

DALE CARNEGIE

The Quick &
Easy Way to
Effective
Speaking





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Introduction

DALE CARNEGIE BEGAN teaching his first public speaking course in 1912 for the YMCA at 125th Street in New York City. In those days, public speaking was regarded as an art, rather than as a skill, and its teaching aims were directed toward producing orators and platform giants of the silver-tongued variety. The average business or professional man who merely wanted to express himself with more ease and self-confidence in his own milieu did not wish to spend his time or money studying mechanics of speech, voice production, rules of rhetoric, and formalized gestures. Dale Carnegie's courses in effective speaking were immediately successful because they gave these men the results they wanted. Dale approached public speaking not as a fine art requiring special talents and aptitude, but as a skill which any normally intelligent person could acquire and develop at will.

Today, the Dale Carnegie courses circle the globe and the validity of Dale Carnegie's concept is attested to by thousands of his students everywhere, men and women from every walk of life, who have successfully improved their speaking as well as their personal effectiveness.

The textbook Dale Carnegie wrote for his courses, *Public Speaking and Influencing Men in Business*, went through more than fifty printings, was translated into eleven languages, and was revised by Dale Carnegie several times to keep pace with his own increased knowledge and experience. More people used the book each year than the combined enrollments of the largest universities.

The fourth revision of the book has been based upon my husband's own notes and ideas. The title is one which he himself chose before his work was interrupted by death. I have tried to keep in mind his basic philosophy, that effective speaking is more than "saying a few words" to an audience: it is the revealing expression of a human personality.

Every activity of our lives is communication of a sort, but it is through speech that man asserts his distinctiveness from other forms of life. He alone, of all animals, has the gift of verbal communication and it is through the quality of his speech that he best expresses his own individuality, his essence. When he is unable to say clearly what he means, through either nervousness, timidity, or foggy thought-processes, his personality is blocked off, dimmed out, and misunderstood.

Business, social, and personal satisfaction depend heavily upon a person's ability to communicate clearly to his fellow men what he is, what he desires, and what he believes in. And now, as never before, in an atmosphere of international tensions, fears, and inse-

curities, we need the channels of communication between peoples kept open. It is my hope that *The Quick and Easy Way to Effective Speaking* will be helpful in all these ways, both to those who wish merely to function with greater ease and self-confidence in practical pursuits, and to those who wish to express themselves more completely as individuals seeking a deeper personal fulfillment.

Dorothy Carnegie

CONTENTS

Introduction 1

Part One / Fundamentals of Effective Speaking

- 1 Acquiring the Basic Skills 3
 - Take Heart from the Experience of Others* 5
 - Keep Your Goal Before You* 11
 - Predetermine Your Mind to Success* 16
 - Seize Every Opportunity to practice* 20
- 2 Developing Confidence 23
 - Get the Facts About Fear of Speaking in Public* 24
 - Prepare in the Proper Way* 28
 - Predetermine Your Mind to Success* 35
 - Act Confident* 37
- 3 Speaking Effectively the Quick and Easy Way 42
 - Speak About Something You Have Earned the Right to Talk About Through Experience or Study* 43
 - Be Sure You Are Excited About Your Subject* ... 51
 - Be Eager to Share Your Talk with Your Listeners* 55

Part Two / Speech, Speaker, and Audience

4 Earning the Right to Talk 61

THE QUICK & EASY WAY TO EFFECTIVE SPEAKING

	<i>Limit Your Subject</i>	62
	<i>Develop Reserve Power</i>	63
	<i>Fill Your Talk with Illustrations and Examples</i>	67
	<i>Use Concrete, Familiar Words That Create Pictures</i>	76
5	Vitalizing the Talk	80
	<i>Choose Subjects You Are Earnest About</i>	81
	<i>Relive the Feelings You Have About Your Topic</i>	89
	<i>Act in Earnest</i>	90
6	Sharing the Talk with the Audience	92
	<i>Talk in Terms of Your Listeners' Interests</i>	93
	<i>Give Honest, Sincere Appreciation</i>	97
	<i>Identify Yourself with the Audience</i>	99
	<i>Make Your Audience a Partner in Your Talk</i>	103
	<i>Play Yourself Down</i>	105
	Part Three / The Purpose of Prepared and Impromptu Talks	
7	Making the Short Talk to Get Action	111
	<i>Give Your Example, an Incident from Your Life</i>	119
	<i>State Your Point, What You Want the Audience to Do</i>	127
	<i>Give the Reason or Benefit the Audience May Expect</i>	130
8	Making the Talk to Inform	133

CONTENTS

	<i>Restrict Your Subject to Fit the Time at Your Disposal</i>	135
	<i>Arrange Your Ideas in Sequence</i>	137
	<i>Enumerate Your Points as You Make Them</i> ...	138
	<i>Compare the Strange with the Familiar</i>	140
	<i>Use Visual Aids</i>	148
9	<i>Making the Talk to Convince</i>	152
	<i>Win Confidence by Deserving It</i>	154
	<i>Get a Yes – Response</i>	155
	<i>Speak with Contagious Enthusiasm</i>	159
	<i>Show Respect and Affection for Your Audience</i>	162
	<i>Begin in a Friendly Way</i>	163
10	<i>Making Impromptu Talks</i>	169
	<i>Practice Impromptu Speaking</i>	171
	<i>Be Mentally Ready to Speak Impromptu</i> ...	174
	<i>Get into an Example Immediately</i>	175
	<i>Speak with Animation and Force</i>	176
	<i>Use the Principle of the Here and Now</i>	177
	<i>Don't Talk Impromptu— Give an Impromptu Talk</i>	178
 <i>Part Four / The Art of Communicating</i>		
11	<i>Delivering the Talk</i>	185
	<i>Crash Through Your Shell of Self – Consciousness</i>	186
	<i>Don't Try to Imitate Others—Be Yourself</i>	188
	<i>Converse with Your Audience</i>	190
	<i>Put Your Heart into Your Speaking</i>	195

*Practice Making Your Voice Strong
and Flexible* 197

Part Five / The Challenge of Effective Speaking

12 **Introducing Speakers, Presenting
and Accepting Awards** 203

*Thoroughly Prepare What You Are
Going to say* 206

Follow the T – I – S Formula 209

Be Enthusiastic 214

Be Warmly Sincere 215

*Thoroughly Prepare the Talk
of Presentation* 215

*Express Your Sincere Feelings in the Talk
of Acceptance* 217

13 **Organizing the Longer Talk** 219

Get Attention Immediately 220

Avoid Getting Unfavorable Attention 231

Support Your Main Ideas 233

Appeal for Action 240

14 **Applying What You Have Learned** 246

*Use Specific Detail in Everyday
Conversation* 248

*Use Effective Speaking Techniques
in Your Job* 250

Seek Opportunities to Speak in Public 251

You Must Persist 252

Keep the Certainty of Reward Before You ... 255

Acknowledgments 263

PART ONE

Fundamentals of Effective Speaking

In every art there are few principles and many techniques.

In the chapters that make up the first part of this book, we discuss the basic principles of effective speaking and the attitudes to make these principles come alive.

As adults, we are interested in a quick and easy way to speak effectively. The only way we can achieve results quickly is to have the right attitude about achieving our goal and a firm foundation of principles to build upon.

CHAPTER ONE

Acquiring the Basic Skills

I STARTED TEACHING classes in public speaking in 1912, the year the Titanic went down in the icy waters of the North Atlantic. Since then, more than seven hundred and fifty thousand people have been graduated from these classes.

In the demonstration meetings preceding the first session of the Dale Carnegie Course, people are given the opportunity of telling why they intend to enroll and what they hope to gain from this training. Naturally, the phraseology varies; but the central desire, the basic want in the vast majority of cases, remains surprisingly the same: "When I am called upon to stand up and speak, I become so self-conscious, so frightened, that I can't think clearly, can't concentrate, can't remember what I intended to say. I want to gain self-confidence, poise, and the ability to think on my feet. I want to get my thoughts together in logical order, and I want to be able to talk clearly and convincingly before a business or social group."

Doesn't this sound familiar? Haven't you experienced these same feelings of inadequacy? Wouldn't you give a small fortune to have the ability to speak

convincingly and persuasively in public? I am sure you would. The very fact that you have begun reading the pages of this book is proof of your interest in acquiring the ability to speak effectively.

I know what you are going to say, what you would say if you could talk to me: "But Mr. Carnegie, do you really think I could develop the confidence to get up and face a group of people and address them in a coherent, fluent manner?"

I have spent nearly all my life helping people get rid of their fears and develop courage and confidence. I could fill many books with the stories of the miracles that have taken place in my classes. It is not, therefore, a question of my *thinking*. I know you can, if you practice the directions and suggestions that you will find in this book.

Is there the faintest shadow of a reason why you should not be able to think as well in a perpendicular position before an audience as you can sitting down? Is there any reason why you should play host to butterflies in your stomach and become a victim of the "trembles" when you get up to address an audience? Surely, you realize that this condition can be remedied, that training and practice will wear away your audience-fright and give you self-confidence.

This book will help you to achieve that goal. It is not an ordinary textbook. It is not filled with rules concerning the mechanics of speaking. It does not dwell on the physiological aspects of vocal production and articulation. It is the distillation of a lifetime spent

in training adults in effective speaking. It starts with you as you are, and from that premise works naturally to the conclusion of what you want to be. All you have to do is co-operate—follow the suggestions in this book, apply them in every speaking situation, and persevere.

In order to get the most out of this book, and to get it with rapidity and dispatch, you will find these four guideposts useful:

* * *

FIRST / TAKE HEART FROM THE EXPERIENCE OF OTHERS

There is no such animal, in or out of captivity, as a born public speaker. In those periods of history when public speaking was a refined art that demanded close attention to the laws of rhetoric and the niceties of delivery, it was even more difficult to be born a public speaker. Now we think of public speaking as a kind of enlarged conversation. Gone forever is the old grandiloquent style and the stentorian voice. What we like to hear at our dinner meetings, in our church services, on our TV sets and radios, is straightforward speech, conceived in common sense and dedicated to the proposition that we like speakers to talk with, and not at, us.

Despite what many school texts would lead us to

believe, public speaking is not a closed art, to be mastered only after years of perfecting the voice and struggling with the mysteries of rhetoric. I have spent almost all of my teaching career proving to people that it is *easy* to speak in public, provided they follow a few simple, but important, rules. When I started to teach at the 125th Street YMCA in New York City back in 1912, I didn't know this any more than my first students knew it. I taught those first classes pretty much the way I had been taught in my college years in Warrensburg, Missouri. But I soon discovered that I was on the wrong track; I was trying to teach adults in the business world as though they were college freshmen. I saw the futility of using Webster, Burke, Pitt, and O'Connell as examples to imitate. What the members of my classes wanted was enough courage to stand on their hind legs and make a clear, coherent report at their next business meeting. It wasn't long before I threw the textbooks out the window, got right up there on the podium and, with a few simple ideas, worked with those fellows until they could give their reports in a convincing manner. It worked, because they kept coming back for more.

I wish I could give you a chance to browse through the files of testimonial letters in my home or in the offices of my representatives in various parts of the world. They come from industrial leaders whose names are frequently mentioned in the business section of *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*, from governors of states and members of parlia-

ments, from college presidents, and from celebrities in the world of entertainment. There are thousands more from housewives, ministers, teachers, young men and women whose names are not well known yet, even in their own communities, executives and executive trainees, laborers, skilled and unskilled, union men, college students, and business women. All of these people felt a need for self-confidence and the ability to express themselves acceptably in public. They were so grateful for having achieved both that they took the time to write me letters of appreciation.

Of the thousands of people I have taught, one example comes to mind as I write because of the dramatic impact it had on me at the time. Some years ago, shortly after he joined my course, D. W. Ghent, a successful businessman in Philadelphia, invited me to lunch. He leaned across the table and said: "I have sidestepped every opportunity to speak to various gatherings, Mr. Carnegie, and there have been many. But now I am chairman of a board of college trustees. I must preside at their meetings. Do you think it will be possible for me to learn to speak at this late date in life?"

I assured him, on the basis of my experience with men in similar positions who had been members of my classes, that there was no doubt in my mind that he would succeed.

About three years later we lunched together again at the Manufacturers' Club. We ate in the same dining room and at the very same table we had occu-