

Tools Of The Speaking Trade

By Burt Dubin

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Wireless Mike, overheads or slides, laser pointer, excellent handout materials -- these are some of the tools of the speaking trade.

Are they the most meaningful tools in your toolbox? I think not. Yes, they matter. They matter a lot, as do other implements. But they're not the most meaningful tools. The 7 most meaningful tools of our trade, tools that help you get more bookings at higher fees, are these...

1. Your empathy:

Your empathy for the concerns of the decision-maker who hired you, for the interests of the organization paying your fee, for the needs and wants, hungers, longings and fears of your audience members.

2. Your attitude:

Are you there to make a dollar or to make a difference? Are you delivering your standard program much like what you delivered yesterday somewhere else? Or do you go the extra mile researching this organization, this industry, the trends affecting this field now, and so forth? Do you interview outside industry experts and key executives within this organization -- and, most important, some of the lower echelon folks who are to be present? Do you ask deep questions about the core issues interesting each of these constituencies? Then, do you probe further for emotional issues that may affect the whole direction of your program?

3. Your program design:

Do you weave your insights and findings into a tapestry of wisdom and hope, of ideas and guidelines, of recommended actions? Do you share new information, AHAs born during your research for this event? Are you a conceptual artist -- like Michelangelo painting

the Sistine Chapel ceiling -- i.e. do you interlace and clarify what others find hazy until the moment you speak? (Do you make the ephemeral visible?) Do you articulate palpable words and images so those present better understand -- and know how to deal with -- the goings-on in their world now?

4. Your passion:

Are your ideas throbbing with aliveness? Does your body language match your words? Do you gaze deeply into the eyes of different audience members, connecting one-on-one with each if only for a few seconds? Do you radiate an emotional intimacy with your words -- and do you express that intimacy by the look on your face? Do you use the power of the pause, the eloquence of silence, to let your ideas sink in?

5. Your state of being:

This is your primary message. It's what your audience members see and feel first. They get it subliminally. They get it instantly. They see it in your stance. They sense it in your glance. And they persist in getting it every second of your program. Are you up? Your audience knows. Are you here now, are you present? Your audience knows. Are you emotionally attuned to your topic? They know.

6. Your mental acuity:

Can you turn your talk on a dime if the audience mood so indicates? Do you respond brilliantly to spontaneous questions...saying enough to satisfy, landing on your feet and staying on your track? Are you sensitive to the various cultures present in the room -- to their perceptions, their expectations and entitlements, their differences and similarities? Are you careful not to offend?

7. Your physical energy:

Do you arrive fully rested, on your toes, eager for this opportunity to speak? Do your eyes sparkle with aliveness as you move through your presentation? Are you light on your feet as you move about? Do you think tall as you stand before your audience? Here's an easy way to do this: Picture a silken thread at the crown of your head gently pulling you up-up-up. This visualization aligns your bones and muscles into perfect order. It often makes you look taller, more in command. It helps you tingle with energy.

Burt Dubin, a 20 year veteran of the business of speaking, coaches and mentors speakers and wanna-be's world-wide. Burt works with people who want to be speakers and with speakers who want to be masters. The words of his clients, the admiration and respect expressed for his work by some of the world's most successful speakers, testify to the values he delivers. For samples of his wisdom, simply go to his web-site, <http://www.SpeakingBizSuccess.com> . Down-load some of the 12

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