

SPECIAL REPORT: The Seven Beliefs of Highly Successful Speakers

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The Seven Beliefs of Highly Successful Speakers

This Special Report gives you the best of the best in public speaking.

It turns out that highly successful speakers share Seven Beliefs that make them excel at what they do. If you have similar beliefs already, then that's great! If you don't, you might want to try these on and change the way you view public speaking forever.

Just like the Declaration of Independence was built on self-evident truths, our system of Method Speaking™ is built on seven self-evident beliefs which, if adopted, will transform the way you communicate.

By using the Seven Beliefs, you will find yourself slowly discarding the limiting old ways of speaking in public. You will naturally and easily adopt and implement new ways of public expression to feel more confident, think on your feet, and deliver well-structured messages.

Sometimes our current beliefs hold us back, and it's important to borrow from the beliefs of those who are already successful. By adopting their beliefs we transform ourselves and raise the chances that we, too, will have success in our lives.



THE FIRST BELIEF

There is No Such Thing as Public Speaking There is Only a Series of One-on-One Conversations Linked Together

Public speaking is an abstract term that has a different meaning to each person thinking about it. Your ideas, associations, and beliefs about public speaking are different from every other person's beliefs.

This abstraction keeps us in our heads, thinking and worrying about whether we are speaking "correctly" and if our content is good enough. This worry disconnects us from our audiences. To truly connect to your audience, you must get out of this abstract isolation, and communicate to your audience one person at a time.

Highly successful speakers believe there is no such thing as public speaking. Instead, there is only a series of one-on-one conversations linked together.

If you can have a conversation with one person, then you can have a conversation with two, three, six, a hundred and even a thousand. The sooner you get this conditioned in your body and psyche the sooner you will be able to engage and interact with thousands of people just as intimately as you can engage one person at a time.

The next time you speak in front of an audience of more than one, try to create a connection with each person you have eye contact with. The connection should feel like you are alone with that person in the room. The more you do this the better you will get at it and the easier you will be able to engage people and form relationships with them from the stage.



THE SECOND BELIEF

Communication is about Sending *and* Receiving Information

Have you ever attended a presentation where you felt the presenter was ranting on and on with no connection to the audience?

That's the wrong way to speak in public. In order to be a good speaker you need to be a good listener as well. This is certainly true on stage.

After September 11, President George Bush was ready to give a speech at Ground Zero. He grabbed the bullhorn with one arm around a fireman and tried to give his scripted speech. The bullhorn was not on and the crowd yelled, "We can't hear you." He adjusted and tried again and the crowd still yelled, "Can't hear you." He tried again and this time he started with "I can hear you. The rest of the world hears you." That was a great moment. It sure beat anything he could have prepared before hand. When you listen to your audience and communicate *with* them instead of *at* them, you get magic.

When you open up and start having a dialogue with your audience instead of preaching to them, you will experience a whole new universe. Public speaking becomes a conversation. Public speaking turns into a dialogue. Public speaking becomes a playful game, a flirtation, a fun, spontaneous, exciting and in-the-moment presentation.

If you are just sending information in the direction of the audience without being aware of their response to you and to what you are saying, then you are not having a conversation with them. In this case you are disconnected from them, and there is no point or relevancy to your communication. If you are not open to receiving the response, then you are not open to receiving information on how the audience is interpreting your message.

You need to read the audience energy, and check with them periodically throughout the talk to know if you need to make some midcourse corrections to your presentation. It's important to know if the audience is with you or not.

When you are on stage, your main focus should be on maintaining a conversation with the audience and not downloading information to them.



THE THIRD BELIEF

There are Three Ways to Communicate: Verbal, Physical, and Emotional

You give someone a gift, and their mouth and eyes twitch in disagreement as they say how much they love the present. Do you believe their words or their actions?

It's likely you do *not* believe their verbal message since it's so different from their physical response. Now, even if they manage to control their physical response and fake both a smile and an enthusiastic response to you, you'll probably sense if they genuinely feel happy with your present.

So, along with the words, physical and emotional communicating is happening concurrently. This means that every time we communicate we send three distinct messages: verbal, physical, and emotional. To be believed, the messages must be aligned.

Most people think that communication only happens when you open your mouth. In fact, most communication happens *before* you open your mouth. Research studies by Dr. Albert Mehrabian, a pioneer in the field of nonverbal communications, indicate that when people listen to us, they value words the least. In fact, it's 7% words, 38% tone of voice and inflection, and 55% body language and facial expressions.

The implication of this is that each time you say a single word, your mouth has said only one word, but your body and tone of voice have spoken volumes. The words you use are the logical message. The body posture, facial expression, and tone of voice are your physical and emotional messages.

The next time you are presenting, pay attention to your body and maintain an awareness of it for as long you speak. If you feel tension, then relax. If you feel fidgeting, command it to stop. Excessive tension and unnecessary fidgeting restrict your expressiveness. The last thing you need as a speaker is to have your body and your words sending opposing signals to your audience!

Also, pay attention to your emotions. Notice where they start, what triggers them, how they move in your body, and where they accumulate as tension. Tension normally accumulates in the thighs and in the jaw muscle.

Influential and believable speakers know that they need all levels of their communication to be congruent every time they are in front of the audience. They constantly work on aligning their verbal, physical, and emotional messages.



THE FOURTH BELIEF

Energy Flows Where Attention Goes

The ancient Hawaiians said that energy flows where attention goes. In eastern philosophies and religions an emphasis is put on this attention, and monks spend years perfecting their ability to control their attention. Why? Because where we put our attention influences where all of our energy, work, and efforts go.

When it comes to public speaking most of us were trained to put the attention on the speaking first. We focus on our own needs and on what we want to say. Then, we force this message on our audience. That's the old speaking model.

This old speaking model stems from our childhood. We cried to get food or a clean diaper so we could feel good. When we grew up, we replaced crying with speaking.

In speaking to get what they want, many adults use intimidation, guilt and fear. This method often works in regular-life interactions. However, it never works when communicating to groups of people. They will smell your insecurity, fear, and agenda from miles away. They will shut you down faster than you can say hello.

Highly successful speakers embrace a new speaking model. In the new model, speakers' initial focus is on the feelings they want to generate in the audience. As they laser focus their attention there, the words flow out of that state. Rather than starting with the words for their presentation, which is the wrong place to start, these speakers allow the needs of their audience to shape their words.

By placing their attention on the audience's needs, these successful speakers increase the probability that they will get what they want from their audience.

Focus your attention on the needs of your audience rather than on your own needs. This will completely redirect your efforts as you create and organize your presentations. Your energy will flow toward the feelings of your audience rather than to your own feelings.

You will then be able to remain neutral no matter how your audience reacts.



THE FIFTH BELIEF

What You See is NOT What You Get

All human beings have their own way of interpreting what they see and hear. As people grow older, they start responding to this interpreted reality as though it *is* the truth when in fact it's an *interpretation* of the truth.

The difference between actual reality and interpreted reality is the difference between a territory and its map. Your interpretation of reality serves as a map to navigate reality as long as the map is updated and is accurate.

People with a clear map of the future are usually called visionary leaders. These leaders can articulate their thoughts powerfully and precisely and change the course of history. Think of Martin Luther King and his "I Have a Dream" Speech or John F. Kennedy's "Moon" Speech. Both speakers had clear visions of the future. They created a map for millions to walk on.

Each member of your audience will be filtering what they see and hear in your presentation with their own maps, which may be outdated, incomplete, or error-prone. It is your job as a speaker to build a specific map, and to make sure everyone is following or at least viewing the same map throughout your presentation.

If your map is not clear, then your audience's map is not clear. The next time you do a presentation, stop the audience in their tracks and ask them what are they are getting out of what you just said. If they are getting what you intended, then proceed. If not, make adjustments. This way you will keep them on their toes, and you will make sure you are all using the same map.

It's not enough for you to *think* the audience is receiving your intended message. You must *know* that they are not misinterpreting your message because of their own view of reality.



THE SIXTH BELIEF

Create a Reality for Others to Join You

Great actors spend years mastering and training their imaginations because imagination is the key difference between lifeless, fake, silly scenes and powerful, engaging, believable scenes. By focusing their imaginations, actors engage their senses, bodies, and emotions—a skill much needed for speakers.

The way you imagine a situation affects the way you feel, act, and speak about it. Imagine a positive scenario and you will feel enthusiastic which will allow you to speak powerfully and convincingly.

If, on the other hand, you worry, your imagination will run wild and take over your ability to speak in front of an audience. If you've ever worried about your spouse, friends, or child because they are running late and have not called you, then you are familiar with the power of imagination. You probably played out every possible disaster movie you could think of, building up your emotions into a frenzy. In that state, your ability to think and speak clearly is seriously impaired!

That's the power of imagination. Control it, and you will deliver magnificent speeches. Neglect it, and you will be unable to speak in public.

As you prepare your presentations, and especially right before you go on stage, use your imagination to visualize the reality you want during your talk. See yourself being successful. Notice the positive reactions of your audience. In this positive reality, you and your audience will travel together successfully through your talk.

Did you know that how you imagine yourself in a situation affects your tone of voice, your gestures, and your body language? If you imagine yourself being successful, you will take the stage confidently and control the room. If you imagine yourself failing, you will move stiffly and barely be able to talk.

The choice is yours. Use your imagination to create the reality you desire for your presentation.



THE SEVENTH BELIEF:

There is No Failure: There is Only Feedback

There is a reason why computers control auto plant assembly lines and the manufacturing process for pharmaceutical companies: computers do not understand the word "failure." If something steps out of line, they correct for it and they learn to correct it faster in the future.

Humans, on the other hand, make a couple of mistakes and start playing a broken record in their heads: "You are a failure." "Why can't you do anything right?" "This will never work."

This intensifies until people quit. Actually, many people get so good at thinking negatively that they never even speak in public to begin with! Their thoughts of failure stop them from taking action.

Some special people don't believe in failure, and it pays them tremendously. Did you know that Thomas Edison tried 10,000 light bulb designs until one finally worked? Why didn't Edison give up after the third try? How come he didn't even stop after the 9,999th attempt? He apparently did not believe in failure; he only believed in feedback.

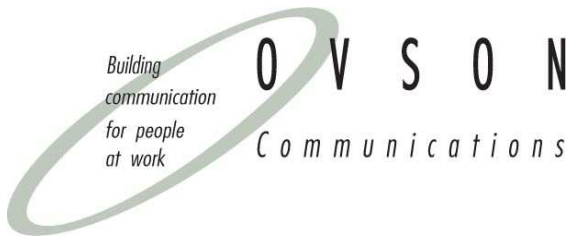
Highly successful speakers definitely do not believe in failure. They think of an outcome they want (such as a specific reaction from their audience), and then they communicate. If they do not get their desired outcome, they adjust their communication based on how close or far they are from the intended outcome.

Good communicators use words as tools. If they use some words and the audience doesn't react appropriately, the speaker pulls new words out of their tool box and tries them. If these words don't work, they keep trying until they have the response they want.

For instance, when a stand-up comedian tries a new joke on stage, the joke will either make the audience laugh or it will not. If there is no laughter, the comedian re-works the material, trying it again and again at future shows until audiences are laughing uncontrollably.

To be a successful public speaker, start thinking of your presentation as a tool to elicit a specific audience response. Do not identify yourself with your words. If you identify with your words and your audience reacts disagreeably to your talk, your ego will get in the way and you'll get defensive. Instead, think of the audience reaction as feedback and adjust your communication accordingly.

There is no failure. There is only feedback. The meaning of the communication is the response it gets. If you say something and it does not generate the response you desire, step back and try again.



CONCLUSION

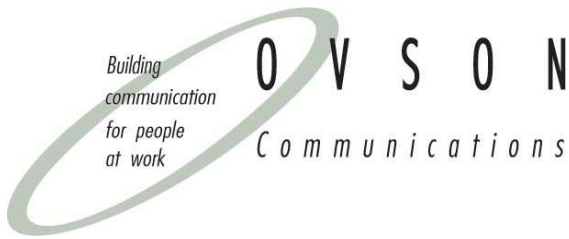
For public speakers who are used to delivering their message with no feedback from their audiences, feeling intimidated by the prospect of speaking in front of large crowds, assuming that all audience members receive the same message, and paying no attention to their body language or voice inflections, the Seven Beliefs of Highly Successful Speakers generally evoke one of two responses:

- 1) Disbelief: It seems unreal to many presenters that public speaking can be so dynamic, with speakers and their audiences engaged in a conversation that benefits everyone involved.
- 2) Excitement: The Seven Beliefs open up an entire world that was previously hidden, and being a part of this world will make an obvious improvement in their experience when in front of an audience.

We hope that you feel excited about making these beliefs a central part of your approach to designing presentations and speaking in public. Adopting this belief system will give you a new direction as you plan future talks.

This Special Report offers just the bare essentials of the Seven Beliefs. If you are interested in exploring this belief system in more depth, we recommend you attend our [Public Speaking Boot Camp](#) and [Advanced Public Speaking Boot Camp](#) in the San Francisco Bay Area. If your organization is located outside northern California, and you would like public speaking experts to give an on-site training, we would be happy to set up a [Customized Boot Camp](#) for you.

In these trainings, you will experience the benefits of using the Seven Beliefs as you learn and use the techniques that make highly successful speakers so influential and confident. Once you incorporate the Seven Beliefs of Highly Successful Speakers into your presentations, you will experience a whole new level of success and satisfaction in your public speaking.



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About Ovson Communications:

For over twenty years Ovson Communications has provided training, facilitation, coaching, and speaking services to hundreds of organizations throughout the U.S. Companies from small startups to Fortune 500 companies have benefited from these services.

Specializing in improving communication among executives, managers, partners, team leaders, and team members, Ovson Communications has [public speaking training courses](#) and [personalized coaching programs](#) specifically designed for success with any type of presentation. In addition, Ovson Communications offers a [Free 20-minute consultation](#) to assess the training, facilitation, and coaching needs of potential clients.

[Public speaking boot camps](#) from Ovson Communications are now available that utilize the unique [Method Speaking™](#) technique, combining business leadership and strategizing, acting techniques and secrets, and personal coaching motivational tools.

For more information on Ovson Communications, please visit: www.ovson.com.