I had joined CAPS, speaking was still the side hustle for me. Yes, I was getting my clients for coaching, consulting, and training from the audience, but I had no idea if it was working well, or if I was doing it right. I started making offers, and people were buying. I tested different systems and learned from a handful of great sales speakers who have gone before me and laid a path for me, including Steve Lowell, Lisa Sasevich, Pete Vargas, and Dan Kennedy.

The event that galvanized me to master the craft of getting clients from speeches was when I bombed a sales pitch from the stage. I got a call from Geneva Group International (GGI). It is based in Switzerland and was having its conference in New Orleans, Louisiana. The people I spoke to said, "We would like you to be our keynote speaker." They said they had found me on YouTube. "Amazing, yes, of course, I'll be your keynote speaker," I agreed. They paid me \$5,000, and I negotiated a flight for myself, my wife, and our three-month-old baby. Soon enough, I was speaking in front of accountants and lawyers who managed high-net-worth clients.

What Does a Bad Pitch from Stage Look Like?

The organizer of the event said it was not really appropriate to make a pitch, but I ignored his advice (I was eager, young, and foolish and had no idea how to make a pitch from stage). I said, “I won’t be pushy. I’ll just make a quick, easy invitation.” I did this whole cheesy internet marketing thing where I said: “I’m going to give you this, that’s worth \$100,000, and I’m going to give you that, worth \$50,000, and now I’ll give you that and a bonus. The whole value is \$250,000, and when you sign up today it’s only—” (then I clicked for the screen to change and boom) “—\$5,000.”

I immediately heard people laughing. But it was not a joke. It was not a punch line. They were laughing at me.

I didn’t really know what to do. I thought, *Aren’t people supposed to be running to the back of the room?* Then I looked over at my client, the event planner, and his face said it all. *Dude, you screwed up.* No standing ovation. I wished I had a time machine to teleport me out of there and back to the beginning of my speech. Nobody bought the package; nobody called me. It was a total fail, and I ruined my relationship with my client.

That day was a turning point for me. I decided, *I am going to master the art of the classy offer from the stage. I am going to get so good at sharing a valuable, entertaining, useful speech that people in the audience who are looking for some help will say, thank you, and they will want to buy and feel lucky to buy. They will feel like the invitation was the most generous thing I could have done from the stage.* They will say, “This is exactly what I need right now.”

Fewer Topics, More Money

What is the transition like from being the everything speaker to being more focused? It can be a struggle when you feel like you have lots of good content and want to help lots of people. It’s like you have something for nonprofits and something for profits and something for entrepreneurs and something for the kids, too. If you browse the Wayback Machine, you can see my old website. There were three boxes on it: Entrepreneurs, Corporate, and Youth. That was my way to organize my content from a bulleted list to grouping topics into three categories. Little did I know that I was still a commodity speaker because I would still speak to everyone about everything. My messaging was distracting to the other two audiences because while I’m speaking to one, the other two are not resonating. For example, the words *entrepreneurship* and *freedom* should not be spoken inside the walls of a corporation. They have their own words, *leadership* and *autonomy*, and their own language, *intrapreneur*. While it was inspiring to share my story of entrepreneurship—starting a snow cone business at sixteen—to motivate my youth audience, it was a liability to share this same story with employees at a Fortune 500 company. What I’d hear from corporate CEOs is “We don’t want you to inspire our audience to quit their jobs and start a snow cone business.”

Trying to re-create a similar speech for three audiences is really a challenge and maybe impossible. If you ever want to resonate among all three, start by connecting with one group, then add another, and then another.

Choose One Ideal Client You Want to Serve

“I can’t sleep the night before my event,” my friend, book publisher, and future client Angela Lauria, of the Author Incubator, said to me at 11:00 p.m. the night before she was about to deliver her signature event. Angela doesn’t consider herself a public speaker. She says she’s more of an introvert, book lover, and avid indoors woman. But she runs a world-class

marketing training for her authors, she runs a group coaching program, and she speaks to larger and larger audiences on how to make a difference with a book. Her training was very good, and she hired me to make it even better.

Within two months of working together, she doubled her closing rate from 40 percent to 80 percent, resulting in \$390,000 additional revenue. And, best of all, she was sleeping well before her events!

Angela became my new ideal client because she paid well, did the work, got great results, and (on many occasions) told me I should raise my prices. Who is your ideal client and how will you apply your gifts to make their dreams come true?

I worked with Angela for a year to combine the craft of storytelling, public speaking, sales, and entrepreneurship. At the time, I offered training programs to small businesses focused on entrepreneurship, sales, and public speaking, but I had never combined all of them. Harmonizing these topics are what created my company, Expert Speaker. I combined sales and speaking to offer sales training *for* speakers who are entrepreneurs. I do speech training *for* entrepreneurs who sell their services. That is focusing on a niche. I combined multiple skillsets to serve the audience at the intersection of my skills and experiences. Where do your skill sets intersect to serve your ideal client?

I did a training called “How to Make Money Speaking for Health Care Providers.” It’s the same training as my “How to Make Money Speaking for Entrepreneurs.” No matter if you were a healthcare provider or an entrepreneur, you would think, *This speech is for me*. Here’s another example.

Let’s say you’re an expert in sales. You’re competing against every sales coach, like Tony Robbins and Brian Tracy. Now, let’s say you’re a sales trainer for financial advisors. Guess what: now your competition just went from everybody to a handful of people. However, just because you’re a sales trainer for financial advisors, you can still work with anyone who could benefit from your message (e.g., lawyers, accountants, dentists, etc.) although you market your brand to your niche. Now, let’s say you’re a sales trainer for financial advisors who use the telephone for sales. Now you’re really an expert, and you’re the best in the world.

Experts Focus

My path to focus went like this: “I’ll speak about everything to everyone” to “I’ll speak to these three groups” (I had two or three topics for each group). Now, I’ve created the one customer avatar and every speech I give I’m talking directly to her. Chances are good that you are my ideal customer if you are running your own business and want to be making more money (profit) and speaking more often. Right? I’ve taken everything I know and applied it to my ideal customer and her current situation.

This is what I combined to find my focus:

- My ability to share my message on a stage and get paid to do it
- My knowledge of how to start and grow a business
- My understanding of marketing, sales, and networking, and how to apply them

From a business model perspective, what I have learned that has transformed my life is to sell one thing and use one way to generate leads and one way to convert those leads to clients. Sell your customers one thing, and if they want to take the next step, sell them the next thing. That’s it. This structure has given me the simplicity and the freedom to say, “I don’t do these other things because this is the one thing.” Focus equals expert. This is my expertise.

Speeches are my tactic for generating leads. I give speeches to audiences of entrepreneurs like you. My speeches turn into appointments on my calendar and then strategy calls, and all the while, I am selling only one thing: my signature program for entrepreneurs called Expert Speaker Live. You can apply to become a certified expert speaker and grow your business with speaking by visiting www.expertspeaker.com/apply.

Speak Directly to the Buyer

When you sell to an organization, you're often speaking to an audience that is not the buyer. Your ideal client is the leader of the organization. You may have the opportunity to speak to the employees of that organization, perhaps two hundred people. You can say to them, "If you're interested, you can do my energy quiz, and I'll personally give you the results," although the effectiveness as a strategy may be low. It is unlikely that the employees will do the energy quiz, and they will be even less likely to buy a \$5,000 program. However, if you are paid \$3,000 by the organization to deliver your ninety-minute speech, now you have the leader wanting to bring you in for a training program to help the organization thrive. You begin as a hired keynote speaker brought in to inspire the employees, and you connect with those high-paying clients. You are talking to an audience while you are satisfying the client. Keep in mind that the person who hired you to speak can likely rehire you, and they probably know other people who have budgets for speakers.

Summary

- A speaker's lifestyle is spending 98 percent of your time on all the things that have to happen to get you on that stage. If you're lucky, 2 percent of your life is actually on the stage as a speaker.
- As a speaker, you have to set up and knock down your own jokes.
- Speaker tip: if you want to make money, you've got to be funny. Nobody needs a downer. People really don't want to be taught, either; they want to be entertained.
- That's all we do as speakers, we're vibrating air with our throats and changing people's lives while doing so.
- To make the biggest impact, you need to have a real business with customers and competitors.
- The majority of my revenue was coming from consulting and coaching, not the speaking fees.
- The right speech for the right audience will lead to consulting engagements, training engagements, coaching engagements, or any number of significant results for you personally and professionally.
- The old business model is getting paid to speak and the new business model is speaking to get paid
- What made the biggest shift in my business was when I started consciously thinking about attracting coaching, consulting, and training clients from the audience when I spoke.
- Be an entertaining, engaging, funny expert.
- Focus: Fewer Topics, More Money
- Sell your customers one thing, and if they want to take the next step, sell them the next thing.

Chapter 3

From Pain Island to Pleasure Island: The Process

I'm going to tell you about the process to get from where you are, which is a place I call Pain Island – where you're in pain and you're suffering – to the place you can see in the distance, the most gorgeous Pleasure Island. You want to get there. I've been on Pain Island too, and I spent way too long on Pain Island. I got to Pleasure Island, and I'm living there now; it's nice. I actually have a boat that's leaving today from Pain Island and heading to Pleasure Island, and you can get on that boat. I will share with you exactly how to get on that boat.

If you're like most of my clients, your Pain Island is that you know you could be a great speaker, you know you have a message to share, and you know that it could be you on those stages getting standing ovations and truly serving people with your speech. But you don't know where to start to get speaking gigs and even if you did, you don't have time to do anything about it because you're busy managing all the things you manage every day as an entrepreneur. If you ever do get asked to speak, you don't know what to charge, you don't know how to negotiate your fee, and you don't know how to leverage the speaking opportunity to attract clients and land more profitable speaking gigs.

Your Pleasure Island view probably looks like this: You are getting requests to speak at exotic locations and cool conferences that you would love to attend anyway, and as a speaker, you get to go for free as a VIP and get paid to speak. You have a waiting list of ideal clients because every time you give a speech you get a ton of ideal clients wanting to hire you. Your calendar is pleasantly full with speaking engagements, travel, and client opportunities. You've also designed a great lifestyle doing the things you love while sharing your gift with the world. Best of all, you have a marketing machine in place booking you more and more speaking gigs with minimal effort from you.

Your journey from Pain Island to Pleasure Island is what this book is all about. Here are the steps to becoming a highly profitable expert speaker:

Step One: Define Your Audience

Step Two: Create Your Offer

Step Three: Craft Your Speech

Step Four: Win Stages – Speaker Fees and the Power of the Free Speech

Step Five: Monetize Your Message

Chapter 4

Step One: Define Your Audience

One of the challenges speakers face is a lack of clarity about who the audience is for their message. The process of getting paid as a speaker starts with you choosing your audience. What should I title my speech? The answer: Who is the audience? Where should I speak? The answer: Who is the audience?

This is a mistake that I made early on in my career when everyone said, “All the money’s in corporate.” For me, the problem was that I had no experience or love for the corporate world. I didn’t know what it was like in there. I wasn’t feeling called to take these big brands and work with their people, but for a while, I pursued it because someone said that’s where the money is. Your audience is entirely your choice. I would not recommend choosing your audience based on where you think the money is.

Define Your Audience Before You Build a Speech

“I’m not ready to book a gig, because I haven’t built my speech yet” is the hardest speech to build because it’s like I’m going to build a perfect speech for an audience and I don’t know who that audience is yet. Don’t get caught up in building a speech when you don’t actually have a gig booked. Book yourself a stage first because it will force you to define the audience, and it will force you to create a speech for that audience.

Let’s get you booked on a stage.

Where should you speak? “Everywhere and for everyone” is not ideal; in fact, if you tell me, “I have a message that would apply to everybody, and I could literally speak anywhere,” it will be the hardest speech for me to help you write.

Instead of thinking about all the places you could speak, think about the one place that would be the perfect place for you to speak, which is a theater full of clones of your ideal client, at the events where your ideal client would attend.

I recommend considering who you would like to serve for the next five years. Consider your ideal clients. Would you welcome them to your house for dinner? Do you actually care about them and their well-being? The people who you feel called to serve are going to be your audience members, your clients. Those are your people, and they are who you will find at events where you’re going to speak. Who are your people? Begin with the demographic, psychographic range you have in mind; for example, “I want to work with women between the ages of thirty and fifty who would identify as spiritual” and go from that demographic section of the population to a specific person. You can call this person an avatar and give her a name.

The easy way to do this is to choose a real person as your ideal client. Let’s call the woman in this example Lucy. When you have any questions, you can call her and say, “Hey, Lucy, when you’re struggling with this problem, what are some of the thoughts that you have?” You can make up a person and still give her or him a name. Lucy has an exact age; rather than being between forty and fifty, she is forty-seven. Who is your person? How would she or he fill in these details?

- Do they drive a car or not? What kind of car?
- Are they more into walking and taking the subway because they live downtown?

- What do they get at the grocery store? Are they a packaged-food/microwave-food kind of person, or are they all produce and organic?
- Do they shop at the health food store, or do they shop at the big box store?
- Do they buy all their groceries for two weeks and fill the trunk? Or are they more of a run-out-in-the-middle-of-cooking-dinner-grab-a-spice-and-come-back kind of shopper?
- What kind of shampoo do they use?
- Do they wear makeup or not?
- Do they wear perfume or not?
- What kind of music do they listen to?

Give yourself permission to have absolute certainty of all the details. If you said, “Okay, my ideal client is listening to a song. What are they listening to?” You know the answer. The answer is not “I don’t know,” the answer is “Lucy listens to new country.” I’ve decided that’s true now. Lucy may surprise me and be a gangsta rap kind of person, but the point is that this is going to make writing your speech easy. This is going to make answering the question “Where should I speak?” easy because you will speak where Lucy exists. The top ten questions or challenges that Lucy has will form the content of your speech.

Find your Lucy and ask her, “What events are you attending this year?” When she tells you the answer, you say, “Great, those are the events that I’m going to speak at, events like that.”

“Are you a member of an association, Lucy?” “Yeah, I’m actually a member of three different associations.” “Perfect. Who would I talk to at those associations to be a speaker for one of their events?”

The name of the game is getting in front of your people because your message and your speech may be brilliant, but it won’t resonate when you are somewhere else rather than in front of your ideal client.

Here’s a very powerful empathy exercise for your ideal client.

Imagine your ideal client in his or her work environment. Maybe they’re working from home or maybe they’re working in an office. What does their work environment look like? What are some of the things on their desk? What kind of computer do they have? What kind of phone? Is their desk cluttered, or is it neat? What’s proudly displayed on the walls? Is there a door on the office or is it an open office with lots of people? Is it quiet or is there music playing?

Have a look at your ideal client’s computer screen and look at what’s on the screen. Are they reading the news? Are they playing Tetris or solitaire? Do they have their email open? What kind of emails are they getting? What’s on their calendar for today? What kind of plans do they have for the weekend? Imagine what it’s like to be them. How do they think about the problem you solve?

They are thinking, *I need a solution. I need to solve this problem.* They go to their laptop and they type into Google, *How do I [solve this problem]?* And then they find you online. They see a video of you and watch it, and they’re thinking, *Finally, someone who gets it. I need to talk to this person, I want to work with that person.* When they see you, what are the thoughts that they have?

You must be able to feel what it’s like to be your client struggling with their problem, finding you, and asking you to solve the problem.

As a speaker, your client is the person in charge of choosing which speaker will speak to the audience. Your client is your event planner. You want them to choose you!

Inside the Mind of the Event Planner

Let's take a minute to think about your event planner. This is the person who is organizing the event where you're going to speak. The event can be a conference, a weekly meeting, a tele-summit, a webinar or a podcast. The event planner says to you, "I want to bring you in to speak because having you speak at my event is going to be good for me." Here's what your event planner wants:

- The audience to say thank you for bringing that brilliant speaker.
- More people to come to their event because you are the speaker
- Their life to be easy because working with you is easy!

The event planner has a lot to deal with and your job is to make their life easier. If they have a budget, they have a boss. They work in an organization that gives out a budget once a year that comes in the form of an Excel file spreadsheet with a category and a number. Their job is to find ways to spend all that money. This is a very different mindset than that of a business owner, whose job is to keep their money.

You are going to be the person who helps them distribute their money while at the same time executing their strategy, which is called make the boss happy so that they can keep their job. They like their job, they want to keep their job. Here is a question you can ask the event planner: "What could happen in the course of us working together to get your boss to say that bringing me in to speak was the best decision you ever made?"

That's a very interesting question for an employee. They are imagining hiring you, and you doing an awesome job. You can step up the visualization: "Imagine your boss is walking down the hall and when he gets to your office door he looks in and says, *Hey, hiring Majeed was the best thing you've done all year.*" Now they are picturing the boss walking and then looking in the office door. The idea is to have them imagine the ideal scenario of hiring you. It's amazing. Boss is happy.

We have a client, Komal Minhas, who does an amazing video blog (<http://www.komalminhas.com/>), and she's got thousands of subscribers. She says, "When I speak at your event, I will do a video blog about your event. I'll show behind the scenes, and I'll interview you." The event planner says, "Hey, that's great marketing," and in the months leading up to the event, this client will also promote the fact that she's going to be there, which means her followers will show up. This helps to calm every event planner's number one fear: that nobody shows up to the event.

Get into the mind of the event planner.

Meet Valerie Bordain, the Funeral Whisperer.

Valerie Bordain is one of my favorite examples of a client success story. She speaks on a topic that's difficult to book for conferences, and yet she's being paid \$10,000 a speech. Here's how. She is the Funeral Whisperer. We came up with that name for her. She has a sad story. Her daughter, husband, and father all died within a three-year period. For each one, emotionally it was like she was getting hit by a bus. She learned personally that in the first twenty-four hours after a loved one dies, you have 150 decisions to make. And it turns out that's the worst time to be making those decisions because you want to do anything but make important decisions like that.

- What kind of coffin?

- What kind of flowers?
- What kind of snacks and catering?
- What kind of venue and when?
- What to say in the obituary?
- Has everyone been notified?

Valerie's in the stationery business. She creates letterheads for businesses and wedding invitations. Naturally, she said, "Of course, I'm going to have stationery for my funerals." She made beautiful stationery for these funerals, and it was a therapeutic process for her. After the third death, she realized that she's actually really good at doing the stationery for funerals, and other people noticed as well. They would say, "Well, I want you to do stationery for my funeral." Now this is her specialty.

Here's how she tells her story. For a speaking gig, she will call up a funeral home and say, "I would like to give a talk at your funeral home. I don't charge a fee for the service. I just would ask you to help me promote it. So, if you have some social media, if you have an email list or client list or if we can take an ad in the paper, we could put your logo in it. Let's get a bunch of people to come to your funeral home to hear from me, the Funeral Whisperer, with my free talk called '150 Decisions You Have to Make in the First 24 Hours of the Death of a Loved One.'"

She fills the room by using traditional promotion, Kijiji, Craigslist, Facebook, and a classified ad in the local newspaper "Free talk at Johnson Funeral home: 150 Decisions You Have to Make in the First 24 Hours of the Death of a Loved One" with "Funeral Whisperer" at the top. It's an hour. It's free. They get forty people to show up, and then she says, "If you're here with a loved one tonight, or, if you know a loved one who might be thinking that passing on is coming soon, or you just don't want to be caught by surprise, you want to be prepared, then you need to know the 150 decisions, and I have prepared for you a gorgeous binder." Of course, it's a beautiful presentation from her stationery business. The guide takes you through all the steps in a thoughtful way that's designed for you to sit down with your loved one, answer all the questions, and have that done. Then you are actually at peace for the day that comes, with all those decisions already made. You can go to a lawyer and spend thousands of dollars on a will, and you still won't have those decisions made. This is only \$500. Half the room buys. Forty people arrive and twenty of them leave with a gorgeous binder at \$500 each, and she makes \$10,000.

The funeral home loves it, it is free promotion for their service. Afterward, all of the people who attend, including those who are there for the first time, go to the director and say, "Thank you for bringing Valerie, the Funeral Whisperer. That was really helpful, and now I have this great resource that is going to help me get all these questions answered. Thank you so much." Of course, Valerie's speech is designed to help them realize the importance of making these 150 decisions for somebody, or themselves, and "here's your opportunity to do it right now."

Valerie loves it, because she gets to share her message. She's deeply committed to this mission of helping people have a much more peaceful experience with funerals, and she gets a ton of business for her stationery company because those forty people are thinking, *I'm getting Valerie to do our stationery*. If Valerie wants a speaking engagement, she picks up the phone and calls a funeral home to offer her signature talk for free and then walks away with thousands of dollars in sales. Everybody wins, and she gets to share her message in the process.

Summary

- Your audience is entirely your choice.
- Do not choose your audience based on where you think the money is.
- Define your audience before you build a speech
- If you tell me, “I have a message that would apply to everybody, and I could literally speak anywhere,” it will be the hardest speech for me to help you write.
- Instead of thinking about all the places you could speak, think about the one place that would be the perfect place for you to speak.
- Consider your ideal client: Who would you like to serve for the next five years?
- Create an avatar of your ideal client and give them a name.
- The top ten questions or challenges that your ideal client has will form the content of your speech.
- You must be able to feel what it’s like to be your client struggling with their problem, finding you, and asking you to solve the problem.
- Get into the mind of the event planner.

Chapter 5

Step Two: Create Your Offer

To win stages, we are going to create your offer before we craft your speech or your campaign. The ideal outcome is your business grows from the speaking lifestyle that you created. You will be getting a lot of clients. And I want you to have clarity on what you are selling or, put another way, clarity on what your clients are buying.

When you imagine giving a speech, imagine delivering it to a theater or a stadium full of clones of your ideal client. One mind, one thinking process. Let's say that out of all the people in the audience, there are five who are going to hire you. Your speech is for those five people and the other ninety-five people are going to laugh and be entertained while learning a few things. So really, you are talking to those five people because they are going to come up to you afterward and say, "You're brilliant. I have got to hire you."

How do you determine what your ideal client wants to buy from you?

Remember that they're suffering. They're struggling with this problem, and they're looking for answers on Google.

Here's a list of what my ideal client wants from me.

- Speaking gigs
- A calendar comfortably full of paid speaking gigs
- A killer talk that can easily get bookings and simultaneously attract ideal clients
- A great speech title, description, and bio that sells

My service gets you from where you are to where you want to be. Just like your service does for your client. Right? It doesn't matter *how* we get from point A to point B. It matters that we get to point B quickly and easily.

Define the result that your ideal client wants and let them know you can get them that result. That's all that matters. Avoid making the mistake that most people make with their offers. They too often focus on the logistics of the delivery of the offer.

"It's my twelve-week course."

"We have two meetings a week."

Nobody wants to buy twelve weeks, two meetings, six modules, or forty-seven pages, which are the *logistics* of your solution. Focus on the *results* of your solution, "Lose Twenty Pounds," "Fall in Love with the Man of your Dreams," "Attract Your Soulmate," "Become a Certified Kettlebell Trainer."

Think about your ideal client and how you're going to make your offer. You may choose to make an offer in your presentation that audience members can easily buy on the spot. For example, you can pass around order forms for them to fill out and submit to make their purchase. Or, while they are watching your webinar, they can make a purchase online.

You may prefer to have a conversation with your client before they buy, in which case your call to action is to set an appointment for a conversation with you. Then you can be sure they are a good fit for your services, and you can answer all of their questions in a private setting. I prefer this method because I am very selective about who I work with and I only work with a few people at a time. By the way, if you think you and I would work well together, and you'd like my help becoming an Expert Speaker, you can book a one-on-one strategy session with me at www.expertspeaker.com/apply.

You may be thinking, “What if I’m not allowed to sell to the audience I’m speaking to?” If you are ever in a speaking situation where the event planner says to you, “No selling” or “No pitching,” then instead, give them something. Give them a free one-on-one strategy session. Give them a PDF download. Give them a copy of your book. Just be sure to get their contact information so you can follow up.

I failed in New Orleans by trying to pitch the audience on the spot. I should have offered people the opportunity to follow up and have a conversation with me, instead of saying, “For you tonight, \$5,000 and while supplies last.” I learned my lesson the hard way.

When preparing your irresistible offer, get clear on:

- What product or program are you going to offer?
- What is the result they are going to get from working with you?
- What is the price?

It’s essential to have clarity on these details because we’re going to build a speech that gets them thinking, *I have to buy that thing*. If we don’t know what that thing is or what that next step is, we’re going to build a different kind of speech. What they are buying is the result, which means that it is less important to them than how (if it’s twelve weeks or eight weeks or six weeks or one week or online or offline), which is why you would only briefly mention those details when you’re making an offer. Even though it may not be prominent in your speech or your offer, you should be clear on the price and logistics of your offer when you are building your talk.

Here is a timely tip on how to manage the question how can people contact you. The most common response is that they can reach you via a website or email address. When you have absolute clarity on the right next step for your ideal client, you say, “They can apply to work with me at this website or they can go to this website and sign up for my course, ‘Find Your Soulmate.’”

Imagine the buying journey of your ideal client. Think of all the ways they can find you or your video on the internet or wander into your breakout session at a conference. Whatever way your client discovers you, once they hear you speak, their thought process will follow this path:

- Hey, this is relevant to me.
- I’m struggling with this right now.
- She is actually pretty funny.
- She’s got some good points.
- She’s helped a lot of people with the same problem that I’m struggling with right now.
- She could help me
- I’m going to work with her. That’s it. I’m working with her.

They go from never hearing of you; to starting to like, know, and trust you from the stories that you tell; to deciding, *Now is the time that I’m going to solve this problem once and for all. I’m going to settle it with that person right there because she’s amazing*. And then they buy from you.

Make their journey as simple and easy as possible with the fewest number of steps in the shortest amount of time. This could all be happening at a ten-minute talk. You want to

present the next step in the buying process in your call to action at the end of your speech, whether it's to schedule a meeting, arrange a strategy call, or purchase your course or book.

This is what I used to do at Rotary Clubs. I made thousands of dollars at Rotary Clubs selling my online course on networking. Every Rotary Club meets once a week, and there's a volunteer who's in charge of bringing in the guest speaker. Oftentimes, they don't even know who the guest speaker will be in two weeks, and they may not have a guest speaker this week because they couldn't find one. Remember, it's a volunteer, so there's not a lot of research or evaluating speaker websites and making people apply. She's simply glad: "You'll speak? Great!" So, I would give a canned talk, meaning, the same talk every time, for fifteen minutes, called "How to Introduce Yourself, How to Shake Hands, and How to Have Eye Contact."

I'd say, "Raise your hand if you thought that was valuable today. Yes? Great. How would you like to have more?" And usually there would be a positive response, so I would say, "We only have fifteen minutes today, but I've got four hours of actionable tips and strategies that I sell on my website at \$500 that you can check out anytime. But because I'm here, and because you guys are in Rotary Club and I appreciate you, I'm offering the material for only \$300. I'm passing out a piece of paper now. Write your credit card number down. Here's my guarantee, if you don't absolutely love the course there is a 100 percent money back guarantee. I want you to have it. I want you to learn from it. See the number 500 on your form? Cross that off and write the number 300. Just write down your credit card number, expiration date, and your postal code, that's the information I need to process it."

I collect all the forms and then everyone leaves the room. I pull out my cell phone and I process the payments on my cell phone: \$300, \$300, \$300, \$300. And I make \$1,500 or \$2,100 at each Rotary Club, speaking at another one the next week and the week after that.

Free speeches, making thousands. So, that's the offer and that's the logical next step after you just learned how to shake hands, make eye contact, and introduce yourself. You're going to also want to know:

- The three questions you have got to ask at every coffee meeting
- How to enter a room with confidence
- What to wear and what not to wear when you go out networking
- More, and that's all in my course

By the way, all of my clients now get a free copy of this course. If you're a speaker, you must create a course. For you, your offer may be your course, or it could be your services, or it could be a coaching or a consulting contract.

When I am speaking to an audience of people who are not my ideal clients, these people may be the ones who can generate referrals for me. You can say to the audience, "You probably know somebody who is going through this challenge right now. If you do know someone who has this situation, right now, who would it be? Okay, is that person in your mind?" They're going through their mind, finding the person. "Okay, you have that person in your mind and you can see their face. Now, imagine them in this situation." You tell the story. Then you say, "How do you think that person's life would change if they met someone like me? How do you think their life would be different if we went through the same steps that I just showed you with this story? Imagine the person you thought of, imagine them being completely done with this pain. Imagine them living over here on Pleasure Island.

You know, if you made the introduction to me for that person they would be quite grateful to you, wouldn't they? I'd be grateful to you, too, because my mission, my purpose

that I live for, that I wake up in the morning for, is to help people like your friend, the one who came to your mind.”

Then you pass around pieces of paper, and you say, “Write down the name of the person who I can be of service to, with their phone number and their email, and I’ll reach out to them and offer them something for free, a free consultation by phone, or I’ll send them a free helpful tips PDF,” something that will be really easy for them to say, “Yes, sure, I’d be happy if you gave my friend a call or email with a gift.”

That’s how you garner referrals for your ideal client when she is not in the audience.

Summary

- When you imagine giving a speech, imagine delivering it to a theater or a stadium full of clones of your ideal client.
- Rather than focus on the logistics of your solution, focus on the results of your solution.
- Build a speech that gets them thinking, I have to buy that thing.
- Imagine the buying journey of your ideal client. Think of all the ways they can find you.
- Make their journey as simple and easy as possible with the fewest number of steps in the shortest amount of time.
- Use effective questioning to get the audience to raise hands.
- Ask for referrals.

Chapter 6

Step Three: Craft Your Speech

When you think of the top ten questions that you would ask your ideal client, the answers to those questions will be the content for your speech.

Storytelling Secrets

Great speakers all have one thing in common: they tell stories. What makes a good story? Paint the scene, use the present tense, and use dialogue.

“So, here I am, the sun is just coming over the Pyrenees Mountains on the border of France and Spain. It is five o’clock in the morning. I am hiking at dawn. And I’m standing here looking at the dew glistening on the purple flowers in the grassy field, thinking to myself, *now this is a hike*. I go down the path alone, got my walking stick, my backpack. I turn the corner and there, standing in front of me, is a black bull, steam coming out of his nostrils, horns pointed straight at me. He bends down, looks like he’s about to charge, and I see my life flash before my eyes. I think, *I knew I shouldn’t have gone on this hike alone* and then ... the bull starts to eat grass. And I go, *Well, that was a bit of an overreaction, essentially this is just a cow with horns, eating. I thought it was a bull!* So, I slowly walk by this beast that is as big as a car, and when I am at a safe distance, I look back to see a little old Spanish man walking along, who isn’t even noticing the bull, just walks right by him. I say, “No tiene miedo, señor?” which is, “You’re not scared, sir?” He replies, “Es solo una vaca” he says. “It’s just a cow.” And that made me realize so many things in life. I look at it and think that’s a scary bull and it’s going to kill me. Really, it’s just a cow, eating grass.”

Paint the scene in present tense and include dialogue.

I painted a picture. When I tell a story, it should be impossible for you to see anything but your version of my story. I can start the story projector in your mind by using the words “you know how” as in, you know how ... when you walk down the street and you hear the birds chirping, you see the green grass and you think, *Man, this is a beautiful day*. You know how ...

I spoke in present tense. There I am. I’m standing. I see the bull, he’s looking right at me, even though this happened in 2006. If I use past tense, then I’m telling the story about a thing that happened. When I use present tense, I’m in there and you’re in there with me. In fact, you’re not seeing me standing in front of the bull, you’re seeing *you* standing in front of the bull, because that’s what a good story is; you’re in the perspective of the storyteller. You can see it.

I used dialogue in my own internal thought and I used the dialogue in talking to a little old man.

Tell stories. It makes you unforgettable.

If I speak in abstract concepts like “balance your portfolio” and “optimize your return on investment,” what do you see? You might see a graph or a pie chart, or you might see a balanced portfolio. But if I say “make the investments, so you can stick cash in your pocket, every single month,” now you can picture something that is motivating you.

If a financial advisor says, “I come to your house, I sit down at your kitchen table, and I go through your bills with you, page by page.” That’s better than “I work with you directly on understanding your bills and invoices.”

Don't just tell it. Show it with a story.

Instead of saying, "I'm making you more money," which is just an abstract concept, we prefer "getting you money that you need to buy the things you want like a house or boat or vacation to the Bahamas." Now you see a house, a boat, a vacation, the Bahamas. An abstract concept like money is now more concrete, individual, memorable. That's why stories are important.

To Speak More, Speak More

This was the mantra on my vision board for years: to speak more, speak more. If you want to be a speaker, then speak more. Any time you have the opportunity to take the stage you jump on that stage and ask questions later. Any time you hear of a call for speakers, you're applying. Right here, right now, I'm going to give you the secret backstage way of getting speeches, so that all the other people who are applying say, "Hey, that's not fair." And you say, "Well, I read *Become a Highly-paid Speaker*. So maybe you should have got a copy."

Where do you want to speak? You can take ten minutes today and say, "I'm going to make a list of all the places where I want to speak." Maybe they are conferences that you've attended in the past, because sometimes your ideal client is just like you from three years ago. So, think about the places where you have attended where you would want to hear a speaker like you with your message.

Events where you want to speak are likely events your ideal client is currently attending. You can Google associations of people you want to work with or go to Meetup.com and find dozens and hundreds of regular meetings of the kind of people who would be receptive to your message. Online meetings, webinars, podcasts. Make a list with focus, because if you say, "I'll speak anywhere and people will discover me," you'll be occasionally delighted and mostly disappointed. If you say, "This is a list of places, and I'm going to reach out to ten of them every week," you'll find you start landing gigs systematically. I'm going to show you the steps of what that looks like.

When you market your speech or you market your services as a speaker, there are three points of data that people are looking at: the title, the description, and the bio.

The event planner or the Lunch and Learn organizer will ask you, who are you and what do you talk about? That is answered in your title, description and bio. People try to get cute and clever with these things, like I did at one time. I was in this business incubator called Invest Ottawa. "Your Network Is Your Net Worth" was the title of my networking speech. It was my monthly speech, and I had a description. It was about learning how to shake hands, make eye contact, introduce yourself, and follow up with people. I got a decent turnout of about fifteen to twenty people. Then I changed two things: I changed the title, and it became the most popular training that they have every month. They had to bring in extra tables and chairs, because there was standing room only, even though I did not change one word of the speech. The people who registered and showed up for the speech hadn't heard the speech. They had only seen the title and the description. What did I do?

I used the three-letter word *for* so that people think, *Oh, that's for me*. The old title was "Your Network Is Your Net Worth." The new title was "Networking for People Who Hate Networking." The new title was a hit! It explained both what it is and who it is for.

Look for how you can tweak your topic. Your title needs to appeal to your audience. The audience needs to read that title and think, *Oh, that's what I need*.

I have a client. Her name is Onna, and she is a functional medicine doctor. She helps high-performance employees maintain their high performance to avoid burnout. But that's not how she would have described it prior to working with me. She goes into high-performing companies like Google and Facebook where they're spending six figures plus per employee – very expensive employees, very high-performing, special people. The title of her talk was “The Five Steps to Get Rid of Irritable Bowel Syndrome.” For anyone showing up to that meeting it would be like, *I have irritable bowel syndrome*. It's not a fun one to show up for, right?

Nobody was showing up for those meetings, even though that's their problem. They have irritable bowel syndrome and she knows that. These high-performing, overworked people get irritable bowel syndrome; then they get really tired, and they burn out. So, she changed the title to “How to Have a High-Performing Passionate Work Life without Burning Out.” Suddenly everybody shows up. Now that Onna has people showing up she can tell them about irritable bowel syndrome. So, the title and description are for the audience member to say, *Oh, that's exactly what I need, because that feels like the solution to my biggest current problem*. That's how you title your speech.

Your bio should position you as the obvious best person to give that speech. Your bio is not a résumé or a LinkedIn profile. It's not where you went to school or your certifications or all the jobs you have had and that you live by a river with two kids and a dog *and you love chocolate*.

I have two versions of my bio, a short version of one or two sentences, and then I have a longer version that's more for the media when they want to pull out a story.

Your bio, your name, maybe your title, and a picture of you are what you need to market yourself so that your ideal client will think, *Oh, she's got the solution to my problems*.

Be so Clear in Your Communication That You Are Not Just Easy to Understand but Impossible to Misunderstand

They should read the title of your speech, understand what they're getting, and think, *That's the talk we need to watch, the video we need to watch*. Jessica, who speaks on big data for fashion, could give a clever title, with an ultra-clear subtitle. For example, “Data Is the New Black: How Innovative Fashion Companies Are Growing Their Revenue with Big Data.”

The key for Jessica is to showcase the incredible transformation of companies that are using big data and growing their revenue and doing it through stories. The main story that would attract a client for Jessica is if a representative of a company said, “Jessica, we have all this data. We don't know what to do with it. We need to grow our revenues. What should we do?” And then Jessica did her thing, and now look at them, profits are up 12 percent, and the data scientists at the company have a seat at the executive table. People are calling the data scientists some of the smartest people in the company and that they are the reason for growth.

Jessica finds that her biggest client is usually the vice president of innovation or the VP of digital, but since they've never done anything in fashion before, they haven't been in the weeds of data science or the weeds of fashion and production. So how can they actually start solving those problems? They hire Jessica to speak. She has been there. So they come to see her talk, because she can empathize with where they're at. She gets it.

The Anatomy of a Killer Keynote Speech

So now you have landed the gig, you're going to be giving a speech. What is the anatomy of your speech. That is, what are the contents that go into your speech. First, let's discuss your research.

Who is your audience?

What is their biggest challenge?

What is their dream-come-true solution?

What do they really want?

Now, you've already done this research because you know who your ideal client is and you're only speaking at events with your ideal client present in the audience. Your job becomes a lot harder if you start speaking for employees one day, entrepreneurs the next, then youth, and the following day people who are looking at retirement. My strong recommendation is to pick an audience and stick to it, because otherwise, in order for your speech to be relevant, you need to change it for each audience.

If you want to research from the client's perspective, ask the event planner and focus on feel, know, and do.

Feel = What do you want your audience to feel during my talk?

Know = What do you want the audience to learn from my talk?

Do = What do you want the audience to do after my talk?

If it's a corporate client and I'm doing a training, I'm going to say, "Imagine Monday morning, everyone comes into the office and you can see the result of the training is very, very clear by what they're doing and what they're saying. And you think to yourself, *Man, that training was the best investment I've ever made.* What are some of the things that the staff would be doing and saying that shows you that the training worked?" The client would say, "Well, everybody is on time. The meeting would be planned out with an agenda and be super productive. There wouldn't be any sort of gossip happening after the meeting." With this information you now have a list of deliverables to satisfy the client.

While the client is talking I'm taking notes, and I'm repeating what she's telling me. I'm saying, "Okay, so I'm going to come in and do this training, and you're going to measure success by the fact that this, this, this, and this is happening after the training. Perfect. Okay." Remember, what they're buying is not the speech or two or three days of training; they're buying the result that they want. That's why it's your job to figure out what the result is and then deliver.

On day one of the training, I'm going to share that list with my students. I'll say to them, "Okay, these are the reasons I'm here. So, when you walk into the office on Monday morning, this is what I want you to do." The client comes to me the next week and says, "Hey you won't believe what happened on Monday morning. It was exactly like I said I wished it would happen!" I then reply, "Yes, we did that on purpose."

Consider the State of Your Audience Member

I learned early on in my speaking career that when you are at a conference where there are delegates, keep in mind that you are speaking to Fred. Let me tell you about Fred. Fred looks forward to these conferences because he's going to get drunk with his buddies. He's at the hotel bar the night before your speech having one too many. He's going to wake up hungover. And when he's sitting in the audience for the keynote speech, he's thinking about how bad his head hurts or where he'll be going out tonight. He's not paying attention. He's on his phone. His mind is somewhere else.

It's your job to connect to Fred, even under those conditions.

Here's your profile of Fred while he's in your audience:

- He's distracted
- He's thinking about something else

- He's battling his own battles
- He has his own stuff going on

It's your job to be more interesting, more relevant, and more compelling than all of Fred's distractions and concerns, to capture his attention, and keep it. It is your job to have your message cut through Fred's hangover and have his attention so that at the end of the speech, Fred is going to drag his hungover body to the event planner and say, "Thank you. That was the best speaker you guys ever had."

I tell my audience to do just that. I tell them to thank the event planner. I say, "Do you see Nancy in the back? Nancy, can you wave, please? The reason I'm here is because Nancy found me. Nancy hired me. Nancy brought me here, so if you like today's presentation, if you got one thing out of it, I don't need you to thank me; I want you to thank Nancy. Before we leave today, when you're walking out of the room, please go and shake Nancy's hand."

To step it up, here's what I do next. I bring really nice physical thank-you cards that I have purchased and I pass them out to my audience. I say, "Raise your hand if you think this event was valuable today" and everyone raises their hand. "I'm sure you all have nice things to say to me, but the reason I'm here is because of my client; her name is Nancy. Nancy booked the room. Nancy emailed all you guys to be here and Nancy wrote my cheque, so it is Nancy who's the hero. So, here's what I want you to do. In the thank-you card, I want you to write, Dear Nancy, and then write down the number-one thing you got out of today's presentation." I tell them to put the card in the envelope, lick it sealed, write the name, *Nancy* on it, and pass them all forward. Then, I have a stack of thank-you cards that I bring to Nancy, and I say, "Nancy. None of these are from me, they're from my audience, from the people that you brought here. Thank you." She opens and reads every single one. And she's reading about all these takeaways, all of these implementations. She says, "This is incredible." You know who else does this? Nobody. No one else does this, so I am head and shoulders above every other speaker and trainer. Nancy gets the most love she's received from any speaker, because it is Nancy who writes the cheque. And Nancy knows other Nancys.

What Do You Say at the Beginning of Your Speech?

You take the stage. The crowd goes wild. They give you a great introduction. Everyone's excited to see you. You come on stage. You stand in the middle and the first sound out of your mouth is what we call the hook, which is the very first thing you say. It's your job to capture the attention of your audience. One of my clients, Kirsten Reeder, is the Mompreneur Coach, and she starts her speech with a startling statistic, which is, "Did you know that by the time your kid moves out of your house, you will have spent 70 percent of your time with that child?" Moms in the audience are immediately paying attention; many really never think about that it that way. Okay, so you got my attention.

If you're a financial advisor you could say, "Did you know there is one determining factor that is more important than any other factor as a predictor of your long-term wealth? Well, would you like to know what it is? It's when your investment starts. Ladies and gentlemen, the day that you start your investment is the one most important factor of determining long-term wealth. In the next ten minutes, I'm going to share with you the three secrets of the ultra-wealthy and teach you how you can retire rich."

You can start with a startling statistic; you can start with a quote. Be sure to research the source. "They may forget what you said – but they will never forget how you made them feel" is a quote often attributed to Maya Angelou, but the source is actually Carl W. Buehner.

We can also begin with a fact or we can start with a story. “So, there I am, standing on the side of the highway in the middle of the night, when a raccoon crawls up my leg.”

Storytelling tip: Bring your audience into the moment, into the picture, and into the scene.

“There I am, standing on the side of the highway, cars racing past, middle of the night, and I see a raccoon. We lock eyes.”

When you start with the story people typically tend to think, *This is going to be good. This is going to be interesting.* People are making a split-second evaluation in the first three seconds of your speech. They are asking themselves *Is this going to be interesting?* or *Should I pull out my phone, because that is for sure going to be more interesting.*

Capture Attention with a Story, Fact, Quote, or Question

The right way to ask a question is make it so clear that it’s impossible to misunderstand. Members of your audience are able to answer “Yes” or “No” questions rather than, for example, “What’s your favorite movie, *Back to the Future* or *Superman 2*?” What’s the audience supposed to do with that? When you say, “By a show of hands, who loves to go to the movies? Please raise your hand.” There’s three parts of that question. There’s “by a show of hands”; then there is a simple question that is easy to answer, and there is the act of showing people what raising a hand looks like, by raising your hand while you are saying, “Please raise your hand” because they need instruction that raising your hand means full extension of your arm.

That’s better than opening your speech saying, “How many of you love going to movie theaters?” By asking just that question, people will nod and they’ll be half-engaged, wondering “Where is this going?” and “What do I do with that question?” which will sometimes throw off the speaker, because if no one responds they are left feeling that the audience is disengaged.

Or you can open the speech with the rhetorical question, which is something like “Don’t you love that feeling of getting into a brand-new car and hearing the engine come to life when you turn on the ignition? Ladies and gentlemen, today I want to tell you about the magic of owning a sports car ...” It’s a rhetorical question that doesn’t require an answer, which is a good way to start a speech.

Payoff Statements

The payoff is what you will get from listening to the speech. In other words, the payoff is why someone cares about what you’re saying or why they should continue to pay attention. As a speaker, you are continuously winning them back from distraction, so from the beginning, what you’re saying means, “If you stick around and pay attention, you’re going to get all this good stuff.”

“In the next thirty minutes, I’m going to show you exactly step by step how to win your first three clients.”

“In the next forty-five minutes, I’m going to show you the secret to negotiating your next raise.”

“By the end of today, you will know the seven key questions to ask before buying your first house.”

Tell the Story

There are three kinds of stories for you to tell when you want clients to hire you at the end of your speech:

- Your own story
- A client success story
- The cautionary tale

Here is an example of how this sequence of stories would look for me.

“Ladies and gentlemen, if you would like to get more speaking engagements, please raise your hand.

“How many of you would love to get an email from the conference organizers of a conference that you adore saying, *We would like to have you speak at our next event?* Please raise your hand.

“How many of you would like to get on stage to give a speech and be greeted by a swarm of raving fans who all want to hire you? Please raise your hand.

“Okay, ladies and gentlemen, in the next seven minutes, I’m going to show you the secret to getting booked as a paid speaker consistently, like clockwork, and I’m going to show you the three stories to tell them to get clients begging to buy from you. Are you ready? Say yes!”

That was the hook and the payoff.

“So, first let me tell you I wasn’t always good at the speaking business. In fact, I had a hard time getting started. My hope is that you won’t struggle so much because in the next six minutes I’m going to show you exactly what you need to do to skip all that struggling and pain that I had. The first time I wanted to speak, I was watching a Tony Robbins infomercial...” and then on goes my story about how I earned a \$25 Starbucks gift card. Now I have someone who walks up to me after a two-minute speech, offering me \$50,000 to help her with public speaking. I have won six-figure contracts because someone saw me speak at an event.

This was describing Pleasure Island.

Then I say, “So, if you want to be a paid speaker, these are the three steps you need to take. First do Step One, then do Step Two, then do Step Three. Follow that process and you’ll become a paid speaker.”

That was the payoff.

Let me give you an example of someone who followed the process. I’ll show you what happened.

Meet Erika Flint. Erika is the author of a book on hypnosis and weight loss. She came to me in July 2017, and said, “Majeed, I know you through Angela Lauria of The Author Incubator. I’m speaking at a conference of hypnotists. My ideal client is a hypnotist who wants to grow their business, and I’m going to show them how to do that in this speech. The problem is I don’t really know what I’m going to say.” Erika wanted me to help her find the best way to speak for the result of having a bunch of new clients. “How can I make the most of this?” she wanted to know. I said, “That’s a great question. That’s exactly what I do. I will be happy to help you.” And she decided to hire me. We sat down together, and we built her speech from scratch.

Naturally, she wanted the speech to be really engaging and memorable. So, we created this memorable tagline. We call it “the phrase that pays.” That’s the one thing we want everybody saying when they get home because it’s unforgettable. And then we set that tagline to a dance move and a song. The dance move was *Staying Alive* and so we had everybody in the audience on their feet, dancing. Erika wanted to make a really huge impact

on this conference. She wanted to have a packed house, and she wanted the conference organizer to notice her. So, what do we do? We reached out to the conference organizer, and we said, “I would really appreciate it if you were at the speech, because I think it’d be one that you’d really like to see.” So the event organizer, who’s running around with one thousand other things to do at the conference, is at her speech. And during her speech, Erika is making him look like an absolute hero, which is part of our strategy, to include commendations in her speech, like “What a great organization, what a great event, and all thanks to the gentleman in the back of the room” and so on. After she has delivered her speech, Erika sends me this message.

She says, “I killed it. Yeah, baby. I want to share one HUGE win with you. After the talk, the president of the NGH came over to the group of people I was talking with, pointed right at me, and said, ‘Now that is the future of NGH!’”

This is the exact outcome that we wanted. We said, if we know we have a magic wand, what are we actually wanting to happen? Erika said, “Well, I want the event organizer to notice me, and I want the event organizer to hire me to speak next year, and I want the event organizer to refer me a ton of business because there are thousands of hypnosis organizations, and I’m really good at helping them grow their business.”

Later on, the next day, Erika sent me this text. “Majeed, I wanted you to know, later that Saturday, after my two talks, I was awarded the NGH Visionary Award. This is a huge award. I’ve been trying to get it for years. I know it’s because I’ve been stepping up. You’re a big part of that in helping me. Thank you so much.” And there’s a picture of her with the award and there’s the guy who was standing at the back of the room.

You will also notice that including the specific time and date establishes credibility to the story. It could be last summer, it could be a couple years back; the important thing is it demonstrates this story actually happened.

Short form of the story:

Erika Flint, the hypnotist, came to me and said, “I have a speaking gig. I don’t know what I’m going to do.” The solution was, “Let’s come up with a great strategic speech for you.” The result was she gave a killer speech, she won the award, and, did I mention, she got a ton of clients out of it.

“That’s what we do. We help ___(customer type)___ get
___(benefit result)_____ without ___(pain)_____”

So, the pain is what your client thinks they’re going to have to do to solve the problem. For example, if your client wants to lose weight, you say, “That’s what I do. I help busy professionals lose twenty pounds in twenty days without having to count calories or exercise. Don’t want to count calories? Don’t want to exercise? Perfect. That’s exactly what I do.”

I used the Client Success Story Formula with Angela Lauria, whom I mentioned earlier. In January 2016, we both spoke at a mastermind event, and we connected afterward. I hired her to help me publish my book. She asked me to help her with her public speaking. I told her, “Well, I’m not actually a speaker coach. I’m just a speaker.” She made me a generous offer I couldn’t refuse, so I said, “I’m your speaker coach.” She was my first client as a speaker coach. As it turns out, her whole business runs on speeches, even though she doesn’t really consider herself a speaker. She attracts clients by giving one-hour talks, and she hosts an amazing three-day training event. What she was missing was stories, which are what capture people’s imaginations and keeps their attention. She told me she wanted to take her

speaking, webinar, and trainings from very good to world class. We rolled up our sleeves and started working on stories.

We reworked the one-hour webinar, and we reworked the three-day event, where she makes a high-value, high-priced offer to her clients to invest in the next level of support. After about three months in, she sent me this email, saying, “An 81 percent close rate; out of the sixteen eligible buyers at the event, I sold thirteen. Every little \$390,000 helps.” She had accepted a \$30,000 speaking offer by the end of our time together. She told me that she made a multi-seven-figure return on her investment on my \$50,000 coaching because her sales rates are up. It’s now easy for her to deliver her program because she knows the stories. And you know what? When you tell a story it’s not a struggle to speak because you’re just telling the story. You don’t have to remember it because it happened; you just tell it.

That’s what I do. I help business owners who have a story that they need to tell capture the imagination of their clients. I help them tell their story in a simple and easy way that gets people wanting to buy without having to spend years and years practicing the craft of storytelling.

Tell Them Your Story: Your Journey from Pain Island to Pleasure Island

“If you’re like me, it wasn’t easy starting out...” Share that story, because your audience member is struggling just like you did when you started. It’s like I can relate to you and you can relate to me because you haven’t always been this amazing. And you made many attempts to get to Pleasure Island, and many attempts failed. You tried it all, and nothing worked. Finally, miraculously you discovered the secret. Maybe the secret was given to you from a wise person. Maybe the secret was found in a book. Now this is an important moment because while you’re telling them about the secret, they’re going, *Ah ha! This is the answer, finally. I’ve been struggling, but today, no longer.* They’re having that moment. So for your audience, you’re such a kind and generous person you decided to take a short trip back to Pain Island to let people know that there is a boat leaving for Pleasure Island now. And you’re driving the boat.

That’s the framework of the “You” story.

Both client success story and your story should be followed by a cautionary tale.

If your speeches are thirty minutes or longer, you’ll have time for your teaching points. If you have a really short speech, you don’t actually have time for teaching points, but you can still get hook, payoff, your story, client success story, cautionary tale, conclusion, and call to action. The purpose and the outcome of your story is to demonstrate to the audience that if they’re suffering on Pain Island, there’s hope because you suffered too and made it to Pleasure Island, and you also help other people like you get to Pleasure Island. That’s the short story. If you have an hour, then you’ll have time to teach them your process along with other things.

When I work with clients, they’re here on Pain Island, and they want to get to Pleasure Island. I take them through the steps. In a corporate environment, first I do a needs assessment and diagnosis, then create a roadmap and a plan, and then set up quarterly planning meetings. We execute the first one together, and by the fourth one, we’ve gone through clarity and creativity and we’ve implemented the plan. These are the steps and now they’re imagining themselves going through those same steps with you.

The Cautionary Tale Framework

The cautionary tale looks a lot like the success story. We start with a person who has a similar problem to your ideal client. The introduction is the same as that of the success story. In my case, Joe wanted to become a paid speaker, but he didn't know where he should speak.

There are four possible outcomes for someone who has a problem.

- Outcome number one is they decide to do nothing
- Outcome number two is they decide to solve the problem themselves
- Outcome number three is they decide to pay someone else or some other service
- Outcome number four is they decide to hire you

I can apply this to the example of an unhealthy, overweight, busy executive. In the first outcome, they might convince themselves that they're going to do it later because now is not a good time, when actually, they've decided to do nothing. In the second outcome, they say, "I saw your speech, and today's the day I'm going to get healthy. I'm going to cut out these things, just like you said, and I'm going to do it myself. Thank you for inspiring me." You say good luck to these people, and you know that you're sending them down the road of pain and suffering because of that struggle to try to do it yourself. Outcome number three is they hire the fad diet guy. "I saw the infomercial. I was convinced by that speech today. Today's the day I get healthy. I'm going to go hire the fad diet guy." And outcome number four is they come to their senses, they do the right thing, and they hire you. So, our speeches are facilitating them through those options and helping them make the right decision. This story is to help them avoid one of those other three options. The cautionary tale will always end with either they did nothing, they did it themselves, or they hired someone else, and the results were not good.

When you tell this story, show love and respect for the people who are struggling and suffering. They are your reason for being in business, and you're there to help them.

Here's an example of a cautionary tale. I met a woman who wanted to be a paid speaker. She wanted to make money speaking; she wanted to travel and speak. She saw me on my videos – traveling here, speaking there – and she called me up, saying, "Majeed, I want to do the traveling and speaking thing." I offered to help her and she chose not to make the investment to hire me.

Later, I found out that she spent \$30,000 on an online funnel where the ad guys said they will send visitors to her website and it will automatically get her speaking gigs. I don't know a single speaker who has a Facebook ad funnel that gets automatic speaking gigs. Can you imagine an event planner deciding, *Oh, I'm going to click on that Facebook ad and then I'm going to be hiring that speaker without speaking to anyone?* I don't think so. So, now, a year later and \$30,000 later, she's got a broken marketing funnel that doesn't work. She's got no speaking engagements. She's got no conferences calling her asking for the speech, and she's not traveling. I can't help but feel guilty that I wasn't able to help her before she wasted all that money.

This is the cautionary tale. It's the story of what happens when someone has the problem you solve but somehow fails to solve it. I recommend sharing the cautionary tale after a success story. You show them pleasure island, you show them pain island, and then you say, "The choice is yours, which one do you want?"

For the conclusion of your speech, you need to remind your audience of what you have just told them. You might use language like this: "In the last forty-five minutes we've covered the three steps to success. You heard a little bit about what happens when you do follow the process, and you heard about what happens when you don't follow the process. So now here's my challenge to you."

Then you give them a call to action. “Do this Monday morning when you walk into the office, say this to your co-worker.”

The call to action that leads to a sale is an invitation:

“For those of you who want results ... ”

“For those of you who think now’s the right time for you to implement a big data solution into your luxury business to increase revenues, here’s what I would recommend for you ... ”

An Expert’s Recommendation Is Like a Doctor’s Prescription

“For those of you who are interested in losing that extra twenty pounds for good, here’s what I would recommend for you.”

“For those of you who are interested in getting rid of that clutter, putting that stuff down and finally feeling free of all the junk in your house, here’s what I would recommend for you.”

Then you give them the next step. It’s either a “buy now” call to action or a “schedule an appointment now” call to action. For purchasing products or courses, I like to pass around purchase order forms and have them write down their credit card information, which I then process manually. That way, all the payment processing is happening with pen and paper. The audience members pass it in, and it’s done. That’s much better than forming a line at the cash register. This purchase order form is responsible for growing my business exponentially. This order form sold my first online courses, my first retreat tickets, and most of my training programs were sold by paper forms at the end of a speech.

You want them putting ink on paper. Then I announce that we’re going to do a draw for a gift card or book. That way, you get everybody writing, so it doesn’t feel like the people who are writing are the buyers. I ask everyone to hand in their forms, whether they are buying or not. Everybody’s writing. If you’re not writing, you’re the odd one out.

If the cost of the product is more than \$3,000, in my experience, it’s harder for someone to make a buying decision on the spot. But someone will more readily make a decision about having a conversation with you. So, I’ll pass out a feedback or lead form that asks for name, email, and phone number, and it says, check the box “Yes, I’m interested in the one-on-one conversation with Majeed because I might be interested in working with him.” Or a more specific result will be “I’m interested in one-on-one conversation because I want to lose twenty pounds in the next twenty days.” They don’t really want the conversation; they want the result. Focus on offering them the result.

Then we would follow up and schedule a conversation. I recommend getting them on your calendar before they leave the room by saying, “If you check the box that you are interested in the conversation, let’s make sure you get on the calendar before you leave the room. What happens is my calendar gets very full, and then it’s weeks or maybe even a month before I can talk to you. And at that point we may not even be able to have a conversation. So, let’s get you on the calendar before you leave the room, come on to the front of the room. I’ll be standing here with my calendar on my phone open, and we’ll get you set up right away.”

I recommend that if you want to make lots of money, give this speech as often as possible. This is the speech that is designed to get clients.

I actually think it is like malpractice in the speaking business to be only entertaining, because even with an interesting, cool story, if you have nothing to help the audience take the next step, you are doing them a disservice. You get everybody excited but then they don’t know what to do. And if you did give them some sort of a tip, maybe they will try that tip, but

then what? What if it doesn't work for them? You could give them six great ideas for losing weight, exercising, and feeling great. They go home, and they do it for two days. And then what? Either it didn't work, or it is too hard and complicated. And then they're going to buy some dumb thing they see on TV because they're excited and they want to make a purchase to solve the problem, but you didn't give them something to buy. I think the ethical thing to do is to always show your audience the next step and demonstrate to them that you are the person who can help them with that next step. Show them what that looks like by giving them scenarios where they can imagine working with you.

Help your audience see the result by using the word *imagine*.

Imagine walking into your office, nobody's complaining. Imagine that everybody's on time. Imagine opening up your project management software and you see all the green lights down the whole list because every project is on time and on budget. This could be you. This is what I do. I help companies create project flows that every project is done on time and on budget. And if you're a great manager, if you are a project manager, this is for you. And they're seeing it, they're seeing the green lights and they're saying, "This is what I need."

Frequently Asked Questions

Question: How do you collect contract information when it's not easy to hand out a piece of paper?

Answer: If you can't pass out paper, what can you do? Here is one thing I used to do. I'm a big fan of the paper now. I put my cell phone number on the screen and I say, "send me a text message right now" then I flip on the sound and I hold the phone next to the microphone and it goes ding, ding, ding, ding, ding, ding, ding, which is fun because then people are thinking, *Oh, I'm gonna make it ding, too.* I'll say, "send me an email right now, pull out your phone." I break down the process of sending an email into ten steps:

- Pull out your phone
- Make sure that it's on
- Unlock your phone so you can see the apps on the screen
- Find the email, go ahead and open your email app, touch that open
- Okay, now I want you to compose a new email, go ahead and click new email.
- All right, I'm going to read off my email address to you. It's on the screen.
- For those who can't see, it's ... [and I read out loud]
- Put that in the *to* field because that's who you're sending it to, me.
- Write book in the subject line.
- I want you to hit send, so you're sending me an email.

"I have my phone open. All right. I just got a message from Brad, Susan, Kim..." And we're hanging out until these emails come in. This is called micro-commitments, micro-steps. There's a study done on trying to get people to exercise. They would do incentives, they would do prizes, they would do cash for exercising, but nothing worked. The one thing that worked is putting on your exercise clothes. One small step toward action and commitment.

If I ask the audience "please take out your phone" that's a micro-commitment. Then I'll ask, "please open up your email app to send an email." Then I'll give them my email address and ask them to send an email right now. If I skip the micro-commitment steps and simply put my email address on the screen and tell them to send me an email, then they'll write it down to do it later. Most people won't do it later. Guide them to the action you need them to

take. Hold their hand and give them the time they need to take that action. Then give them a reason to send that email right now.

You could say, “And by the way, if you send me an email before I get off stage, I’m going to open my inbox and randomly select a prize winner.” Yet another reason for them to do it now. Or, “If you send me an email before I get off stage I’m going to check the time and each one of you who sent me an email before I get off stage, will receive my PDF checklist” or “I’m going to send you a copy of my e-book.” You must give them a reason to do it now.

Pro Tip: When networking at a conference, follow-up immediately. Instead of promising to follow-up later, do it now. Send an email immediately, during the conversation or immediately following. The pace and speed of a relationship is set in the early moments and so, *do it now* is one of my mantras.

Summary

- What makes a good story? Paint the scene, use the present tense, and use dialogue.
- Tell stories. It makes you unforgettable.
- This is the question-answering process. reward, restate, respond, reconfirm.
- If you don’t have an answer, you would ask a question, such as, “What makes you ask that?”
- To speak more speak more, if you want to be seen as a speaker, get to speaking.
- Any time you have the opportunity to take the stage, you jump on that stage and ask questions later.
- Make a list of all the places where you want to speak.
- The title of your speech needs to appeal to your audience.
- In the title of my speech, I use the three-letter word for so that people think, Oh, that’s for me.
- Your bio should position you as the obvious best person to give that speech.
- Be so clear in your communication that you are not just easy to understand but impossible to misunderstand.
- They’re not buying the speech, they’re buying the result that they want.
- It’s your job to figure out what the result is and then deliver.
- Capture attention with a story, fact, quote, or question.
- Consider the state of your audience member.
- It’s your job to be more interesting, more relevant, and more compelling than all of the distractions and concerns, to capture attention, and keep it.
- While the client is talking, take notes, and repeat what you are hearing.
- You can start with a startling statistic, you can start with a quote. Be sure to research the source.
- A rhetorical question that doesn’t require an answer is a good way to start a speech.
- Three stories to tell when you want clients to hire you at the end of your speech: your own story, a client success story, the cautionary tale
- Give your audience scenarios where they can imagine working with you.
- Make it easy for your audience to buy from you.

- You must give your audience a reason to act now; use micro-steps.

Chapter 7

Step Four: Win Stages

Think about the ideal speaking situation for you. Maybe it's a big stage, a big event. Maybe it's ten people in a boardroom at an office. How do you get from here to there?

Being Awesome Versus the Campaign

There is the "Be Awesome" strategy, which works for people who do incredible things like climb Mount Kilimanjaro with one leg. That's awesome. For someone like that the phone rings, and they have a speaking tour all of sudden because they did an awesome thing and people found out about it.

I thought, *I need to do an awesome thing so people will find out about me. I will write a book.* I did. And the phone didn't ring. Then I did other awesome things, and the phone still didn't ring. I figured, *The phone is not ringing because I'm not awesome enough or not enough people know about how awesome I am, so I should be more awesome.*

I did that as a strategy for about five years. And sometimes, it works that you're awesome and someone calls you up to do a speaking event. But I don't know how to replicate that. Now, I have a very simple strategy that seems almost too simple, which is to make a spreadsheet of the places where you want to speak call them and say, "I would like to speak at your event." This is what I call the stage-getting campaign, and it's called a campaign because it's a series of communications designed to create a sales outcome.

The "Be Awesome" strategy does not work consistently. It is for hobby speakers who like the occasional gig, but don't have a systematic process for getting steady gigs.

That is not a way to build a business, and it's not a way to be able to predictably say, "I am going to speak ten times this year," or "I'm going to speak three times a month, paid." Instead, you want to think of the campaign. Here are the steps to booking the talk. Where would you like to speak?

The Stage-Getting Campaign

Make a spreadsheet of one hundred stages. This is what we do for our eleven clients in a bureau where our agents are doing outreach for them. Whether they are using Google Docs or Excel spreadsheets, the client writes down each stage they are focusing on. We do the research and find the website, or the client finds the website, of each stage. For example, one client wants to speak at Tony Robbins, South by Southwest, and a number of other stages.

We have two types of stages:

1. Credibility stages: this is where it's nice to be there speaking, but you're not necessarily going to get clients.
2. Client stages: this is where the audience is full of a bunch of potential clients.

We encourage our clients to speak at client stages. When people want to speak on credibility stages, it's usually a sign that they don't think that they're good enough as it is right now, and we say, "You actually are good right now. You don't really need to have more credibility." But some people want to do it as a bucket list item. For example, we have a client right now who wants to speak at Harvard, so we've booked a speech for him at Harvard

because I happen to know the rabbi at Harvard. So our client is going to speak at Harvard, and then he can tell all of his clients and future clients that he spoke at Harvard. He's not likely going to get clients from that, but that's a bucket list item checked off for him. And it really does give him credibility with his future clients.

When building out your list of stages to speak at, consider these factors:

- What's the honorarium? How much are they going to pay?
- What's the size the audience?
- When do we need to submit by?
- When is the event?
- Who is the person in charge?
- Contact information: email address, phone number, mailing address (state, city, zip code)
- Who are some other past speakers?

This is a good thing to research, the past speakers at any conference where you are applying to speak. Call them up and say, "Hey, I noticed that you spoke at last year's finance conference. I wonder, who was your main contact who was handling you at that conference?" That's a good way to find out about the conference organizers. And go further, "I'm thinking about speaking at that conference. Is there any advice you have for me about that particular event and working with that team?" You can also ask them about other places they are speaking this coming year. Since they spoke at the conference where you want to speak, it's likely that the conferences that they have lined up for speaking gigs are some of the same places where you'd like to speak.

You might think that speakers don't want to help other speakers, because they're in competition, but I've never personally experienced that. We all know the struggle and like to help each other out.

In your list of events, you can include offline stages and online stages, with the dates of those events as well.

- Where do I want to speak?
- What are the website addresses?
- What type of stage is it?
- Is there a fee to pay?
- Do they have money for speaker fees, yes or no, and how much?
- How big is the audience?
- Who is the person in charge of managing the speakers?

This list is essential to begin, and then research is the next step. Why should they hire you? You get that answer through a conversation. Make the phone call to talk to them and ask,

- What are your goals for this event?
- How would you measure success at the end of this event?
- What do you look for in a speaker?
- Have you ever hired a speaker who was a disappointment? And what happened?
- What kind of speakers do you currently have lined up for your upcoming event?

- What's missing in your lineup?

Ask, "What's missing in your line up?" Listen carefully to what they are looking for so you can say, "Perfect. That's what I do. That's what I talk about." As long as your topic can adapt to what the event organizer needs, go for it.

I'll tell you how this has been executed by one of our clients, Marc Cordon, who speaks on happiness. The topic of happiness can also be mental health, resilience, leadership, or workplace culture. Marc calls up event planners and asks them, "Who do you already have booked as a speaker and what's missing in your line up?" When they answer, if it is close enough to happiness, Marc says, "Oh, perfect. That's exactly what I do" and they say, "Really? You have made my life easier because I was just about to do some research to try to find a speaker; that's amazing."

That's when your conversation is going in a good direction. Typically, these conversations are more like crash and burn.

Speaker: "Hi, I'd like to speak at your event."

Conference organizer: "Well, we're not looking for speakers right now."

That's one way that they go. In fact, when you're talking to an organization that only occasionally looks for speakers, then most of the time they're not looking for speakers, which means they already have speakers in place. Or their event just passed, and they haven't started their new call for speakers. They do that in three months or so. Chances are likely you're going to get them at the wrong time. In this case, you can find out when the right time is to make sure you reach out on time. Put the date on your calendar. Then move on to the next item.

The Official Backup Speaker Strategy

"I understand you have your speakers lined up which must be a real relief to you. If you're like most of my clients, you're probably stressed right up until the minute when they take the stage because who knows what could happen. Sometimes speakers cancel, sometimes they miss a flight. So, I'd like to offer you something that will give you peace of mind. I call it the official backup speaker. What I'd like to offer you is that I will be your official backup speaker, which means I will have a polished, prepared speech for your event, ready to take the stage at a moment's notice if any speaker cancels. I'll be sitting in the front row. And all you have to do is nod and wink at me. That's my signal to take the stage. Now, you don't have to use me if you don't need to. My hope is that everything goes smoothly with your speakers. But if you're like my other clients, there's always something that goes wrong. And having this as an insurance policy will help you sleep at night. All that I ask is that you cover my travel expenses and my conference ticket, and then I will waive my fee. How's that sound to you?" Guess who else does that? Nobody. Nobody does that.

I've used the official backup speaker strategy at least a dozen times, and my success rate is probably 25 percent. At every event that I attend, I always speak; whether I'm a speaker or an audience member, I'll always find a way. It's probably happened twice that I have gone on stage with a keynote at the last minute. And it's never happened at the actual event. No, it's usually two weeks before, "Hey, one of our speakers has backed out. Are you still ready?" and I say, "Of course, the flight's booked and everything."

Now, when I have made the backup speaker offer, sometimes they have said, "We don't have a budget to cover your travel, but if you would be willing to be a backup speaker we'll cover your conference fee." Then I have to decide if this is worth my time and money to attend a conference. If you want the easiest strategy to get booked as a speaker, go to a

conference, meet the conference organizer, say, “Oh my goodness, I love your conference. I want to help you make next year’s conference an absolute crazy success. Can I help you with that?” And most likely the organizer will be very appreciative with thanks and asking you to follow up with them afterward, to which you reply, “Absolutely.”

Attend Conferences Where You Would Like to Speak

Think of it this way. When deciding if it’s worth attending a conference where you’d like to speak: Consider an event planner who has to decide between two speakers. The event planner can’t really tell much of a difference since they’re both around the same fee and they’re on the same topic. The only difference is that the event planner met one of them when they attended their conference the year before. Easy choice.

Do research to find out the chair of next year’s conference because they’ve already been looking at locations and they are already signing leases. You can also find the person in charge of managing speakers. When you call, you may catch them at the wrong time, unless you get lucky. You can do the backup speaker strategy. Or you can ask, “When are you accepting applications?”

Here is what I do. I call before I submit an application, and I’ll say, “I’m on your website. I’m about to submit a speaker application. I don’t want to waste your time with the wrong topic. Would it be okay if I quickly ran my topic past you before I submit it?” And they say, “Sure, that’s fine.” I continue, “Okay, great. I have a couple questions for you.” And now we’re in a sales conversation. I actually have a few questions:

- What’s the one most important thing you want as a success for your event?
- What do you look for in a speaker?
- Imagine you hire the best speaker you have ever had, what are the delegates saying to you as a result of that speech?
- What topics do you already have booked?
- What topics did you book last year that you don’t want to repeat this year?

When I have those answers, then I say, “Okay, perfect. Here’s what I had in mind. I’ve got one speech, and I’m testing three titles. There’s this, that, and that, which one do you think will resonate with your audience most?” And they say, “We were just talking yesterday about how we need someone to be talking about that.” I say, “Perfect. That’s exactly what I do. I’m going to submit my speaker application today. I know sometimes the technology gods are not always in our favor, so I’m going to call you tomorrow, just to make sure that you received it. Can I call just to confirm? It’s really important to me.” “Sure, that’s fine.”

That’s great. Then the next day when I call, I say, “Hey, I’m calling to follow up and make sure that you received my speaker application. Great. Did you have any feedback for me? Like, on a scale of one to ten, how would you rate it as an application, where ten is that it blew your mind and you’re totally going to sign me up and one is you’re out the door. How would you rate it?” When they say, “Yeah, I call it an eight” I thank them for the feedback and ask, “What would make it a ten for you?” They say, this and this and this, and I say, “Great. I can get that for you. Awesome.”

As you can see, there is more to being truly dedicated to landing speaking gigs than to apply and then wait, hoping that it will work.

You might find out that they already have all of their speakers even though the close date is two weeks away, so they’re not really considering more applications, even though they’re still coming in. That’s good to know, and you can still ask questions:

- When's your next event?
- Who's the person in charge of finding speakers for that event?
- Can you put me in touch with them?
- What's the theme for next year's event?

You want to be high-touch and more proactive, as if you were searching for a job. Rather than simply email résumés to companies or submit your job application online, you get in there and build some relationships. Before committing to any event, be sure to check your own calendar, so that you don't go through all these steps and then find out the event is on a day that you're unavailable.

What Does the Event Planner Need?

People often get this wrong in the conversation with an event planner. The event planner will ask, "What will you speak on?" and the speaker will tell them, "I speak on happiness" and then the event planner says, "That's not really what we're looking for. We're actually looking for someone to speak on mental health." But you just said happiness. So now you can't say, "Well, I speak on mental health." When the event planner asks about your topic, you say, "That depends on the audience, what is the topic that you are missing from your upcoming event?" and they reply, "What we're looking for is someone to speak on mental health" then you can easily say, "Perfect, that's exactly what I do." That is what Marc Cordon learned to do. The same rule applies for the speaker fee.

The Budget

The event planner asks, "What do you charge? What's your fee?" The wrong answer is a number, because your number is 95 percent likely to be too high or too low. You say, "Oh, my speaker fee is \$3,000," and they say, "We're looking for a \$10,000 speaker." It's too late for you to say your fee is \$10,000, and there's no reason why you can't be a \$10,000 speaker. We call this the negotiation script, and the response I recommend to the "What do you charge?" question is: "I would be happy to work with your budget, as long as we know that my message is a good fit for your audience."

Now we're skipping the fee and we're making sure this is a fit, because if my message isn't a fit for your audience, it really doesn't matter what I charge.

Let's discuss your fee. You have in your mind the walk-away money number and the happy money number. Both may change like the weather. It changes with your bank account balance. For example, if you've got \$100,000 in your bank account today, all of a sudden, your money number would change: "Well, I'm not getting on a plane for that much money, I have \$100,000 in my bank account." I recommend having a speaker fee number that makes you feel like you need to stretch the quality of your speech to earn that amount. There's a number that will compel you to show up and do a good job. But what would happen if you double that number, because then you know you'll be adding some fireworks to your talk and you'll be stepping it up. I like to show up and expect the highest of myself.

Maybe that number is \$2,000, maybe it's \$5,000, maybe it's \$10,000. When you receive a number, check your inner critic when you hear those numbers, *not me, I could never...* My fee is \$10,000, and although I've only been paid \$10,000 once, that's my fee. Everyone else is getting a steal. So, you say, "I'm happy to work with your budget. Would you like to share your budget with me?" They will either say, "We don't have a budget" or they will give you a range with specific numbers. Then you're going to say either, "Great, I can work with your

budget. My fee is...” and then you say the upper limit of the range. For example, “We’re looking at between \$3,000 and \$6,000” and you say, “Great, my fee is \$6,000.”

If they say, “Our budget is \$2,500” and you still want to say yes, you’ll find the value to match your ideal fee. This is what you do. “Okay, well, I am happy to work with your budget. The thing about my fee is actually – ” then you say the higher number \$5,000, \$6,000, \$8,000, or whatever it is “ – and it would be unfair to my clients if word got out that I’m giving \$2,500 speeches when my clients are paying \$8,000. That would not be good for my reputation. Here’s what I propose. Part of my fee, you can cover with cash, because you have a budget for \$2,500 and the rest of my fee you can cover in value of \$5,500. I’ll tell you some things that are of value, and you can tell me if those are things that you can deliver and maybe we can have a deal.

- I value video of my speaking. If I have to hire a video crew to come film me that will cost me thousands of dollars – if you already have a video crew and you could just give me access to the video that is of value to me
- I value the ability to bring my clients and my prospective clients to come and see me speak. So if you could give me five tickets to your event, and I can give my clients a VIP experience at your event, that will be really valuable to me
- I value introductions. I have built my business on word of mouth. I work with a client and they call their friend and they say, you’ve got to hire Majeed. That’s how I build my business, on referrals. Introductions are very valuable to me

“So, I’ll tell you what, if you can give me access to the video, if you’ll give me five VIP tickets for my clients, and if you can make three phone call recommendations for me, assuming that you absolutely love the speech, then that would be worth \$5,500 to me.”

I say, “I will write those three things into our contract – access to the video, five VIP tickets, and three phone call introductions – and I will itemize the value as a \$5,500 credit toward my fee, so you have yourself an \$8,000 speaker. I can work with your budget. Does that work for you?”

I’ll do that same routine on a free speech. They might say, “Well, we don’t have video, and we always let you bring clients, and for sure, we’ll give you phone call referrals,” but this is how you turn one speech into three speeches systematically. You write a contract that says they will make three phone call introductions to people who can hire you. Then you hold their feet to the fire. You confirm ahead of time and follow up afterward. They will forget about you and life moves on the day after your speech. So, you must always follow-up.

That’s how I negotiate a contract, and I always have my walk-away number. I will speak for free for the right audience, even if they don’t have video, even if they don’t agree to all the other things. Meanwhile, you should have firmly in your mind, before entering into negotiation, what you are willing to say yes to and what you are not willing to say yes to – you do not want to get yourself in a situation where you feel like you’re doing them a favor. If they feel like they’re doing you a favor, then both parties are disappointed.

Only show up when you can rock the stage at your highest level, because every speech represents you and your brand and your reputation. Don’t come to a speech ill-prepared and second rate and then justify it by saying, “Well, it was a free speech” or “Well, they didn’t pay my full fee.”

Further to making it fun and easy to buy your services and products, the proverbial cheque in the mail is over. I just wrote my sixteenth cheque ever, months ago. Set yourself up with a PayPal account like I have done. PayPal.me makes it really simple. Check out

PayPal.me/Majeedm to see an example. Your customer can put the amount to send, and send it to you very easily. There's only one button. Super easy.

I was in a conversation the other day that ended up in a \$36,000 sale. We were live on zoom. I sent her the link in chat and said, "I'm sending you a link. I'll hold the line while you process it." She processed it, and I said, "That was easy." If I didn't close the sale on the phone it might have been a longer process of, "Send me an invoice" and so on. Remove steps from the process when you can. Make it easy and possibly even fun to pay you.

Inside the Mind of the Event Planner

The event planner has a job. They want to pull off this event, whether it's a Rotary Club meeting or a Lunch and Learn or a conference that they've been planning for twelve months. Event planners think about what could go wrong, and what could go wrong with you. I've got a whole checklist. You could miss your flight, you could get sick, you could not have your PowerPoint properly formatted. When I work with an event planner, before they buy, I show them this checklist. I tell them that this is a checklist that I compiled from all the mistakes that I've made, and all the things that I have forgotten, and all of the accidents that I've had. I tell them that I go through it every time before I leave the house to make sure these things don't go wrong.

My strategy is to define all the things that can go wrong and have a plan for how to prevent those things from happening, or what I would do in the case that they do happen. I've given speeches with the power off in the hotel. I've been booked on flights that were cancelled and I've taken a train instead of an airplane. As a policy I never, ever, ever, book the last flight out. I will book the second to last flight out because flights get cancelled, and I'm not going to fail at the number-one job of a speaker, which is to be there. If you don't show up, it doesn't matter how funny you are or how well you crafted your PowerPoint presentation. So, I leave the day before. I learned this lesson when I had a speech in a town that's two hours from home. I left three hours before my speech, and then I hit two hours of traffic. I was not anticipating road construction. I was late to my speech. That was the last time that has ever happened.

Today, I have a rule. If it's more than an hour's drive away, I sleep there the night before. It's my job to get there, no matter what.

When I book a hotel, I book a room that is in the same building as the speech because I don't want to get lost. I go to the stage the night before, and I feel it out. I stand on the stage, I walk around the room. I don't want to be surprised when I arrive and find that the stage or room is smaller than I thought it was going to be.

While you are putting their mind at ease with your checklist, the event planner is hearing all this and they're thinking, "Oh, this person is a pro." I tell them that if anything comes up, then we'll handle it here. And typically, by the end of the conversation, they're feeling that this is the most prepared I've ever been with a speaker. I say to the event planner, "My job is not to be a speaker. My job is help you have a successful event." We confirm the title of my presentation, the date and time of the presentation, and the venue. This is particularly important with a college or corporate campus because the address is the general vicinity, so ask for special parking directions and room directions. If you have signs, flip charts, or banners, you want to know the loading spot.

Here's the full list I go through to make sure I have everything I need. This checklist works best when you use it before you leave your house, because otherwise you could look at it afterward, and say, "Oh, I should have brought business cards."

The Expert Speaker Speaking Engagement Checklist

- Presentation Title
- Date / Time of speech
- Venue Address
- Special directions (room, parking)
- Audience (size, demographic)

Logistics

- Print address, directions, campus map
- Airplane tickets
- Passport
- Full tank of gas, if driving
- Cash / credit card
- Time from hotel to venue

Communication

- Cell phone / charger
- Backup phone battery
- Phone numbers of main contact and backup contact

Venue

- If possible, visit venue or
- Review floor plan
- Review photos of room
- Confirm venue equipment
- Confirm internet at venue
- Ask for private internet so it's more reliable

Equipment

- Laptop / charger
- iPad / Android / charger
- Backup laptop
- Electrical adapter
- Small speakers for sound
- Adapter to connect to projector, esp. Macs
- Remote for presentation
- Batteries for remote
- Extension cord
- Timer

Marketing

- 200 business cards
- Promotional material

Consumables

- Bottle of water
- Banana / Energy Bar
- Throat lozenges
- Aspirin / medication

Personal

- Pack suitcase night before
- Watch
- Glasses / contacts
- Toothbrush / toothpaste
- Lip balm
- Deodorant
- Hair brush / comb
- Spare shirt / tie
- Spare blouse / nylons

Stationery

- Pens / Pencils
- Notepad

Presentation

- Printed introduction for person presenting you
- Speaking notes on index cards
- USB backup presentation
- Email presentation backup
- Keynote users, PowerPoint version of presentation
- Hard copy of slides
- Be able to go without slides
- Props
- Markers for flip chart
- Markers for white board
- Handouts
- Evaluation forms
- Video camera / stand

Day Before

- Confirm arrival
- Get a good night's sleep
- No alcohol

On the Day of the Speech

- Exercise in the morning

- Arrive really early
- Reserve a seat near the front
- Block off back rows with masking tape so people sit near the front
- Meet host(s)
- Meet technician(s)
- Test presentation equipment
- Run sound check
- Prepare speaking area (lectern, walking space, flipcharts, etc.)
- Ensure proper seating
- Adjust lights / curtains
- Adjust temperature
- Locate restrooms
- Have drinking water available

Here's how I use the checklist:

- I'm going to print off the address and directions. I'm not going to rely on my phone battery, because if I have your address in my email on my phone and I lose my battery, I now have no idea how to get to you
- Print out my airplane tickets, confirm that they are purchased
- I'm going to have my passport packed in my bag that I packed the night before. I have gone to the airport without my passport and screwed that up
- Full tank of gas ahead of time if driving
- I've got extra cash and credit card in my bag in case I lose my wallet
- I want to know how long it takes to get from the hotel to the venue and I'm going to triple it. If the venue is 10 minutes away from the venue, I'm allowing 30 minutes
- Cell phone and charger with backup phone battery
- The phone numbers of the main contact and backup contact printed out ahead of time

I used to work for a training company called Learning Tree International and because they had the checklists and the backup plans in place, they were able to do really remote training like in First Nations communities and up in the North Pole and Nunavut. When all the logistics don't work, they've got backup plans for the backup plans.

And there's more. Here a few questions for the event planner:

- Tell me about the venue and can you send me a copy of the floor plan?
- Is there an event in that same room the day before, and can we visit the venue then?
- Can you put me in touch with the event production person at the hotel or at the venue?
- Do you have any photos of the room?
- Can you confirm the equipment that's in the room?
- Do you have access to a power cord?

We have a projector and a screen. Do we have a backup projector? I've done this, where I've tested everything: test the slides, test the projector and made sure that the image is really square and everything. Someone unplugs the projector and moves it to another place and now it doesn't work. You don't unplug projectors, you push the Off button which keeps the fan running, because there's a really hot light bulb in there that burns out when you unplug it.

- Confirm internet at the venue. Near an airport, internet signals get weird because of the control towers, and microphone signals get weird near the airport. Since wireless microphones don't work so well by airports, ask for a wired microphone.
- Is there a private internet network? If any part of your presentation requires the internet, see if you can download what you need. For example, if you have a YouTube video that you want to play during your presentation, download it on your computer, because then the internet's not your problem anymore. Google "download YouTube video" and you'll find a bunch of sites that tell you how to do that.
- Equipment: I'm bringing my laptop, my iPad, my charger, my backup laptop, and my electrical adapter for foreign countries. I'm bringing my Bluetooth speaker, my adapter to connect my Mac, and my dongles. I'm bringing my remote for my presentation, my batteries for the remote – fresh batteries always – my own extension cord, and I'm bringing a timer so that I know that I'm going to stay on time.
- Bottled water, energy bar, throat lozenge. The last is a good one if you wake up with a sore throat or you wake up with a bit of a cough. Have aspirin medication. This was more relevant when I drank; I would often find myself with a hangover on the day of my speech. That's why I have: *Day before, no alcohol*. I don't drink anymore. And the aspirin was pretty much a hangover management tool for me.
- Top Priority Tip: Pack suitcase the night before. Don't say, *Oh, I'll just wake up and pack my suitcase*, because that's when you leave behind everything that's important.
- Bring my watch, glasses, toothbrush, lip balm, deodorant, hairbrush, and a spare shirt and tie, which is very important if you're going to wear something that has a mustard stain on it. You might think it's hidden, but subconsciously, it is not hidden from you, because you're constantly thinking, *Oh, I think they see the mustard stain on my shirt*. So, bring a backup tie and backup shirt, blouse, or nylons, as is relevant.

The reason why we create a checklist is so that we don't need to reinvent this process every time we pack the suitcase. There are lots of other things to focus on, and you have a limited amount of creativity and decision-making power. Let's not use it on packing a suitcase.

- Pens, pencils, notepads
- A printed introduction for the person presenting you

Control the controllables. One thing you can control is what they say to introduce you before you come on stage. They can say the wrong thing, and it can kill your opening line.

I've been the one who has done that, said the wrong thing when I had a speaker whose opening line was going to be, "According to Jerry Seinfeld, you're more afraid of public speaking than you are of death. That means, you'd rather be the guy in the coffin than the guy giving the eulogy." Now, unfortunately for her, I had also seen that episode of Seinfeld and

my introduction for her was, “Our next speaker is the public speaking coach, Susanna. Did you all know that people are more afraid of death and they are of public speaking? In fact, according to Jerry Seinfeld, you’d rather be the guy in the coffin than the guy giving the eulogy. Ladies and gentlemen, put your hands together for Susanna!” She comes on stage and the first thing she says is, “Thanks for stealing my thunder, Majeed, I was going to make the Jerry Seinfeld joke.” It was awkward and her opening sucked. Now, as a pro, what could she have done differently? She could have skipped it. People don’t know what is supposed to happen, so you don’t draw attention to it and you go in a new direction; that is part of being nimble as a speaker.

For example, when you give a thirty-minute speech, don’t start with an apology, “Sorry, guys. I normally have an hour, but they said I had to keep it to 30 minutes, so, bear with me.” We don’t need to go there.

Also, she could have brought a written introduction to me ahead of time and said, “Majeed, read these words to introduce me, read only these words, do not read other words, do not say other things. Do we have an understanding? And now, please practice how to pronounce my name.

It’s Suzanne, not Susan not Susanna; it’s Suzanne. Can you say my name, please?”

Have an introduction prepared for them that they can read. That’s how you control your introduction.

So for my own introduction, I made a sheet with size eighteen font, triple-spaced, and laminated to hand to the person who will be introducing me. Then I upgraded it by removing my last name, because no matter how many times we practiced, people get up there, and they see my last name, and they go, *Oh, no, I don’t know how to say that*, which makes a less-than-powerful prompt for the welcoming applause. So now it’s Majeed, just my first name, like some others do as well.

Yes, we are still going through the checklist!

- Speaking notes on index cards: If you must use notes, use index cards, because it’s much better than a standard sheet of paper. No matter how calm you are, it looks like you’re nervous because it’s shaking.
- USB backup presentation. What if your laptop gets fried? If you can’t download your presentation, you have it on USB. If you don’t have it on USB, maybe you emailed to someone the night before, and they have it on their computer. If they don’t have it on their computer, and your USB doesn’t work, and the screen doesn’t work, have it on paper. If you can’t get your paper, have it in your head. Don’t put yourself in a position where you can’t give a speech without a PPT. Always have a backup.
- Email presentation backup. Keynote users, PowerPoint version of presentation slides. If you’re an Apple Keynote user, and you get there and they say, “We’re using PC and we’re only running PowerPoint.” You say, “Well, can I just plug in my laptop?” and they say, “No because the laptop’s in the back, in the room in the AV room and you’re on the stage.” or “No, we can’t plug in your presentation.” “Okay, don’t worry, I’ve got it exported to PowerPoint.” Your PowerPoint version is different from their PowerPoint version. So, you’ve got to make sure it works on the laptop that you’re using. Even better is to export it as a PDF. It’s never going to look wrong when it’s a PDF.
- Hardcopy of the slides and be able to go without slides.
- Props. If you have any props, that’s just a reminder.

- Markers for the flip chart, markers for the whiteboard, bring your own markers. People have a bad habit of trying to keep markers way beyond the day they should be kept. I get these big fat Sharpie magnums, like seven bucks a marker. Then the people in the back can read what I'm writing and it also keeps me brief, one word per line, because that's about as much as you write with these big markers.
- Print your handouts on nice paper so that when people touch and feel the sheets, they are thinking, *Oh that's nice!*
- Evaluation forms. I'm not so interested in the audience's critique of my speech (like, are they all speaker coaches)? No. I am more interested to know whether anyone in the audience wants to hire me for something. So for the client – the event planner – these are not called sales forms or lead forms; they're called evaluation forms.

It's a good idea to film yourself speaking. It's a great idea to film the audience for yourself to review afterward, because when you watch the audience while you listen to the recording of your speech, you can see when they're laughing, when they're bored, when they're distracted. It's a very good way to improve your speech based on the response of the audience.

- Video camera stand. I like to go on Facebook Live and have my phone filming me so that the five hundred people can see me online speaking; if you want to be seen as a speaker, you need to be speaking and people need to be able to see you, not just people in the room.

Day before presentation:

- Confirm your arrival by sending a text to the event planner.
- Get a good night's sleep.
- No alcohol

Day of presentation:

- Exercise in the morning.
- Arrive really early, reserve a seat near the front. Nobody appreciates it when they say, "Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome Majeed!" and I'm way in the back, walking up to the front, forever. You should be already at the front of the room so you are ready for the stage because your performance starts before you speak! Run and jump onto the stage, so people know that this guy's got energy!
- Block off the back rows with masking tape so people need to sit in the front.
- Make sure you meet the hosts, meet technicians, meet the people, and refer to them by name to thank them during your speech because nobody does this and you're a class act.
- Test your presentation equipment, test the clicker and make sure there's fresh batteries.
- Run the sound check. When you're running a sound check, it's not just "test, test, can you hear me in the back?" It's you speaking at full volume at different spots on the stage to check for hotspots, which is when there's microphone feedback from the speakers and then the AV guy needs to either lower the volume or fix the speaker.

Anything You Can Anticipate Ahead of Time, Do It

- Prepare the speaking area, the lectern, the walking space to flip charts. If you know you're moving during your speech, make sure you know where you're going to move.
- Ensure proper seating. One thing you want to watch out for is columns, when people are stuck behind a column. You either move the chair away from the column, or you put *Reserved* on the chairs behind the columns to ensure that everybody has a good seat. When you tell the event planner why you are doing that, they're thinking, *This person is a pro. I didn't even think of that.*
- Adjust the lights. You don't want a whole lot of light on your screen, because light on a screen looks like a dim presentation and subconsciously for the audience it makes the whole presentation look amateur.
- Adjust the temperature of the room. You're going to be a few degrees warmer than everybody else due to your hooting and hollering on stage, and everyone else is sitting. You don't want people calling the room too hot, because people get divorced over the right temperature for the room. You want to make sure that it's comfortable and fresh.
- Locate the restroom for yourself, because you will have an urge to run to the bathroom right before your speech, and you want to stay calm, knowing you can make it back.
- Drink water, because if you start coughing into the microphone the entire crowd is going to be distracted by someone trying to find you water. Have your own water there.

That's the checklist. I use it as a tool to not forget stuff, and I also use it as a part of my sales process by going through the checklist with the event planner. At the end, they say, "Wow, this is the most prepared I've ever been for a speaker." And I say, "Well, that's how I roll."

Promoting Your Event

Question: Have you ever been in a situation where you promoted an upcoming talk and you put it on social media with a video so people know that you're going to be speaking at a certain event? And how do you structure a thirty-second teaser video?

Answer: I promote my talks, and I tag the event on my social media posts. My event planner sees her event listed in the promotions and thinks, *I like that speaker because they're doing some free marketing for our event.* I always make the event planner feel like a hero. If I'm going to speak at a company about leadership I might happen to know from my conversations with the person hiring me that the leadership at this company is kind of a disaster. People are leaving, people are quitting, it's a toxic work environment. I'm not going to make a promotional video saying, "They're bringing me in because their leadership sucks." Rather, in my promotional video I'm going to portray the people bringing me in as brilliant, smart, wonderful. I'm going to say, "I'm so excited to be speaking at this company. I'm heading to the airport tomorrow. Just packing my bag. And I wanted to share how impressed I am that they are investing in their people through leadership training. It is a sign of a great company and a great culture. I had a conversation with my client just the other day while we were doing some final logistics, and she told me that this training is exactly what their people have been waiting for. I just feel honored and blessed to be part of such a great company that is

doing amazing things in the world, so I'm zipping up my bags, heading to the airport and can't wait to get in this talk at the company's conference."

Your goal is to make the client or the event feel like bringing you in was an honorable, noble thing to do and that other conferences and other companies would be so proud to be able to say that they brought you to their company.

What Happens Behind the Scenes with the Event Planner?

You probably picture a boardroom table, when you imagine them evaluating you, with a bunch of people looking at websites on the screen saying, "What do we think of this one? Next, what do we think of that one?" Usually, it is one person doing this process, unless it's a large conference where they make decisions by committee. They're saying, "Oh yeah, I know her, she's awesome. Oh, she came highly recommended." There's relationship and favoritism, and you can create that unfair advantage for yourself by taking responsibility for developing the relationship. This is the not-so-secret secret to getting an unfair advantage. Have a relationship with the person who's making the decisions.

You create the relationship by calling and following up, communicating over multiple mediums: phone, email, physical mail, follow-up phone call, send them a little selfie video.

"Hey, Julie, just got off the phone with you and wanted to say thank you. I'm super excited about your event. I want to help make it a huge success. I just want to send you this video to show you the smile on my face after speaking with you. I'm really looking forward to your event."

Guess who else does that? Nobody. Everybody follows the application procedure because they don't want to break the rules. The procedure is: wait for our call for speakers, fill out the application on our website, and wait for them to call you.

And if you like standing in line in the cold with everybody else, then that's what you should do. If you want to sneak in the back door where they're serving the hot chocolate, what you do is you make yourself unforgettable and you get your foot in the door. One very powerful way to get your foot in the door is to walk into the office. And there you are, looking fantastic, talking to the person who you know is the person in charge of the speaker organizers. Think of your communication with the event planners as a campaign.

The event planner will say, "Yeah, he came to the office. He's a really nice guy, and he followed up; he sent me this card. He offered to take me out for coffee. He sent that video message." And eventually, they will have you speak there. If you are doing this for a long time, you just keep on it. That's the advantage we have – I have this belief, like I'm a speaker. I'm going to be a speaker 'til I die. That means when I reach out to a conference to speak, this is the first time for the next seventy years. I'm following up, even when they leave the company, I'm following them into their next company.

People who are really good at this are speaker agents who have been doing it for twenty years. They have all the relationships. They have the trust. They have the follow-up, follow-up, follow-up.

We need to think of ourselves a little bit more as speaker agents and speaker marketers, focus less on *What do I say on the stage?* and more on *How do I become really good at developing relationships with people who get people on stage?*

One thing to keep you humble: At a big conference they spend more on the coffee than they spend on you.

And if you don't show up, the conference goes on. If the coffee doesn't make it, it's an absolute disaster. You are less important than the coffee, and the reason I mention this is that

many speakers have a diva complex because speaking is an emotionally fragile job. There's a lot of ego because everybody is looking at you. And when you're applying to speak and they say "No, not a fit for us," you take it personally and think, *I guess I'm not awesome enough.*

Instead, think about how you are a solution to a problem: the event planner's problem. How can you be the easiest speaker they've ever worked with, zero drama, super-prepared?

- I will text when I get on the plane
- Text: I'm on the plane
- When I get off the plane, text: I just landed
- When I get to the building, text: I'm at the building
- Text: I'm all set. Don't worry about me. Let me know if I can help with anything!

I'm showing up in communications, answering each unspoken question in the event planner's mind. Then I get there early. Yes, even for a free Lunch and Learn, be the easiest, most professional Lunch and Learn speaker they've ever had.

**The way you do one thing is the way you do everything.
You are an embodiment of your personal brand.**

Lunch and Learn

When you're doing a Lunch and Learn, you're taking full responsibility for every element.

- What are people having for lunch?
- Is it finger food?
- Are we doing forks and plates?
- Is it going to be loud?
- Are we going to eat first and then speak?
- I'm bringing in my own music; is anybody sensitive to loud noises?

You're very considerate and you're thorough and they think, *Hey, if this person is as thorough and professional with something as simple as a free Lunch and Learn, just imagine what they're going to do when they come to work for our company.*

Question: Is it worth my time to do a free Lunch and Learn?

Answer: You can do free speeches and get nothing. That is part of the process, but you can also reduce the likelihood of that happening.

The way you do that is you say, "Often, the people who hire me want to make sure that I'm a fit culturally by putting me in front of their group. And then they'll check with the group afterward and ask, "Did you like him or her, and should we work with them?"

Since I know this, I actually make that part of my process. What I mean is, I say that I'm going to ask everybody at the end of the Lunch and Learn if they want me to come and work at the organization. If the group consensus is, "No, not really," then I will simply say, "Thank you for your time." Then I tell the person who is bringing me in that at the end, I will ask people to rate on a scale of zero to five the desire to which they want me to come in and implement what we just talked about over lunch. And I say, "If the average is four or higher, I want you to commit to taking this to the next level. That means if any one-person rates me a one or a zero, it's going to drop the average down, and we're not going to do it. I'm going to give you veto power, because you are the person who's bringing me in. If everybody says five out of five that we want Majeed, and you have watched the presentation and say it's not

a fit, you have that veto power. Okay, so the only way we're moving forward together is if you want me and the whole group wants me."

I'm actually managing all of the expectations before I ever do the Lunch and Learn. Because some people, for whatever reason, think people like you and me like to do Lunch and Learn events for free and don't expect any business out of it.

They say, "Thanks for coming. That was really interesting." And you say, "Would you like to work together?" "Uh, well, no, we don't really have a budget." So, we're handling that conversation before we're ever booking the Lunch and Learn. The reason for the Lunch and Learn is for your team to evaluate if this is something that they want. If they want it and you want it, we're going to move forward, and we agreed to that.

How do you find out who to speak to and how arrange this to your benefit ahead of time?

When you call an organization, you could say, "I'd like to do a Lunch and Learn for your team. Who would be the person I would talk to about that?" When you are speaking with that next person, say, "My Lunch and Learn is on this topic ... is that within your scope of responsibility or is there someone else in the organization who is in charge of that particular issue?" Because people have budgets, and you need to find out who's writing your cheque. If Sally can give you the Lunch and Learn spot but Jim writes the cheque and Jim doesn't know about the Lunch and Learn, and Jim's already been talking to someone else and just signed the contract with them, you need to talk to Jim. And if Jim says, "Yeah, I'm interested. Talk to Sally to schedule the Lunch and Learn," then that's the path you move to. In the corporate buying situation, everybody in the entire company has the power to say no, and if one person is not into Julie, the proposed speaker, then that's the end of that idea. Typically, one person has the power to say yes and can part the seas and say, "Julie's getting the contract. Make it happen. I don't care if there's not a budget. Pay her what she's asking." That is the only person you should be talking to.

All the communications within the organization, to all the different people, it's all about getting to one person: the person who writes the cheque. Find out what you need to do to get an appointment with that person.

Free Speaking Gigs

As entrepreneurs, you and I are afflicted with a same condition: we are very, very optimistic. While everyone else thought it was too hard to start our business, we were saying, *This will be easy, this will be fun*. When it comes to speaking, when we consider the likelihood that business is going to come from the speech, we have to be careful with our optimism; we'll be thinking, *You never know who's going to be there*.

You will have lots of opportunity coming your way, and event planners will play off this, not necessarily in a malicious way, but they'll say, "It'll be great exposure for you." You can say, "Well, exposure doesn't pay the bills now, does it?" However, it does pay the bills when you're strategic about it and when you're clear on it.

When you accept a free speaking engagement, you have the right to ask questions:

- How many people are you going to have show up?
- Have you done this before?
- Are they paid attendees or are they free registrations?
- How many registrations do you have so far?
- Can you tell me a bit about the audience, their interests, education?

With free registrations you can count on 40 percent of people showing up. Usually people who have paid show up, though stuff will happen. My colleague had an event where

they were expecting one hundred people. I said, “Great, set up forty chairs.” They were wondering where the other sixty people were going to sit. I said, “Trust me, forty chairs will be fine.” They had one hundred people registered, and it snowed that day. It was a free event with food, which tends to have a higher show-up rate than a free event without food. So, we had enough shawarma to feed the entire office because there was a total of only twelve people in that audience. Now there were twelve people with forty chairs. With twelve people and eleven chairs, it is a sold-out event, standing room only.

Event Tip: Remove Chairs

I always travel with a roll of masking tape so that if I can’t remove chairs, for example in a theater, I can tape off the back rows. Then people have to sit up front. Next, I ask the event organizer to make an announcement, “Please move one seat closer to your neighbor, and fill in empty seats between you so that we can allow for people to sit on the edges of the aisles.” Otherwise, you get people sitting all over the place and the venue feels half full.

Let’s Talk About Websites for a Minute

I know some great speakers with crappy websites, and I know some pretty average speakers with great websites. Does a website get you booked? No.

Your website should, at the minimum, have a professional picture of you, a video of you speaking, and a clear statement of your area of expertise.

While you are not counting on your website to win you business, make sure it’s not losing you business either. If you’ve got time-stamped content on your site, make sure that it’s up-to-date. You don’t want it to look old. If your last blog was six months ago, it looks like you’re not in business anymore. Make it easy to contact you, to sign up for your newsletter, and to schedule an appointment.

Testimonials are great, from both an individual extolling the benefit for them from the results you produce and an event planner commending you as a speaker, with appreciation for the audience’s positive reception to your message – along with other benefits they have experienced by working with you. Remember, a testimonial saying “[insert your name] is a really great person” is less effective than “[insert your name] solved a real problem for us.”

What needs to be on your website?

- Photos of you: Invest in a really good portrait shoot
- Clear topic: This is what you’re an expert in, with testimonials
- Call to action: Email me, book an appointment, request [your name] to speak at your event

The Big Secret to Booking Stages

Figure out where you want to speak, reach out to the event organizers, and do it consistently. If you want to get consistently booked as a speaker then you should consistently ask to be booked at numerous places. You will find that for every five to ten places you contact, your success average will be one gig, either free or paid. Your success rates are going to be lower on paid gigs because of the timing issue. They may already have their speakers or there are budget constraints. It’s not impossible to get paid gigs. The trick is to know your ratio, for predictability.

Let’s say you would like to do one speech a week. Let’s say you have a one-in-twenty success rate. So, if you want to do one speech a week, how many places do you need to reach per week? You need to reach twenty, right? So, now you have predictability, because you

know how much outreach it takes to win a speech. That ratio will improve over time because you'll become more skilled, and you'll have more referrals.

If you're just sitting and waiting for the speaking engagements to come to you, eventually, if you tell everybody that you are speaker, they will come, but they won't come predictably. Predictability is what helps the entrepreneur sleep at night and grow the business during the day. Also, if you're planning to grow a company that requires employees, you need to know where the next month's revenue is coming from. When you have a system in place, you see it working; every time you reach out to twenty stages, you get a booked gig. Then you know that by reaching out to twenty more you will get the next booked gig. That's the campaign.

Let me break down some of the steps in the campaign:

- Start with an email asking are you the right person?
- If you're not the right person, who is the person who deals with the speakers?

The objective of the beginning of this campaign is to find the speaker organizer.

- Then you make the phone call following up on the email you sent

When you're calling to follow up, don't say, "Did you get my email?" because then they say, "Who are you again? I don't know, I haven't seen it" and then time is going by when you suggest they check their inbox and call you back. You simply begin, "I'm following up on the email I sent to you, and the reason for my call is to find the person in charge of organizing speakers for your upcoming event."

- Follow up with a video message. *Great talking to you*

Inject a little personality – you're a speaker. And further, it gives them even more of a sense of who you are when you do that rare thing to follow-up.

- Send a handwritten card

Make sure it's a nice card, so that for sure, they'll keep it, put it on their desk and see it hundreds of times, and other people will see it too.

- Business-related or relevant swag (an item with your brand on it), an item that people will want to keep on their desk – classic examples are mugs and pens, but you can get more creative. For example, I have gone to Staples and bought a bunch of the big red buttons that say "That was easy" when you press it. Then, I send a package by postal mail with the message: "If you want to work with the easiest speaker you've ever worked with ... press the 'easy' button." What is cool about this is, while it's in transit, even when you bump the package, you hear it. I call these gifts "unthrowawayable." They might give it to someone else, but nobody's going to throw it away. There it is, sitting on their desk, and every time they see it, they think about me and think I must be the easy speaker to work with. I know a guy who sends a microwave popcorn in the mail and says, *If you want to make your event really pop ...* Get it? Simple. Fun. It shows effort and creativity.

A handwritten note is already head-and-shoulders above almost everybody else. If you want to put in a piece of nice chocolate from the local chocolatier with a note, *You are so sweet to take my call the other day* or *Let's make your event a sweet success*. Why put in a sixty-five-cent Hershey bar (cheap is cheap) when you can put in the seven-dollar bar of chocolate, and you're going to get a phone call!

Most people think, *What's the least amount I can spend to acquire a client?*

What if you asked yourself, *What's the most I could spend to acquire a client?*

Now you start thinking about sending hundred-dollar bouquets of flowers. You start thinking about putting some nice stuff in the mail. Send something in the mail, a handwritten note, a physical package. You're becoming unforgettable.

- And then follow up after their events. Even when you've missed the deadline for their event, you know it is coming up in thirty days. You know they have speakers. After the event, send them, in the mail, a coupon for a massage or day at the spa, with a note, *Hey, I know you've worked really hard to make your event a success. Take the day on me. Enjoy.* Demonstrate, in a gentle, professional way, you're committed to supporting them. Guess who else is doing that – nobody.

They will know that you are not going away. You're either going to get a referral or you're going to get a booking, so, think of this as an ongoing never-ending campaign.

Imagine, you have your list of one hundred stages, and you reach out to all of them once a month. That form of consistent, ongoing outreach is a lot better than going to one hundred different stages every month, because on the third email, on the third phone call, on the second or third package in the mail, each of them will recognize, "Okay, this person is clearly committed to this relationship." Most people give up after the first attempt, and most people never make the first attempt anyway. They'd rather spend two years researching and writing a book to get a speaking gig than make a call to the conference organizer and say, "Can I speak at your conference?"

Contracts and Proposals

Contracts are great for clarifying expectations. That said, the sale isn't done until the payment is made. If I send you a contract that you sign that says you're going to pay me, I feel like it's not done. It's important that you get paid so that you can fully focus on delivering results and not worry if the client will pay you. I will say, "The way I work is I collect 50 percent upon agreement of the speaking engagement, and 50 percent on the day of delivery. As a way of saying thank you, I offer a 10 percent discount for clients who can pay in full up front." Most of my clients take the 10 percent discount because it's easier to process one payment instead of two. When you're working with a company, the fact is, the person you are dealing with is not spending their own money. They are allocating a budget. Make their life easier with one payment and help them allocate their budget to get the result they are responsible for.

"Can you send me a proposal?"

When someone asks for a proposal, you should say, "Of course, I can send you a proposal. Are you asking me to send a confirmation of our agreement or is there more to discuss before we reach a solid agreement?" And if there is more to discuss, then I say, "Let's go through the proposal together line by line on the phone right now, so that we know you can sign off on it."

Make it easy for them to pay you. Once the agreement is met, make payment simple and straight forward. When selling to an individual, take credit card payment so they get to accumulate their credit card points. When selling to a company, ask them what the easiest way is for them to make payment.

Summary

- No more “Be Awesome” strategy; go for what I call the stage-getting campaign, which is a series of communications designed to create a sales outcome.
- Make a spreadsheet of one hundred stages. Do your research.
- There are Credibility stages and Client stages
- We encourage our clients to speak at Client stages.
- Contact the past speakers at any conference where you are applying to speak.
- Speakers like to help each other out.
- Ask the event organizer, “What’s missing in your line up?” Listen carefully to what they are looking for so you can say, “Perfect. That’s what I do. That’s what I talk about.”
- Offer to be the event planner’s official backup speaker.
- Attend conferences where you’d like to speak because then you can meet the event organizer.
- Ask “When are you accepting applications?”
- There is more to being truly dedicated to landing speaking gigs than to apply and then wait, hoping that it will work. Ask questions!
- Before committing to any event, be sure to check your own calendar, so that you don’t go through all the steps and then find out the event is on a day that you’re unavailable.
- Find out what the event planner needs for speaker topics.
- Rather than a number, say “I would be happy to work with your budget, as long as we know that my message is a good fit for your audience.”
- Show up and expect the highest of yourself.
- Negotiate a contract for partial speaker fee and the rest of the value in access to the video, five VIP tickets, and three phone call introductions.
- Free or paid, only show up when you can rock the stage at your highest level, because every speech represents you, your brand, and your reputation.
- Use PayPal to make sending and receiving money easy.
- Make the event planner’s job easy by being the most prepared they have ever been with a speaker.
- Say to the event planner, “My job is not to be a speaker. My job is help you have a successful event.”
- Speaking Event Checklist – review before leaving and cover all possibilities for a successful event. Anything you can anticipate ahead of time, do it.
- Top Priority Tip: Pack suitcase the night before.
- Don’t begin a speech with an apology.
- Control your introduction by providing MC with notes and review with them in advance.
- Film yourself speaking for great learning! If possible, film audience to review their responses to your speech.
- Promote your event.
- Be proactive with communications with the event planner. Set their mind at ease at every opportunity.

- Follow-up, follow-up, follow-up. Send a card, a gift, stand out.
- Follow up after events even if you were not a speaker.
- The Lunch and Learn is for your team to evaluate if they want to work with the company.
- All the communications within the organization, to all the different people, it's all about getting to one person: the person who writes the cheque.
- When you accept a free speaking engagement, you have the right to ask questions.
- Event tip: remove chairs.
- Keep your website up to date. Make it easy to contact you, to sign up for your newsletter, and to schedule an appointment.
- Figure out where you want to speak, reach out to the event organizers, and do it consistently.
- If you're just sitting and waiting for the speaking engagements to come to you, they will come, but they won't come predictably.
- Inject a little personality – you're a speaker.
- Do what other people aren't doing.
- Make it easy for them to pay you.

Chapter 8

Step Five: Monetize Your Message

There are myriad ways to monetize your message beyond speaker fees. You can get paid by offering your services and products, such as your book, audiobook, online course, retreat, or group coaching program. You can also have a sponsor who pays you to speak to promote their message and who would love to be in a positive light in front of your audience. There are government grants available, for example, to companies who will hire you to train their team of employees. That's how I made six figures. I spoke at high schools about entrepreneurship, because it was part of their mandate. One speech can turn into many speeches. Remember to look at suitable associations who will benefit from your expertise, because if you're speaking at one chapter, you might as well speak at all the chapters. If there is a state organization that hires you, it is likely that all the other state organizations will hire you. These are ways for you to monetize your message, so that you're being paid to speak, whether it's with a speaker fee, exchange of value, or through revenues that are created as a result of you speaking.

Innovative Speaking Models

Marc Cordon has the "One Speech to Many" model where, as part of a strategy, he will target organizations that have multiple chapters. So, if he's going to speak at the Florida Association of whatever it is, he knows there are fifty others, and he builds that into a strategy where if they say yes, probably all of the other forty-nine are going to say yes. He works into the contracts things like, "I don't always accept my full fee in cash. If you can make three phone call recommendations this will make up the value to me ...". This is how he booked fifteen speaking gigs, but they weren't unrelated; it was three or four that turned into fifteen paid speaking gigs. He also has the "Speak to Get Clients" model. He targets coach training organizations where they have a crop of freshly minted coaches with no clients as yet. They bring Marc in to talk about happiness, which is positive psychology applied in the coaching environment. During his training he tells his story about how he filled his calendar with qualified leads and got a whole bunch of happy clients.

He'll add that into a speech and get clients after giving the speech. They paid him to come and talk about happiness; they didn't pay him to pitch, and he's not pitching, but he's talking about how he grew his business to a bunch of people who want to grow their business. Just like that.

Jennifer Edden speaks at conferences and meetings about her topic, sugar addiction. If she wants to host a talk, she can call up a health food store and put on a free workshop. Jen has a \$10,000 three-month coaching program on how to kick sugar addiction. She titles her talk with a very general public appeal, which is something like "How to Become Super Healthy, Lose Weight, Feel Great, and Be Amazing." It has a general public appeal, so it's not a title about sugar, because you want the title of the talk to appeal to your ideal client who thinks, *Now that's something I'm going to go see*. If they see "How to Kick a Sugar Addiction," they might think, *Well, I don't have the sugar addiction* because they probably don't know that sugar is in everything and their addiction to food is actually an addiction to sugar, right?

Jennifer calls up the health food store and, similar to Valerie's approach to the funeral home, she'll say, "I want to have a talk at your health food store," which will involve the store rearranging the aisles and bringing in a bunch of chairs, for a talk to happen in the store. "And I want you to help me promote it. Let's put it on your bulletin board, and in your newsletter. Let's advertise it at your cash registers for a month ahead of time. It will be a free talk about how to lose weight, feel great and be amazing, be super healthy. What I'll do is I will tell all my friends to come and bring as many people as I can to your health food store, and I will take the audience by the hand and walk them through the aisles and say, buy this buy this buy this and do all your shopping here. Would it be okay if I host an event here at your store?" Every store is going to say, "Oh my goodness, you're going to tell them to do all their shopping here and show them what to buy? Of course!"

After the talk she says, "And for those of you who want my support personally over the next three months to permanently lose weight, feel great, and be awesome, be super healthy, and never feel the need to indulge in food again, and be the healthiest one of your friends..." Then she'd have a conversation with you, a strategy call. One in three strategy calls becomes a \$10,000 client, so on average, for every speech she gives, she gets one client. What's her speaker fee? Zero. That's pretty simple and easy.

In this way, the pitch to the event planner – the owner of the grocery store – is about bringing people in at no cost to anyone and encouraging them to buy at their store by educating them about the products. The pitch to the audience member is how to look great, feel great, have clear skin – all the results they are looking for, right? Jenn gets the people there, gives the talk, the store owner is happy, audience members are happy, and they get a free consultation with this amazing woman. Some of those free consultations turn into your ideal client who is thinking, *This is the time for me. I need to work with you.*

Those are examples of innovative speaking models. I want you think outside of the speaker-fee model. I'm not opposed to speaker fees, but chasing speaker fees is just a lot of hard work, though it's not impossible.

Sharing Best Practices

Now I'll tell you a quick story about the \$350,000-room at the Canadian Association of Professional Speakers (CAPS) annual convention. There's a room where they meet, and you have to prove that you made over \$350,000 in the last year. That was my goal from day one, to get in that room. What happens in that room? Are they celebrating and patting each other on the back and laughing and saying *we're rich*? Two years ago, I got in for the first time, and last year I was there as well.

I was really curious about everybody's business model. Every single person makes the majority of their revenue, typically 80 percent or more, from services (coaching, consulting, training), and they use the platform, the speech, as their positioning and their marketing. I also happen to know the results of the member survey that's done by CAPS. Presumably the five hundred members of CAPS are the five hundred professional speakers in Canada. The average income of a professional speaker is less than \$25,000. This survey is not publicly advertised, because that's not a great selling point of joining CAPS. But the fact is that experts getting paid lots of money to speak is rare, and experts who are speaking and making lots of money are using the platform to drive revenue into their business. Is making money a big part of your priority? If you think, *I'm not really into the making money, but I want to make a huge impact and difference*, talk to someone who knows that being creative with lots of money makes a huge impact and difference.

If You Want to Do Well for the World, You Need to Do Well for Yourself

Take that money and spend it on things that are useful and important to you. I think making money is something that should be prioritized, and as a speaker, the best way to do that is to speak in front of clients and have something that is incredibly useful, incredibly valuable for them at that moment. They will be thinking, *I want to hire this person, I want to work with this person*. So give them something that they can buy, make it easy and fun for them to buy from you. Price it in such a way that the act of purchasing is a transformational act, this is an important point.

The act of hiring you is transformative, meaning that the organization or the individual who is spending that much money with you is feeling like this is a real, significant investment. Otherwise, it's an expense and it's a distraction. Consider the value the client or company is receiving. For example, an individual may pay \$500 for a legal document, but is that going to solve their problem? It's not. So, when a company hires you to do an all-day training so that the people become more educated, how much are they paying? They might pay \$3,000 to have more of what they need.

Negotiation Conversation Sample

How does this first conversation go with the new client after they have seen you speak and would like to hire you to do training for their company? The following is a transcript from a role play activity in my expert speaker training.

You: I'm so glad that we connected and I'm glad that we're able to follow up and get on this call. I just have a few questions for you to make sure that my training is actually what you need. Can I ask you, what was it that compelled you to reach out and say that you might be interested in my training?

Potential New Client: To me, it was a relatable training. It was different than just hearing what the law says and it actually gave me actionable steps that I could take and share with the people who work here to help them resolve conflict, instead of just making an investigation determination that is going to result in one person quitting every time.

You: So, you saw my training as something that was actionable and different that you think might prevent an investigation, resulting in employee turnover. Is that right, did I hear that correctly?

Potential New Client: Yeah. And also, in the organization, with the "me too" movement and working with vulnerable clientele, it's important that we know what is compliant. We want to make sure we're doing the right thing.

You: Right, so, you know that this issue is gaining a lot of presence in people's mind with the "me too" movement, and you just want to make sure you're on solid ground. Did I get that right?

Potential New Client: Yeah.

You: Okay, great. First, I would like to honor you because I wish there were more organizations like yours that were as conscious about this issue. Let's say you and I work together and we do this training. What are some of the benefits you think you'd experience as an organization?

Potential New Client: Hopefully, it would make sure people understand that they can report harassment if it is happening and open up a conversation with employees in general and help them feel like they're allowed to talk about that. My vision is to have a morning presentation for all the employees that's basically like the speech I saw you give, and then in

the afternoon, we can do a regulatory and compliance presentation to all the administrative staff. Then we will know that we're able to protect the company and follow the law.

You: That's great. Yeah, that sounds perfect, and what do you think would be some of the results and benefits of the training over the next months or even year?

Potential New Client: Hopefully we don't get sued. And I would like us to have the tools to respond effectively if we do get a report, more than determining who we believe, but also in how we resolve it, how we create a better environment for the people who work for us. To minimize the issues that have been coming up between staff and clients, it will save time and money.

You: Okay, so you've got some sensitivities with the clients. You've got some unique situations with staff and they're kind of on edge and a bit stressed about all this. And you see the result of this training will be to save time and save money, is that it right?

Potential New Client: Yeah.

You: Any other benefits conceiving coming from the training?

Potential New Client: Ideally happier and safer experiences for staff in a safe work environment.

So far, you have only been asking open-ended questions, listening to her and repeating back to her what you're hearing. Now you are going to ask a leading question, which is a yes or no question.

You: Do you think your staff would be happy and feel appreciated if you invest in this training?

Potential New Client: I hope so.

You: Generally, one of the things that I see is that the staff tend to feel valued and appreciated when their employer takes time to actually invest time and money into their skills and their training. So that's why I'm asking.

Potential New Client: One of my concerns is that sometimes the staff don't like to take time out of their day to deal with this kind of issue. Another concern is that because some of our staff have been accused by clientele, they can feel put on the spot.

You: Great, we should work out a strategy to reduce the likelihood of those things happening now that we know that. So, when we move forward to start working together, when we do our planning and logistics for this training, we're going to come up with a strategy to reduce that effect on your people. Sounds like a good plan?

Potential New Client: Yeah, right.

You: Now let's just say, for whatever reason, we decide that this isn't a fit. Let's say, worst case scenario, potentially one staff member or a client feel someone else's harassing them and we don't respond appropriately and it's traumatizing both to the employee and to the client. And we get sued. Have you been sued before?

Potential New Client: Yes.

You: Well, as a lawyer, I've seen more of these lawsuits than I care to ever see, and I know that it's not just about money. It actually can be very disheartening to the entire organization emotionally. It's like an emotional trauma that happens to the whole organization. Morale is low, productivity is low and then one person leaves and everyone misses them and then another person leaves and there's a new person nobody likes, and the whole turnover can actually really taint the culture for years. It's hard to put a real dollar amount on that, but you can't put a dollar amount on the settlement. I know these settlements tend to be north of six figures and an organization like yours is particularly highly exposed to a high-settlement lawsuit like that. So, I think it's very wise that we're having this conversation. It's time to figure out if now is the right time for us to do this together. I know

that you're the right kind of company to have this training, because I know your values based on what you've told me. I know the risks. I know this would be really helpful to reduce that risk and from a legal perspective, if I was your lawyer giving you advice, I would recommend investing in a course like this training. So, the question is, do you want to do this and do you want to do it now?

We still haven't set the price because if they don't want to do this and if they don't want to do this now, there isn't a price.

Potential New Client: Yes. Well, it depends on what it costs.

That's the kind of conversation you would have with a potential client. The client is saying, "I want this in the morning, this in the afternoon." The thing is they don't know what they need, and they don't know if what they need takes three hours or three days or three months. So let them tell you what they think they need, and you can listen because what they're buying is the result: reduced liability and happier staff, job security, making their boss happy and the ability to sleep at night. If this is the HR person, she's buying what's going to make her successful, and be able to keep her job.

The buyer doesn't know your business. The buyer doesn't know what you charge. They might have hired a trainer for a day before and that trainer charged \$500 so that's what they are thinking of paying. Now if you get into a position where the client says, "Oh, that much for a day!" then you can say something like, "Well, I'd be happy to do a six-week training, but most of my clients would rather get it done sooner than later. So, we can condense the six weeks to a day."

Potential New Client: Yes, I want to do it right now.

You: Okay, perfect. So, what do you think would be a fair investment to save your organization possibly hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Potential New Client: We're a nonprofit, we don't really have a big budget, so I think we have between like \$500 and \$1,500.

You: I would be remiss to tell you that for \$1,500, you would not get anybody of my caliber. And I don't have anybody to recommend to you for \$1,500 because I would say that's likely a waste of your time and your money. But I'd rather see you get it done right the first time, instead of hiring someone else who is not a lawyer, and you're not going to find someone of my expertise who is also a practicing lawyer. That means that if you work with them, later you will come to me with a whole bunch of questions, and I'm going to have to bill by the hour. An exercise like this, saving hundreds of thousands of dollars, is an investment in reducing your employee turnover and an investment in improving morale in your organization. An investment of that calibre is not cheap. For me to do this exercise with you and for me to do it right, it's an investment of only \$10,000, so how can we make that work? We may need to look at other budgets. You have a \$1,500 budget, but you may have other budgets for retreats or personal development and professional development. Let's work together on finding the budget to make this work. Now, what's the number you want to actually do?

Inspiration, Education, and Implementation

At \$10,000 they're going to do exactly what you say. They can record every word and everyone's going to make sure that implementations happen. If you want to do them a favor, so they get better-quality service, you charge more. Your lack of certainty and wondering if you will get them results is going to kill your sales at any price. Nobody wants to waste time on someone who's not certain. You have to have absolute total confidence that you will get them the results, no matter what. Even if you have to go beyond the scope of the day, your

certainty is the high watermark in the relationship. You have to show up with the confidence that your client is not going to ever have that problem again and that you 100 percent know how to do deal with it. They're investing in transformation.

Otherwise, what you're doing when you lower the bar for yourself is you give yourself the excuse that it's okay to screw up this one. That's morally and ethically wrong. Give yourself a price point where you have to show up and kick ass no matter what, because then you will, and if you think that they are better served with eight weeks of ongoing support, then add that to the offer. This is how I work that into conversation: I say, "The problem with motivational speakers and one-day trainings is that they don't work and they're a waste of money. If you want me for an hour to fire up the troops, and if you want me for a day to fill their brains with wisdom and knowledge, well, that's fine, and I'm happy to do that. The problem is that nine times out of ten nothing gets implemented, and everybody concludes that the training didn't work."

To drive home the point of the value of ongoing training and coaching, I'll write out on a whiteboard or on a napkin: inspiration, education, and implementation.

Inspiration gets them fired up. That's the speech, that's the Lunch and Learn, and it might even be a half day. Everyone's like, *Wow, this is amazing*. They know there's a problem, and there's a solution, and we've seen the Promised Land, but we don't know what to do. That's inspiration, and I think a little bit of inspiration is dangerous. Get them all excited, and then what?

The next phase is education. Education gives them the tools, so they actually learn how this stuff works. They learn the underpinning frameworks, they understand the psychology and where it came from, the history. They have a deep understanding and in a training environment, they can even practice what it would look like in a safe environment in front of an instructor. And actually be in it. The problem is the audience will eventually leave the classroom. They're exposed to the realities of the world and they think, *Oh this is harder than I thought, what am I supposed to do?* And now they have no resources. So, while a little bit of inspiration can be dangerous, education gives them the tools, but now they don't really know what to do with it.

So, the final step necessary for lasting impact is implementation. That can come in the form of ongoing training, coaching, and/or consulting. You want to help them actually transform their organization. You want them to say "this is now baked into our DNA and our culture." For lasting results, you have to go all the way with all three: inspiration, education, and implementation.

You are persuading people to buy into the larger transformation picture. You charge them whatever you can because they're invested and they take it seriously. I'll charge the thousand dollars for a Lunch and Learn. You have to get over your hesitation in asking to be paid. You're a speaker. This is what you do; people pay you when you speak.

Imagine charging \$3,000 for an hour and a half. Think of it not as the amount of time, but as all the sweat, blood, tears and money you put into your mind that you're now able to distill into that brilliant sixty or ninety minutes. You can also look at it this way: you don't give free speeches, but you do make charitable donations. So you made a \$1,000 donation to the City Club. You could look at it that way. And you could say to the company president, "My fee is \$1,000 for this presentation and in consideration of the opportunity that we have to work together in an ongoing basis, I propose that I could waive my fee and credit you that \$1,000. That said, it's actually free to you on the condition that we're using this as an opportunity to see if there's a long-term fit for us. And then if that's an agreement that you

will hire me on an ongoing basis, I'm happy to make the presentation and waive my \$1,000 fee."

You can do it that way because then it's above-board that you're here for the purpose of helping them make the decision to hire you long-term.

Further, "I want your entire organization to understand the message and buy in, so that when we do work together, they already know who I am, they already know our story, and they're already excited when you make the announcement that we're doing a long-term implementation together. That, to me, is an investment in our relationship and an investment in your people that they will recognize when they hear your announcement. They know who I am and what this is all about."

I've seen it happen where people will spend a small amount and feel a small amount better and then give up, when they could have a full implementation of results, which I'd prefer for them.

Summary

- Monetize your message beyond speaker fees: offer services and products, such as your book, audiobook, online course, retreat, or group coaching program. Have a sponsor or work with companies who can apply for government grants to train their team of employees.
- Focus on organizations that have multiple chapters so you can speak at them all.
- Title your speech for your ideal client and work with stores to have free presentation and share in promotion for the event.
- Share best practices with other speakers. Learn and grow.
- Make it easy and fun for the audience members to buy from you.
- Price your service and products in such a way that the act of purchasing is a transformational act.
- Is making money a big part of your priority? Talk to someone who knows that being creative with lots of money makes a huge impact and difference.
- Review the negotiation process.
- When you lower the bar for yourself you give yourself the excuse that it's okay to screw up this one.
- The value of ongoing training and coaching: inspiration, education, and implementation.

Chapter 9

What Is Holding You Back from Becoming a Successful, Highly-Paid Speaker?

What is going to hold you back now? What's actually going to stop you? It probably seems like a lot of work, and when you do it alone, it can be very confusing and daunting. That's why I'm here to help you make it as simple and easy and possible. Trust me, when you're on that stage making a difference in people's lives, you'll know that the work pays off, big time!

The Mindset of a Speaker

Avoid this mindset:

- "I'm not ready" – Now is your time. The opportunity to serve is yours for the taking.
- "I'm not expert enough" – You are an expert to those you can help

"Now" is the mindset you want to have.

- I can help people now
- I am helping people to have the right mindset
- The world is waiting to hear from me
- I can help people with my story

I like to get all moral and ethical with myself when I say:

- "This is my duty to share this message"
- "Not sharing my message is robbing the world"
- "How dare I be so selfish to keep my message to myself?"

It's common to be forever stuck in this "I'm confused, I'm not ready" state. All you have to do is, instead of saying, "I don't know how," say:

- "I read *Become a Highly-paid Speaker* and now I know what's up"
- "I figure things out as I go"
- "I learn from my mistakes"

This moment is the time to get your mind right. Imagine, it's true, that there are events, conferences, companies, groups, and associations right now that are struggling, looking for you. And when they find you, when you show up, they will say, "Wow, you're exactly what we've been looking for."

Having that reality in mind each day is a powerful mindset for you to be cultivating as you go about your business of getting yourself speaking gigs. Imagine that mindsets are interchangeable articles of clothing. Clothing becomes familiar. After a while, you outgrow it, and it doesn't fit right; so you take it off. You put on another one and feel that it suits you

better. You can see now that the old mindset of “I’m not ready” and “I’m confused” and “I don’t know how” and “I’m not expert enough” are ones to remove and replace with “The world wants to hear my message” and “The world is waiting to hear from me” and “People are actually looking for someone like me” and “I can help people with my story” and “It’s my calling to share this message.”

Visit ExpertSpeaker.com/training for free training to help you grow your speaking business.

Summary

- When you’re on that stage making a difference in people’s lives, you’ll know that the work pays off, big time!
- Cultivate positive mindset of the speaker.

Chapter 10

Your Message Matters

My wish for you on your journey, dear reader, is that every speech you give is a perfect vehicle for your message, and that you are able to clearly create your speaker lifestyle as a fulfilling fit for you, your family, and your ideal client.

There is one story that I feel is important to include. It's about my firstborn baby. It provides insight into the speaker lifestyle and what you're imagining it will be like, how you imagine it fitting into your life.

So, there we are, at the hospital on October 20 when my baby was born. It was after a thirty-six-hour labor that ended in emergency C-section. We had been planning a natural birth in the hospital for our first baby. Baby's beautiful, mom's beautiful. Within forty-eight hours, I have a scheduled meeting to sign a contract with two gentlemen downtown which, to date, will be the biggest contract in my business. I am not going to miss that meeting. I say, "Sweetheart, I'll be right back, gotta go sign this contract." I go home, have the first shower I've had in three days, get a haircut, and go to the meeting. One of the gentlemen says, "How's your wife doing?" and I have not mentioned to them that we had the baby. They know it was her final days of pregnancy. I say, "Oh, yeah, we had the baby, she's at the hospital," and they pause. They look at each other, and they look at me, and I know that I have screwed up. The guy says to me, "What the ... are you doing here?" One is a father of four, the other is a father of two. And I am like, okay, I made a mistake, this is bad. I need to get out of here. So, we sign the papers. I take the paperwork and return to the hospital. Elaine sees me and she says, "You got a haircut? Are you serious? You've been out and getting haircuts? Welcome back, where you been, buddy?"

I took that moment to teach myself that I have family now. I have a child. I have a wife and mother to take care of. The worth of every opportunity that is outside of the home has to be weighed against leaving the family?

As a speaker, having my family changes my priorities significantly. Luckily, technology has brought us to an age where I can give a speech to one hundred people around the world, click a button, be done and go hang out with the kids in minutes. I am telling this story about the opportunity cost in business. There are a couple of lessons in the story about the day our first baby was born. One is, business can be done remotely. They could have emailed me the contract because I could have signed it and sent it back. I did not need to drive to an office to sign a piece of paper. Two, don't design a business that has you missing the most important things. Don't ever put yourself in a situation where you have to be on the road or believe you have to be somewhere away from those precious moments.

You are a speaker marketer, so you are applying to speak, and asking to speak, day in and day out. If your experience is typical, rejection is the norm. Get used to every No being one step closer to Yes. To make it easier for yourself, hire a coach who knows how to craft the speech, who knows how to book the gigs, who has access to incredible speaker agents, and who is doing all of these elements systematically. If you're going to hire someone, hire someone who's doing it now and who's helping other people now, not someone who was doing it a long time ago. The world was different ten to twenty years ago.

Your story can change the world by changing one person's life. This was most powerfully illustrated for me with a kid in high school where I was talking about entrepreneurship in a business class of twenty kids. You can imagine that many are not paying attention. They're doing their own thing. I'm trying to be interesting and entertaining. I tell my story about starting the snow cone business and my story about the kid in the dorm room making \$500 a day with grilled cheese sandwiches. I did my speech and left the school.

A couple weeks later I get an email from a kid in the class. He wrote, "Thanks for your talk on entrepreneurship. I decided to become an entrepreneur instead of doing what I was going to do." I was curious and wrote back, asking him what he was going to do. Maybe he was going to be a doctor. He replies, "I was actually thinking about committing suicide." I freaked out and didn't know what to do. I emailed the teacher; I emailed the principal. The student emailed again, "No, really, I'm fine now, I have a project I'm interested in." I had no idea that talk about entrepreneurship saved a life. Now, every speech I give, whether it's about entrepreneurship, time management, or marketing, I go into the room expecting to save one life. It keeps me focused to be my absolute best.

I show up, fully repaired, fully present, as inspirational as I can possibly be, because you never know who's in the room. You never know when or how your message is going to resonate. I don't know how many other lives I have saved of people in the audience who didn't email me. Perhaps even conversations have been sparked from what has been heard in my speech. I can only imagine.

A Speaker's Ripple Effect Is Profound

Imagine each person in your audience is going home, telling your story to their family at the dinner table. They are going into the office the next day, telling the story. If you approach every speech, every speaking opportunity like that, it will be a breeze to overcome the challenge of filling out the form for a call for speakers, and the challenge of thinking, *I just left my fourth voicemail, and they haven't called me back* because you have as much conviction as a person with the cure for cancer. You know, *My speech needs to be heard. It's not about me. It's not about my ego. It's not about me looking good on a stage. It's because I know that this is saving people's lives.* And you can adopt that in your speaking life and take it on and say *I know my speech is saving people's lives. It's changing people's lives; it's inspiring. It's changing communities.*

For me to be scared and to stay small and hold back from bringing my message to the world would be robbing the world, and I will feel guilty about that. Use your guilt and emotion to drive you to do what it takes to bring your story to life. Those are the parting words I have for you.

To be of full service to you, I recommend as your next step to join the Expert Speaker Institute. We have a bureau where we represent our clients for speaking gigs, and the first step is to take our "Make Money Speaking" program.

The Expert Speaker signature training program, Expert Speaker Live, is designed for people who have a message and a speech that is not yet perfectly crafted or who know how to get on a stage but don't know how to deliver to clients after the stage, like the big contracts following the speech. We teach you how to engineer the talk to attract clients and we coach you on an ongoing basis. Any time that you have a question, you can ask me and I am right there, answering your questions. We craft the speech and we film it with a high-end professional video team, three high-end cameras with three camera operators and a live audience.

If you want to get paid speaking fees of \$5,000 or \$10,000, you need to look like a professional, seasoned speaker. That means you have a great speaker reel. We make that for you.

Your speaking video is designed for your ideal client to find it online and go, *Oh my gosh, she's amazing, got to hire her.* That video is designed for your event planner to view and say, "We need to have this person speak at our event."

This is the fastest way to grow your business speaking. Period.

If you are ready, apply for a one-on-one strategy call with me at www.expertspeaker.com/apply.

If you think, *I'm just going to figure it from here,* you are choosing the slower, harder, more expensive path. The choice is yours.

If you want to press the easy button and get yourself speaking on stages, get your signature speech created and filmed, then apply to work with the Expert Speaker Institute: www.expertspeaker.com/apply.

Summary

- Your story can change the world by changing one person's life.
- IMAGINE and step into the best story of your life!

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