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Good, clear, straight advice, exceptionally well-written.'

Matthew Parris, Journalist, Author & Broadcaster

INSIDER SECRETS OF PUBLIC SPEAKING

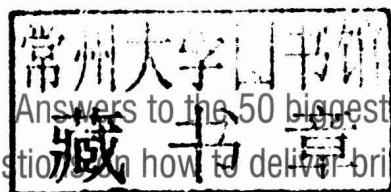
Answers to the 50 biggest questions
on how to deliver brilliant
speeches and presentations

A large crowd of people is depicted as silhouettes in various shades of blue against a dark background. The silhouettes are arranged in several rows, with some individuals in the foreground appearing more prominent than others in the back. The overall effect is a sense of a large gathering or audience.

Nadine Dereza & Ian Hawkins

INSIDER SECRETS

OF PUBLIC SPEAKING



Answers to the 50 biggest
questions on how to deliver brilliant
speeches and presentations

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Testimonials

‘Like the best speeches, this book cuts to the chase. Instead of theoretical waffle or impossible demands, Dereza and Hawkins go direct to the questions that trouble experienced as well as new speakers. Good, clear, straight advice, exceptionally well-written.’

Matthew Parris, Journalist, Author and Broadcaster

‘There are two golden rules to public speaking: The first is don’t. The second, if you’ve screwed up on the first, is buy this lifesaver of a book.’

Leo Johnson, Author and Presenter

‘This is an entertaining, insightful and practical guide. I know from experience how important essential tips can be to avoid reinventing the wheel and falling into traps. For instance, ‘don’t crack a joke at the beginning unless it is the right time and place’. Do not talk at your audience but ride with them and above all, ‘know your audience’. The importance of leadership shines through which is all about confidence without arrogance (a very difficult balance to achieve). All in all, good common sense but from the standpoint of real hands on experience.’

**Rt Hon David Blunkett,
MP for Sheffield Brightside and Hillsborough**

‘Both authors know their subject inside-out from practical, first-hand experience – and it shows. This book offers straightforward, no-waffle, useful advice in an easy-to-use format. I have recommended and booked guest speakers worldwide for over twenty years, and I found some useful nuggets of detail, which I’ll be using from now on. The best speakers, awards hosts and presenters always seek to improve – the lazy ones don’t bother. And the results shine through. I expect great results every time – and this book is a welcome addition to a speaker’s armoury.’

Diana Boulter, Founder & MD, DBA Speakers

‘This book provides clear and practical advice for anyone faced with the challenge of addressing an audience. It is very readable with some entertaining but useful anecdotes.’

Alasdair Northrop, Editor, Scottish Business Insider

‘At last, a sensible and eloquent answer to the fears of public speaking. An industry first!’

Mark Cowne, CEO, Kruger Cowne

‘This book marks a departure from tradition. It takes a difficult subject and makes it accessible for everyone who has stood up in front of an audience and felt ‘why should they listen to me?’ It helps with a whole range of tools and techniques including the structure of a good speech, which is often overlooked. It also debunks some myths. No one is a born public speaker! I would recommend it as a useful refresher for the most experienced speaker and an essential guide for all those who are currently lacking confidence when they speak in public.’

**Ruth Spellman, Chief Executive,
Workers’ Educational Association (WEA)**

‘Don’t Panic! Read this, it will make you a better speaker. It’s written with the wit and accessibility of Douglas Adams’ work and the insight and experience of this publication’s authors, which means it has the rigour that at times *HitchHiker’s Guide to the Galaxy* lacks. This is a brilliant guide to speaking on stage. Read it and learn. If you think you are a really good speaker even you must read this you can get even better – I did.’

**Ben Hawkins, Executive Producer,
George P. Johnson Experience Marketing**

‘When a person becomes a speaker they place themselves in the spotlight, warts and all, and without adequate preparation they will fail to inspire or influence. The experienced authors have hit the mark about one of the most important aspects of successful public speaking – preparation. This is the only way to effect public speaking which not only moves an event audience there and then, but also resonates two weeks later when an employee is sitting at their desk, and is spurred to act upon the influence of the speaker, and to utilise the tools they have been bestowed by a fully prepared, authentic and authoritative speaker. The list of questions suggested by Nadine and Ian to ask the client before an event is replete and concise – and should be universally used by speakers to ensure complete preparation for any event.’

Nick Gold, Managing Director, Speakers Corner

‘The authors are experts in delivering messages in an authentic and inspirational way - this is a must read for anyone wanting to communicate with impact and integrity. As an international speaker on the topic of sustainability I am constantly looking to learn best practice on using my words to ignite real change.’

Fiona Pelham, MD, Sustainable Events

‘This book is what every speaker needs, even if they don’t know it yet! Some sage advice in each of the tips – easy to read but nonetheless powerful and enabling. ‘Trade being liked for being respected when delivering bad news’, this for me typifies the real value of this book, it is not just about delivering a perfect presentation, but about the ‘effect’ it has on you and your audience.’

Mike Faulkner, Director, Media Outsource

‘This book should be required reading for any young person looking to make it in the professional and highly competitive world of commerce. If we could coach our young people and give them the skills to address an audience no matter how big with confidence, authority and style, they would, be able to communicate anything, to anyone at any time! Having the confidence and know how to communicate effectively to an audience has become, in my opinion, the most important skill in today’s world. This is a book, a coaching manual and confidence builder that can, empower the reader to transform their ability to speak in public.’

**Graeme Barnett, Senior Exhibition Director,
Reed Travel Exhibitions**

‘Even the most seasoned speakers will find surprising and pertinent answers to their biggest fears. Disappointing your audience is simply not an option. So I recommend you get this book before your next speech!’

Christophe Morin, CEO, Sales Brain

‘An insightful and astute look into the mind of a presenter and the world of public speaking. Nadine and Ian tackle head on, the highs and lows faced by presenters the world over with accuracy, honesty and wit. Tips, hints and ideas a plenty. A useful read for presenters of all capabilities.’

Richard Elson, MD, Organisational Impact

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Introduction

Spiders, death and clowns: scary, yes, but in survey after survey, it's been found that none of these is as terrifying as speaking in public. When we are asked for advice from clients who have a date with the stage and have no way of getting out of it, we often find the fear of public speaking is at the root of their problems.

Some of these clients come to us when their fear of getting it wrong outweighs their ability to prepare and they feel that they can't deliver a confident and engaging presentation.

Other clients are experienced, professional speakers, many of them paid thousands of pounds for a single speech, who would like to improve their speaking, but are worried about trying something new when someone else is writing them such a large cheque.

Both groups want to know what works, what doesn't, and what's best for them.

Why do they listen to us? Why should *you* listen to us?

We are a unique partnership. Between us, we have spoken at award ceremonies, business conferences and in the media. We've taken on roles as diverse as motivational speaker, conference chair, sports commentator and stand-up comedian. Our experience has enabled us to coach politicians, actors, academics, curators, business leaders, journalists, Olympic athletes and speakers for TED talks.

We have worked behind the scenes to shape programmes and content for conferences, award ceremonies and other live events, recommended and booked speakers, and evaluated and analysed the process every step of the way.

We have been there, done that and, hand-on-heart, promise you won't find anything here that hasn't been tried and tested in the real world.

Let's be honest: the real world is where good speakers are made. The best way of learning how to speak in public is to go out and just do it. No book will replace experience, but only this book will guide you through the process of learning. We think learning to speak in public is a bit like driving a car: our intention is to show you how the gears work and where the mirrors are, so that you can drive to wherever you like. You may find some interesting back roads, or go off-road completely, but hopefully you'll build up your own experience and arrive in one piece.

We have adopted a Q&A format, because real-world problems demand practical solutions, and you should see beyond *what* you should do and start to understand *why* you are doing them. The format also allows you to look through the contents and quickly find an answer to the question that most closely fits your own dilemma – and if you're feeling a bit hopeless in the face of the swiftly approaching speech, it's comforting to know other people have been in the same position as you. You too can go out, deliver the presentation, survive and maybe even surprise yourself by finding how enjoyable the process is. Speaking in public is a great life skill to have.

Three Golden Principles

We are biased towards the practical, but we also have our share of big ideas, so let's kick off with our philosophy on speaking; our three golden principles. These are the basis of a good presentation or speech, whatever the occasion, whoever you are.

1. Authenticity

We live in a world of on-message PR (Public Relations). The highest profile politicians of recent years have been those who have spoken out of turn. As an example, Boris Johnson and Sarah Palin, from different sides of the Atlantic, may be divisive, but you know who they are, and they get more written about them than time-servers in grey suits. They are themselves. You may not agree with what the speaker says, but you understand where they are coming from. They are influential because they voice honest, heartfelt dissent from the mainstream.

Great speeches don't just happen on the page; the best speeches are tethered to the person who makes them. An audience wants their speaker to be passionate, knowledgeable and confident, for if the speaker isn't, why should they listen?

If you are delivering a speech that doesn't come from *your* heart, you should look at how to make it uniquely your own. There should be something about your presentation that makes it impossible to be told by anyone else.

A good speaker is the best version of themselves they can be. As that great one-off, Oscar Wilde, said; *'Always be yourself. Everybody else is already taken.'*

2. Audience

Despite being the focus of attention, it's not about the speaker. The speaker must understand what the audience needs from a presentation. It might be a clear explanation of complex data, it might be the latest sales figures or it might be a break for tea and coffee; whatever it may be, the speaker needs to know what it is, and act.

When you're putting together a speech or presentation, your first thought should be about the audience's experience: so how can you get the audience to *want* to listen to you?

You can talk *to* an audience, you can talk *with* an audience but if you talk *at* an audience, don't expect your words to have much traction. Find out who they are, and why they are there, and make your message relevant and useful to them. Give them a reason for listening to you, and think: 'At the end of this speech the audience will take away X, Y and Z.' Whether it's how to make a million dollars or the memory of a funny story you have told them, don't get onto a stage without having a really clear idea about what you want to have achieved by the time you leave.

Put the audience's needs first, and you will avoid a lot of trouble.

3. Authority

YOU OWN THE STAGE. Four words, but they have profound implications. You are responsible for the room while you are there. It is up to you. Responsibility, yes, but also power. You can be vulnerable of course – it's one of the most attractive things a speaker can be – but you cannot doubt that you have authority. You can tell a personal story, admit to failings and mistakes – so long as you are in charge of what you are talking about. Audiences like to be guided. If it gradually dawns on them that you're nervous and flustered, they will start to worry about you and stop listening.

Speaking in front of others is an act of leadership. Perhaps this is why people fear it. If you doubt your ability to take the reins while you are speaking, it will reduce your impact. Leadership and being a good speaker go hand-in-hand, because if the leader isn't the speaker then it has to be someone else. And if someone else is the leader, why are we listening to the person on-stage?

Authority can be summed up as this: *Speak as if what you say makes a difference.*

To summarise

Authenticity, Audience and Authority are our golden principles of public speaking, be it at a conference, wedding, comedy club or in the media.

In the rest of this book, you should be able to spot these guiding principles threaded through the advice we give, and how they impact on what you say, how you say it, what you do and why you do it.

The Fifty Biggest Questions

We have chosen the fifty biggest questions we've been asked over the years, from our clients, colleagues and friends. All these questions represent 'real people's' issues and challenges when it comes to speaking in front of an audience - whatever its size.

The people who get in touch with us do so because whatever their level of speaking experience, they've suddenly found themselves out of their comfort zone, and need a professional outsider's view.

From a nervous father of the bride to a Chief Executive Officer, these questions address their basic concerns all the way up to professional tips. Our Fifty Biggest Questions have all made the cut because they represent the broad span of what our clients, colleagues and friends frequently ask us, and we think the answers will make anyone standing in front of an audience understand how to do a better job.

This book hasn't been written as a course. It is intended as a reference tool, with short actions that are easy to digest and put into practice. You don't have to read it in any particular order, from start to finish. Dip in, look at the contents, and see what strikes you as being relevant to your abilities and circumstances.

Where we think it will be really useful, is for those moments when you need some inspiration and guidance on how to prepare and deliver a presentation or speech.

Now you know where we are coming from, it's time to open the floor and ask: any questions?