



Talk Like TED: The 9 Public Speaking Secrets of the World's Top Minds

By Carmine Gallo

“Ideas are the currency of the twenty-first century. Some people are exceptionally good at presenting their ideas...Ideas, effectively packaged and delivered, can change the world.”

“*Talk like Ted* is for anyone who wants to speak with more confidence and authority. It’s for anyone who delivers presentations, sells products and services, or leads people who need to be inspired. If you have ideas worth sharing, the techniques in this book will help you craft and deliver those ideas far more persuasively than you’ve ever imagined.”

The author evaluated the top 500 TED presentations and found that they shared nine common elements (one for each chapter). These chapters are divided into three parts which highlight the three components of an inspiring presentation: emotional (they touch my heart), novel (they teach me something new), and memorable (they present content in ways I’ll never forget).

I. Emotion (they touch my heart):

1. Passion

Finding what you are passionate about is key to communicating well. “Science shows that passion is contagious, literally. You cannot inspire others unless you are inspired yourself. You stand a much greater chance of persuading and inspiring your listeners if you express an enthusiastic, passionate, and meaningful connection to your topic.”

“People cannot inspire others unless and until they are inspired themselves.”

“Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, “Nothing great has ever been achieved without enthusiasm.”

To discover what you are most passionate about, ask yourself: “What makes my heart sing?” The answer is deeper than *what* you do. This question reveals the *why* behind *what* you do. “Your true passion should be the subject of your communications and will serve to truly inspire your audience.” “The first step to inspiring others is to make sure you’re inspired yourself.”

2. Mastering the Art of Storytelling

“Stories are just data with a soul.”

“Inspiring communicators and the best TED presenters stick to one of three types of stories. The first are personal stories that relate directly to the theme of the conversation or presentation; second are stories about other people who have learned a lesson the audience can relate to; third are stories involving the success or failure of products or brands.”

Stories do more than just convey emotion, they help the listener to feel the same emotion. Stories can break down listener’s barriers to a topic because they “plant ideas and emotions into a listener's brain." Mere data alone rarely changes others thoughts or actions, including our own. We didn’t come to our conclusions or ideas in an instant, there were key life events that helped mold and shape our thoughts and behaviors. Sharing the stories that shaped us helps others to feel those same emotions and bring them on a journey with us. Once they have walked that journey, the conclusions or ideas we have will make sense to them and are more likely to be embraced.

“Stories illustrate, illuminate, and inspire.”

3. Have a Conversation

"It takes practice to appear natural." He recommends to “practice relentlessly and internalize your content so that you can deliver the presentation as comfortably as having a conversation with a close friend." Practice alone, practice with an honest friend, practice with a video camera.

People listen to those with “command presence”. We should:

1. Evaluate ourselves on the four elements of verbal delivery: rate, volume, pitch and pauses.
2. Use gestures because they “make a strong argument even stronger”.
We should use them, but do so sparingly, at key moments, and within the power sphere.
3. Avoid distracting body language.
Don’t fidget or tap, move with purpose. Don’t stand rigidly in place, walk, move, and work the room. Don’t keep your hands in your pockets. (“One hand is acceptable as long as the free hand is gesturing”.)

II. Novel (they teach me something new):

4. Teach People Something New

“novelty is the single most effective way to capture a person’s attention.”

“The human brain loves novelty. An unfamiliar, unusual or unexpected element in a presentation intrigues the audience, jolts them out of their preconceived notions, and quickly gives them a new way of looking at the world.”

Novelty makes information “new and exciting” which results in a dopamine release in the listener’s brain. This dopamine acts like “your brain’s natural “save button””, it helps us to remember it. “Reveal information that’s completely new to your audience, is packaged differently, or offers a fresh and novel way to solve an old problem.”

5. Deliver Jaw-Dropping Moments

“The jaw-dropping moment in a presentation is when the presenter delivers a shocking, impressive, or surprising moment that is so moving and memorable, it grabs the listener’s attention and is remembered long after the presentation is over.” Example: When Bill Gates released a jar of mosquitos to fly around while making a point about malaria. While it only took 5% of the presentation, that is what is remembered.

Jaw-dropping moments "create what neuroscientists call an emotionally charged event, a heightened state of emotion that makes it more likely your audience will remember your message and act on it." These moments can be stories, videos, demonstrations, surprise guests or simply a personal anecdote. “Your presentation content will make a better impact if it can be stamped onto the minds of your listeners.”

6. Lighten Up

“Humor plays a key role in the playbooks of the world's most inspiring public speakers.”

"Why it works: Humor lowers defenses, making your audience more receptive to your message. It also makes you seem more likable, and people are more willing to do business with or support someone they like.”

“Humor...is one of those tools the brain is hardwired to react to and is key to making a message new and novel.”

“Laughter also plays an important role in strengthening group cohesion....laughter, is...a method of communication, designed to capture the attention of others, to convey important emotional information, and to activate similar emotions in others...Laughter not only conveys cognitive information to others but it also serves the function of

inducing and accentuating positive emotions in others, in order to influence their behavior and promote a more favorable attitude toward the one who is laughing.”

Use:

- Anecdotes, observations, and personal stories
- Analogies and metaphors
- Quotes
- Videos
- Photos

“If something makes you laugh, there’s a good chance it will make someone else laugh too”. Share it.

III. Memorable (they present content in ways I’ll never forget):

7. Stick to the 18-Minute Rule

“Why it works: Researchers have discovered that "cognitive backlog", too much information, prevents the successful transmission of ideas.” Our brains can only hold so much information. 18-12 minutes is the “Goldilocks zone”, not too little, not too much, but just right.

“Creativity thrives under intelligent constraints...contrary to popular belief, the main event of the imagination—creativity—does not require unrestrained freedom; rather, it relies on limits and obstacles...A “constrained” presentation is often more inspiring, creative, and engaging than longer, meandering presentations that are boring, confusing, and convoluted.”

Remember the "rule of three”:

People can remember three pieces of information really well; add more items and retention falls off considerably.

- Step One: Create a Twitter-friendly headline (140 characters or less)
- Step Two: Support the headline with three key messages
- Step Three: Reinforce the three messages with stories, statistics, and examples

“It takes courage to reduce the number of the slides in a presentation. It takes courage to speak for 18 minutes instead of rambling on for much longer. Leonardo da Vinci once said, ‘Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication.’”

8. Paint a Mental Picture with Multisensory Experiences

“Why it works: Remember, the brain does not pay attention to boring things. It’s nearly impossible to be bored if you’re exposed to mesmerizing images, captivating videos, intriguing props, beautiful words, and more than one voice bringing the story to life.”

“Concepts presented as pictures instead of words are more likely to be recalled.”

"Visualize content" and avoid the temptation to use word-heavy PowerPoint slides. Show more photos or use interesting props to bring your stories to life.

9. Stay in Your Lane

“Be authentic, open, and transparent.”

“Why it works: Most people can spot a phony a mile away. If you try to be something or someone that you’re not, you’ll fail to gain the trust of your audience.

“When you deliver a presentation, your goal should not be to “deliver a presentation.” It should be to inspire your audience, to move them, and to encourage them to dream bigger.”

“Stay in your lane. Hold the space. Be true to your authentic self—the best representation of yourself that you can possibly be.”