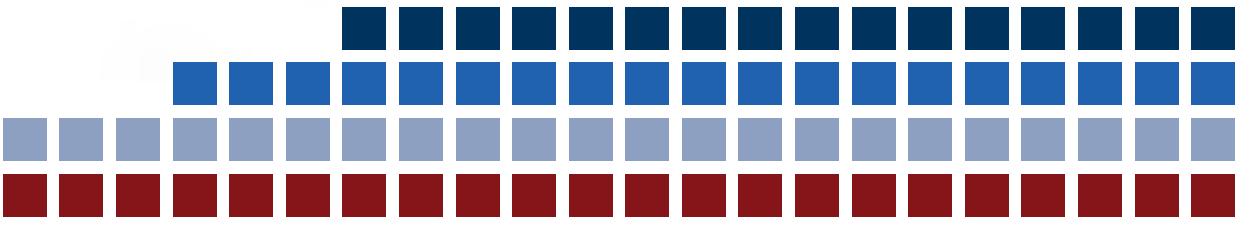


THE

KILLER
Speech
Writing

WORKBOOK

Peter Dhu



The
KILLER Speech Writing
Workbook

Peter Dhu

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INTRODUCTION TO THE SPEECH WRITING WORKBOOK

As the internet and technology become increasingly more efficient at making the world smaller, we are writing more than we ever have. We text, we email and we blog all the time. It's all very informal and at times would make our old English teachers cringe at some of the grammar and spelling that's acceptable for one-on-one communication.

You would think all this writing has made it easier for people to write and give speeches. It hasn't. Speaking in front of an audience is still one of the biggest fears shared by people all over the world. Texting a friend or emailing a colleague is one thing, but standing in front of a group of people who don't particularly think you're their bff (best friend forever) is another.

The truth of the matter is that it all starts at the speech writing stage. The more prepared your speech, the more confidence you have. The more confidence you have, the less likely it is that you are going to stand in front of that audience and have a complete meltdown.

As a public speaking and presentation skills trainer and coach I am often asked, what is the best way to prepare a speech from scratch.

- ✎ Where do you start?
- ✎ How do you make it interesting?
- ✎ What is the best process to follow?
- ✎ How do you structure the speech?
- ✎ How do you make it relevant to the audience?

Conceptualising, writing, rewriting and practising your speech are fundamental to becoming a good public speaker or presenter. You may have the gift of the gab, exhibit high self-confidence and be completely fearless, yet still fail to connect with the audience and deliver some meaningful and relevant messages or material for them to take home.

Confident and effective public speaking requires that you combine both effective preparation and writing of a speech with confident delivery, strong voice and effective presentation skills.

This workbook and CD will focus on the preparation and the methodology for writing and refining a speech ready to present. It will take you through a series of steps that will ensure that you have a speech that is well written, relevant for the audience and ready to present.

Work through the workbook step by step. Complete the various sections, tutorials and exercises, and you will be rewarded with a dynamic speech that is thoroughly prepared and ready to deliver.

In fact, you could follow the first five steps of this process, purely as a speech writer, and then hand over the speech to another person to practise and give the final presentation. This is, of course, assuming they know the topic and content of the speech.

This is a step-by-step speech writing workbook that can be used by first-time speakers as well as experienced public speakers. It's an easy-to-follow system that ensures you deliver an informative, persuasive, and passionate speech every time.

WARM UP EXERCISE: PREVENTATIVE MEDICINE FOR WRITER'S BLOCK

The biggest misconception about writing in general is that when you put pen to paper or click the keys on the keyboard, whatever comes out needs to be perfect. Professional writers and novelists know that this is not true.

This type of thinking is the precursor to writer's block. That's why you sit in front of the blank screen for hours and nothing comes out. That's why you hold the pen to your pad and think of all the other things that you'd rather be doing. It's the fear of not getting it right. It's the fear that what you write is going to be horrible. It will be horrible. It will suck. Even if it seems great now, in a week, if you read it again, you will realise that it's horrible. That's the difference between a professional writer and an enthusiast.

“I’m not a very good writer, but I’m an excellent rewriter.”

James Michener

“The time to begin writing an article is when you have finished it to your satisfaction. By that time you begin to clearly and logically perceive what it is you really want to say.”

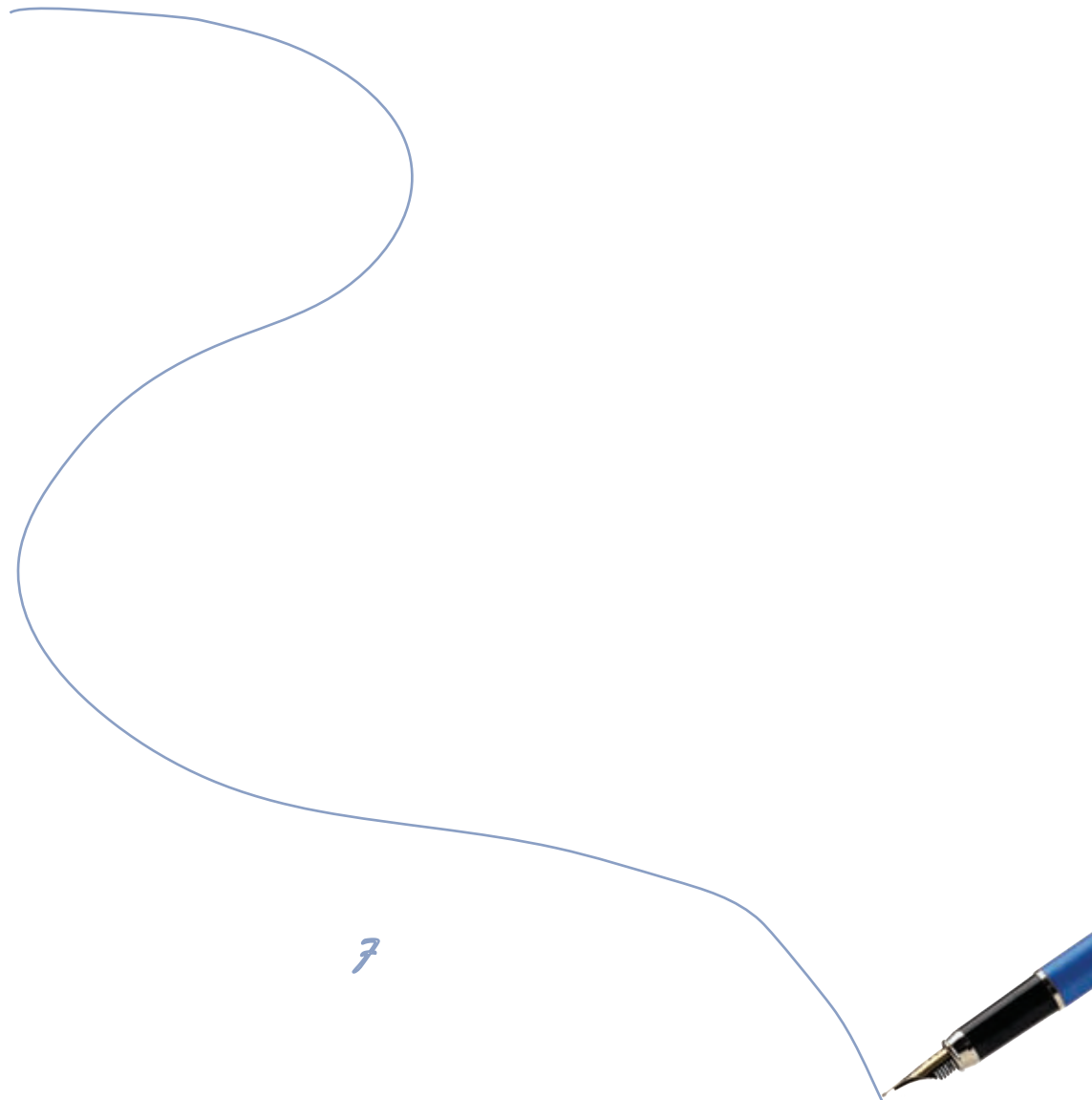
Mark Twain

Eliminate your fear of the blank page and just put something down. Change your way of thinking that what you write has to be perfect on your first try. Get into the habit of thinking that you can re-write your speech as many times as possible before the day you have to give it.

As a warm up, write your speech now. Use only one page or the section provided below. You are not permitted to think, just write. This exercise will unlock the hidden recesses of your brain and open you up for more proactive research for exercises later in this book and it will also help to eliminate your fear of the page. There will be something on the page for you to work with.

You only have 15 minutes to complete this exercise. Once you're done, read it, put it away and then move on.

What you will discover is that this exercise will also trigger things in your mind that you may want to include in your speech, it might help you define the intention of your speech, and also highlight potential weak areas.



1.

START AT THE END

Most forms of communication are designed to get a point across. Even before we were able to speak, we used hand gestures, grunts and cave drawings. The whole point of communicating is to relay information, to educate, to possibly lean someone towards your way of thinking or just to see things from your point of view.

When you tell your children to do their homework, you explain the benefits of getting an education and what will happen if they don't get good grades, in order to get them to do what you would like them to do. When a guy strikes up a conversation with a girl at a singles bar, he speaks with the intention of getting her telephone number, a date or to see her beautiful smile.

When starting the process of conceptualising and writing a speech, determine what you would like your audience to think, feel or do by the time you finish this speech. Everything else in your speech will be based on getting to this desired action. Ask yourself and write the answers below:



What do I plan to achieve with this speech? _____

What is the purpose of my speech? _____

What is my take-home message? _____

What call to action or new knowledge do I want to leave the audience with and why? _____

What do I want to happen after my speech? _____

These questions that clarify what the end purpose of the speech is will help you focus on designing the rest of the speech in a way that achieves the ultimate goal. After all, writing and delivering a speech that does not achieve your end goal, that does not influence the audience the way that you planned, has probably failed.

If you were planning to visit your favourite restaurant, the direction you take and the mode of transportation you choose to get there will be determined by the restaurant's location (your destination.)

Write your powerful and big take-home message using the information you have gathered from the above questioning.

Don't end with a whimper. End with your big powerful message.

Eliminate the desire to end with something like, "Thank you", or "You have been a great audience," or "Have a safe trip home". If you wish to say these things, then include them before you finish your speech, before you state your final big explosive message.

Attempt to be memorable. Your message should stay with the audience for a long time. Let your last words, your last gesture, your last message stay with the audience as they leave the presentation.

Combine your answers to the previous questions down to the most important. Now write what is most important for your audience to think, do or believe when you've finished speaking: _____

2.

THEME:

THE THREAD THAT WEAVES YOUR SPEECH TOGETHER

Your theme should have been sneaking up on you from the point you finished the previous exercises. The theme in your speech is the glue that holds all the points together. It's the one constant in your speech that the audience can hold on to and that you can refer back to in order to keep your audience following your message more closely.

A theme is the underlining comparisons, implied ideas, recurrent motifs or messages that run throughout your speech.

For example:

- ✗ Comparing race car driving to being competitive in the business market.
- ✗ Using the story of a single mother and her struggles and triumphs in a political speech.
- ✗ Following a story arc in a popular television show to explain

relationships.

- ✎ Using the speaker's own personal story to illustrate a journey, life's lessons and growing maturity.

An important element of giving a speech is repetition. Weaving a theme into your speech helps you in using the instrument of repetition to your advantage. It helps you to use repetition without getting boring and overdoing it.

Using a central theme also helps paint a picture in the listener's mind. It makes your speech easier to follow and more enjoyable.

Find a theme that is either relevant to the main idea of your speech or fits in well with the expectations and tendencies of your audience.

Pick three themes that could possibly fit into your speech and write three comparisons that you could use in your speech. Review what you have come up with. Pick the strongest theme and the one that motivates you internally.

Popular themes (Circle Three):

New Year's

Family

Children

College Graduations

Race Cars

Sibling Rivalries

Yearbooks

Spaceships

Sibling Alliances

Marriage

Armed Forces

School

TV Shows

Age

Goal Setting

Literature



Patriotism	Focus on Ability Not Disability
Relationships	Angels
Taking Ownership	Grandparents
Demons	Major Historical Events
Clothes	Religion
People (i.e. Dentists, Lawyers)	Professions (i.e. Celebrities, Political Figures)
Art	Astrology
The Environment	Sports
Folk Tales	Taxes
Dogs	Parents
Teenagers	Fishing
Men/Women	Financial Security
Nature	Love
Personal Effectiveness	Motorcycles
Overcoming Adversity	TV Commercials
Movies	

List Other Possible Themes:

List possible comparisons, contrasts, and motifs that you can use in your speech.

Theme: _____

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Theme: _____

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Theme: _____

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Review what you have come up with. Pick the strongest theme and the one that you feel most motivated to use in your speech. Write it down here:

Strongest theme: _____

3.

WIIFM: WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

The act of giving a speech is a form of communication. Even if you're not in a town-hall style question and answer speech, your audience is participating. Without them, you wouldn't have a speech to give. Make them feel involved.

Identify what's in it for the audience - "What's In It For Me?"

The WIIFM principle is a universal principle in marketing and communication and is the cornerstone of constructing an effective and powerful speech. Why should the audience listen to me? What are they going to gain from my message? How will they benefit?

Many people think that when they speak, it is about them, the presenter. However, to be an effective speaker and speech writer, you need to think from the audience's point of view and what benefits they are getting out of listening to you.

If you think in terms of main motivators generally you will either:

- ✎ Reduce pain
- ✎ Increase pleasure
- ✎ Solve a problem

- ✎ Help them achieve a goal
- ✎ Satisfy a need.

In terms of the pleasure–pain continuum, it is often said that pain is a greater motivator than pleasure. So are you going to help someone achieve financial freedom and independence, or are you going to help someone avoid the pain of financial crisis and uncertainty? Both messages and outcomes could be achieved by presenting similar information and ideas; however, the avoiding financial crisis should be the stronger message.

But this ultimately will depend on your audience, and if you are speaking to a group of high income earners about the benefits of superannuation and retirement funds, the message about financial crisis and financial uncertainty may not be one they are familiar with. However if you were talking to a group of school leavers about to enter the workforce, then describing how superannuation and savings plans can help ensure that they will never face financial pain and crisis is a strong motivator.

Even if you are talking about yourself and you are a sporting champion or have climbed Mount Everest, your message should not just be about you and your success. Rather it should be about how you achieved your goals, and the steps that you took to ensure success, and what your audience can do to ensure that they can achieve success or any goal that they put their mind to if they follow similar steps.

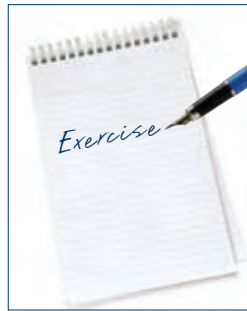
Don't assume you know your audience. Take the time to discover who the people you will be communicating to really are.

The local newspaper from the community in which you plan to speak will be a great resource for learning about the people you will be speaking to. Read the newspapers they read and pay attention to the advertisements and entertainment offerings and even the types of crimes committed in the area.

If you are travelling to a different country or speaking to members of cultures different from your own, pick up brochures from a travel agent, surf the web, or check out an encyclopaedia in order to familiarise

yourself with the country, people and customs.

Look at your topic, your content and your message and write your speech in terms of the benefits and the WIIFM principal, from the audience's perspective. You want them, after all, to buy your message.



Make observations about who will be listening (use the blanks to fill in responses):

- Friendly, pleasant, welcoming

- Neutral, unbiased, middle of the road

- Hostile, unfriendly, argumentative, in opposition to your position

- Well-informed versus ill-informed (on the topic you're spotlighting)

- Educational background (graduate school versus high school, unemployed versus employed, and everything in between)

- Environment (big city versus small-town residents, cultural traditions, prevailing political preferences/alignments)

- Job descriptions: incomes (affluent versus modest)

What are the main benefits for your audience in listening to your speech? What will they gain after listening to you (entertainment, pleasure, new knowledge, solutions to problems)?

What are your audience's three biggest desires?

What are your audience's three biggest frustrations?

4.

IDENTIFY THREE OR FOUR KEY POINTS

If you interviewed 100 people, 75 of them would say they have told a joke at least once in their lives. Most people use the techniques of public speaking without even realising it. When you tell a joke or a story, you instinctively highlight the key points essential for getting the punchline across. We do it every day.

We have to use public speaking tactics when we explain to our children why they have to finish their homework. We use these tactics when we are in a job interview. We use them when we meet someone new that we would like to go out with on a date. We are constantly emphasising the key points.

When giving a speech, you are explaining your beliefs about the subject, emphasising the importance of following through with the action you want the audience to perform, or promoting your credibility by pointing out your key accomplishments. You are highlighting your knowledge, expertise and skills so that people believe that what you tell them can get them to a better place in life, improve their lot and enable them to make better informed decisions that will have more benefit for them.

To convince your audience, you highlight the benefits in accepting and

using the information you are imparting to them. Identify the three or four main key points that illustrate and support your take-home message, your call to action, and your memorable statement and get your point across.

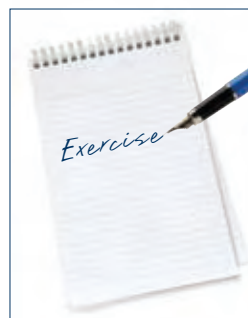
George A. Miller, a psychologist who studied cognition, came to the conclusion that generally humans can only remember three to five chunks of information at a time. I personally use, and would recommend using only three main points, each of which link back to your key message and central theme. This technique adds learning and value to that key message.

Then you can use sub-points or anecdotes or several examples which each illustrate, prove or contextualise the point that you are making.

The best way to illustrate or expand on a point is to tell a story – and if possible a personal story. Christopher Witt describes stories as “a speaker’s – and a leader’s – greatest resource.” Story telling enables you to connect with the audience and build a strong bond and rapport. The personal story best illustrates that what you are saying is true and that you have firsthand experience of what you are teaching and advocating.

Another big advantage of using stories is that you don’t have to learn your script or worry about forgetting your material. You are just telling your story, about a particular occasion or event that clearly and strongly demonstrates the point that you are making.

So when scripting your speech, all you need to do is write and learn your opening, write and learn your take home message and call to action, know the three points which support your message and tell your stories and examples extemporaneously to illustrate your points. That’s it.



List as many key points as you can think of that illustrate and support your take home message, your call to action, and your memorable statement and you can close the deal. When you can't think of any more, go back and number these points in order of impact and importance. Use the top three in your speech.

Point # _____

Point # _____

Point # _____

Point # _____

Point # _____

Point # _____

Think of a story or personal example related to your chosen theme that will support your main points. Write a few sentences below explaining how you could possibly incorporate this story into your speech.

Perform research online, at the library, in newspapers, etc. to find statistics and documents that support your main points. List the information you find along with the sources below.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

Find quotes by famous people, respected specialists, and insiders to include in your speech. People attribute that person's credibility to you when you quote them in your speech. Here are sources to find great quotes.

<http://www.brainyquote.com>

<http://www.thinkexist.com>

<http://www.woopidoo.com>

Write down a few of the most powerful quotes that support your intended call to action and your main points.

5.

START STRONG

I have heard it time and time again. Boring and weak introductions that focus on housekeeping and statements like, “It’s nice to be here” and, “We will break for coffee in an hour, turn off your mobile phones, now let’s see – why are we here?”

You have between 30 and 60 seconds to grab your audience’s attention and create relevance for them. Start strong and open with something unusual, amazing and definitely attention grabbing.

The opening is where you inspire and motivate your audience and quickly establish the WIIFM factor.

The opening is also where you establish your credibility. Your audience needs to feel like you deserve their attention. Use the opening to show them why they should even listen to you.

You should have several openings up your sleeve and have several add-on’s and fall-backs just in case after your initial opening the members of your audience do not all seem to be engaged.

A question tends to start a chain reaction of thought and involvement, and that’s why an exciting question can be a very effective way of starting your speech.

What questions could your audience be asking about the topic of discussion?



Write down a few examples of questions that you could ask as openings for your speech.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Find interesting anecdotes or stories related to your theme, preferably from your own past, that you could possibly start with.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

6.

WRITE YOUR FIRST DRAFT

All the exercises in the previous chapters have led up to this point. Now, it's time to write your speech. Write your script out with your opening, three points, stories and examples that support your points and your conclusion.

You have done most of the work without even realising it. It was quite painless and stress-free. You've already written the speech, now you just need to organise it, add some meat to it and then cut the fat.

Use these charts to outline your speech.

I. Your Opening _____

A. Main Point _____

1. Support _____

2. Example _____

B. Second Point _____

1. Support _____

2. Example _____

C. Third Point_____

1. Support_____

2. Example_____

II. Conclusion_____

This is the most common structure for a speech. It's often called PREP, which stands for Position—Reason—Example—Position. It's a very simple structure and easy for the audience to follow.

Once you've created your basic outline, you can write out your full speech. Other speech structures you can use include:

- ✍ Past—Present—Future, which takes the storyline of your idea and presents it in chronological form.
- ✍ Problem—Cause—Solution.
- ✍ AIDA, which stands for Attention—Interest—Desire—Action, is usually used for sales presentations or persuasive speeches.

It's best that you write your speech from the basic outline until you get more comfortable with speech writing.

One last note before you write the speech out in full. Speech pathologists recognise that some words resonate with audiences. It's not the polysyllabic words that you may think. Big words can make a speaker look like he owns a dictionary, but they don't really win audiences over. The audience has to clearly understand what you're saying. Keep the words simple. Choose words from this list of power words when it's appropriate:

Act Now	Amazing	Approved
Attractive	Bargain	Certified
Children	Colossal	Deal
Discount	Don't wait	Dream

Exceptional	Extraordinary	Family
Free	Gigantic	Easy
Endorsed	Enormous	Entertaining
Exclusive	Fascinating	Genuine
Great	Guaranteed	Hate
Huge	Hurry	Immediately
Improve	Informative	Last chance
Limited time	Love	Low cost
Lowest price	Massive	Money
New	Now	Offer
Only	Opportunity	Outrageous
Outstanding	Patriotism	Phenomenal
Poor	Popular	Powerful
Practical	Praised	Proven
Rare	Real	Recommended
Reduced price	Reliable	Remarkable
Revolutionary	Rich	Save
Secrets	Sensational	Solution
Special	Success	Superior
Today	Transform	Tremendous
Unique	Unparalleled	Unsurpassed
Versatile	Wealth	Wonderful



Now, go ahead and write out your speech on a separate piece of paper or on your computer. When you're done, come back to this page.

Read your speech out loud.

Did you notice transitions that didn't flow smoothly? Did some of your supporting material appear to help make your case until you read it aloud?

Remember, the magic in writing is in re-writing and making it better. Edit your speech several times and check that it flows in a logical manner.

Write out your revised and edited script using 14 point Arial or Times New Roman font double spaced. This time also add bold underlined text for any particular words that you want to emphasise or stress, and schedule in pauses by using a double back slash. Emphasis and pausing at key points can add impact and generate suspense, creating a stronger learning experience for the audience.

Condense this down to one A4 page which contains your opening, your three points and your take-home message. The stories and examples that you will use to support your points, you already know off by heart so you don't need to write them out for the final version of your speech – just note where they will go.

7.

PRACTISE AND PREPARE

Preparation builds confidence and practice makes perfect.

There are no shortcuts to preparing an effective, powerful speech and, as they say, “prior preparation prevents pitifully poor performance.” Mary Atkins suggests that 90% of a speech is in the preparation and 10% is in the delivery. Writing your speech, preparing a script, editing the script and bringing it down to a one-pager and then practising, should lead you to be able to deliver the speech much better than if you just spoke off the cuff.

Do as much background preparation as you can before delivering your speech. In my book “7 Steps to Overcome your Fear of Public Speaking”, I talk extensively about the importance of preparation. Specifically:

- ✎ Know your audience
- ✎ Know your venue
- ✎ Know your topic.

And over and above these three key areas of preparation, anticipate any other issues that could possibly arise, such as contentious questions from the audience, the arrival of a television crew or a bigger than expected audience.

Imagine if you were asked to speak to a small group of parents about post-school options for children with disabilities and 100 people turned up. Would you be ready for such an event?

Practise in front of friends and family; practise in front of the mirror and look closely at your gestures and body language. Record yourself and play it back, taking notes of areas for improvement in the script. Check that your timing is within the allowed time for your speech. If you had to reduce your time at the last moment, what could you leave out or reduce without affecting your speech?

List any scenarios that you think could possibly happen and write down contingency plans and strategies for dealing with them.

Learn your opening off by heart so that you can deliver it the same way, word for word, time after time.

Do the same with your take-home message and check that there can be no doubt in the audience's mind about what it is that you are asking them to do or what you are leaving them with. And make sure that this message is exactly what you wanted to achieve.

Now, you are ready to deliver a killer speech.

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Peter Dhu is a person who has stuttered all his life. As a teenager and young adult he struggled to speak and was ridiculed, teased and treated unfairly by his employer. He survived his high school and university years by being an elective mute, writing down on paper every request, every communication, so that he would not face the humiliation, embarrassment and shame of stuttering. His first job saw him placed in the basement with no client contact and strict instructions not to answer the telephone. Over 5 years he trained many new graduates, only to see them leapfrog over him to get senior positions and promotions. When he confronted his boss, he was told to be grateful for the job he had and because his communication skills were so bad, don't expect to be promoted and "Please Stop Applying for Senior Jobs"



Since that time Peter has devoted time and effort, sweat and tears, highs and lows to overcome his stutter and learn to speak fluently. He has pushed his boundaries, faced his disability and his fear to take on public speaking at every opportunity.

Along the way Peter has spent over 20 years supporting, helping and training other people who have speaking and communication difficulties. He has served as president of the Australians Speak Easy Association for 5 years and has served as president of the Speak Easy Association WA for 7 years.

Peter has spoken to and inspired people at many conferences and meetings in Australia and around the world, including Denmark (Nyborg), Belgium (Gent), Canada (Toronto and Montreal), England (Leeds), Ireland (Dublin) and Croatia (Dubrovnik).

Peter leaves his audiences inspired, committed and confident that they themselves can achieve anything that they want in their own careers and lives. Peter talks about personal effectiveness tools, including goal setting, coaching, learning from experience and taking ownership of your own destiny.

Peter's mission in life and his passion is to help people find their voice so that they can effectively and confidently get their message and their point of view across to others.



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