

# REAL-WORLD PUBLIC SPEAKING

What To Say



*Connect with Audiences  
Develop Your Message  
Build Your Outline*

*Create Informative &  
Persuasive Presentations*

*Create Elevator Pitches*

*Question and Answer Sessions*

*Introduce Yourself and Others*

*Interview Successfully*

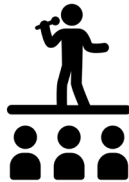
Aaron D. Anderson

David S. Leong

# REAL-WORLD PUBLIC SPEAKING

## PART 2: WHAT TO SAY

Aaron D. Anderson and David S. Leong



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# Foreword

Even for seasoned business and scientific presenters, David and Aaron have ideas to make you even better and more effective.

At the United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS), we need to communicate complicated ideas to many different audiences to help save lives. Sometimes those audiences are medical and scientific, while other times those audiences are business leaders, policymakers, and lay persons. Luckily, we employ some of the smartest and most dedicated scientists and researchers in the world. But it's sometimes difficult for experts to communicate with non-experts in ways that are clear, easy to digest, and action-oriented. And that can be a problem.

Our team gives several hundred presentations and talks a year at national conferences; board and governance meetings; national policy development committee meetings; grant and contract reviews with funders; and business operations meetings. We're under tremendous deadlines, and we don't always have a lot of time to spare putting together presentations, no matter how important they are to our mission.

Because we present to so many different audiences, we always need to solve a multitude of problems. In a nutshell:

- We need a systematic way to identify what information is most important for each audience.
- We need to hone down the information for some audiences and enhance it for others.
- We need to make our message informative, convincing, and compelling without boring the audience with slides full of text and bullet points.
- When we do use slides, we need to make sure they engage the audience as well as communicate the information.

- We need to make sure that some presentations can be given by multiple presenters.
- We need to be able to quickly convert different types of presentations (elevator pitches, informative presentations, persuasive presentations, educational Q&A sessions, etc.) for delivery to many different audiences.
- And we need a way to do all of that without spending too much time preparing.

Fortunately, Aaron Anderson and David Leong give us the solutions to do all that and much more. They provide us with elegant and no-nonsense ways to put together presentations for any audience. We use all the tools that are in this book on a nearly daily basis.

Even if your job doesn't involve research and policy development for saving lives, I'm sure that saving time and being effective and efficient are important to you. Read this book. Use the tools that are in it. they are simple to do and yet more effective than any other ways I know. You won't regret it!

*Ryan Ehrensberger, PhD, FACHE, Chief Growth Officer, United Network of Organ Sharing, July 2020*

# Preface

In 2005, if you'd told us that within a year we'd be teaching doctors how to communicate with dying patients, and that within two years we'd be travelling the world teaching CEOs how to communicate with angry shareholders, we'd have told you that you were crazy. But it happened.

How did a couple of theatre professors end up as international business consultants and executive coaches? As with many adventures, it started with a single conversation. In 2006, we found ourselves talking with Dr. Richard Wenzel, a prominent epidemiologist and noted medical educator, about a recent study suggesting that doctors had gotten so bad at talking to patients that patients were actually getting sicker.

Theatre artists know that a large part of actor training is teaching people how to listen actively, and as the conversation continued, it became clear that those same skills might also help doctors connect with patients in ways that mattered. This idea intrigued Dr. Wenzel so much that he proposed a study to see whether or not some basic theatre techniques could be used to teach doctors the skills of clinical empathy. Dr. Alan Dow, a leading researcher and hospitalist with Virginia Commonwealth University's (VCU) Department of Internal Medicine, helped us design and conduct a rigorous year-long empirical study to test the effectiveness of the theory.

Did it work? Oh yeah! More than anyone could have predicted. It turns out that teaching people how to communicate effectively is pretty straightforward. If you teach people a few basic skills, they get a lot better—no matter how much education they already have. Patients not only noticed the difference, they significantly preferred the doctors who had been trained in theatre-based communication skills.

That study—as well as several others we did—was published in a number of prestigious medical journals and won us several awards for innovation in medical education. The studies also ended up generating a lot of worldwide attention in the lay press.

One of those articles in *The Washington Post* caught the attention of the CEO of a major Fortune 500 company. That CEO contacted us to ask if we would teach his executives the same skills we taught doctors in the hope of improving communication across his company. By the end of the training, his executives did indeed get a lot better at communicating. And most importantly, they got a whole lot better at designing and delivering presentations.

It turns out that being able to give an effective presentation is an essential part of leadership, especially in big organizations. We didn't recognize that immediately. Our clients slowly taught us how and why presentations work in the real world. They brought us into their boardrooms, shareholder meetings, and venture capital pitches. We sat in on everything from daily meetings with a few people to yearly updates in front of thousands. During those foundational years, we learned that business communication involves more than just delivering information: It also requires knowing your audience and being able to craft a message that will persuade and motivate others to collective action. Over time, this unique combination of real-world business experience and theatre training led us to where we are now.

Since then, we've worked with literally thousands of students, doctors, lawyers, nurses, scientists, politicians, artists, and teachers to help them give presentations that get results. We've coached managers dealing with layers of international trade and small business owners just struggling to land their first client. We've helped scientists educate people about issues that were literally life and death and taught undergraduate students how to prepare for presentations that only felt like life and death. We didn't invent the process of designing and delivering winning presentations—we just broke it down and explained it clearly.

You learn empathy—and any type of communication—the same way you learn acting. You develop skillsets and then practice them until you get better. Neither empathy nor persuasive communication are something you are born with (or without). You practice them the same way you practice a musical instrument: sometimes focusing on the small details, and sometimes on the big picture. This book will show you how to accomplish this.



Flash forward to 2015 when we were asked to study the effectiveness of the required public speaking textbooks across our university. VCU's School of Business in particular was having difficulty identifying a course and textbook that was geared toward real-world application. As was true at other universities, students complained that their public speaking textbooks were heavy on theory, filled with redundant information, and, worst of all, didn't actually prepare them for the types of presentations they were asked to give in the real world.

With detailed advice from the professionals we coached in business, medicine, nursing, allied health, education, and the arts, we set out to create a reader-friendly, visually-appealing, and highly-effective textbook filled with chapter summaries, stories, and, of course, practical exercises based on the types of presentations people actually give outside the college classroom.

In 2020, the e-book format became essential to faculty and students as the worldwide pandemic altered the way instructors taught. So to better prepare students for the real world outside of school, we wrote additional chapters on How to Deliver Virtual Presentations and began sending out weekly public speaking tips to all students enrolled in university public speaking courses.

Any public speaking course needs to teach at least two different but intertwined skill sets: *what* to say (or not say) in a presentation, and *how* to say it effectively. Unfortunately, most public speaking textbooks relegate the skills of *how to deliver* to a single chapter or two and fail to provide teachers with observable, concrete skillsets with which to coach their students. Our e-books *Real-World Public Speaking: What to Say* and *Real-World Public Speaking: How to Deliver* solve those problems.

We wrote these books because we feel strongly that effective communication can make the world a better place. It helps patients to get well and businesses to thrive. The need for these skills is greater than ever before.

We hope you find inspiration within these books to help you connect with others authentically, whether you are presenting to large groups of people

or simply talking with others on a one-to-one basis. Doing it right is easy if you know how. It took us years to learn what's in this book.

Let our lifelong experience be your easy-to-use shortcut.

*Aaron D. Anderson and David S. Leong, January 2021*

# Introduction

*Real-World Public Speaking: What to Say* is specifically designed as an e-book for ease of use and clarity of reading. Each chapter includes public speaking tips and tools, learning outcomes, practical exercises, real-life stories, a glossary of terms, and a test-your-knowledge section so you can measure your learning. Color photographs, illustrations, charts, and tables highlight the contents. By the end of this e-book, you will know how to

- Connect with your audience.
- Develop your message.
- Build your outline.
- Create an informative presentation.
- Create a persuasive presentation.
- Create an elevator pitch.
- Conduct a question-and-answer session.
- Introduce yourself and others.
- Interview successfully.

Those are the essential skills you need for knowing *what* to say during any presentation. For those who want to know *how* to say it, the handy companion volume, *Real-World Public Speaking: How to Deliver*, will show you how to

- Overcome stage fright.
- Use your body.
- Use your voice.
- Memorize quickly.
- Practice with ease.

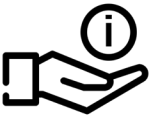
- Use stories.
- Present without slides.
- Design engaging slides.
- Give group presentations.
- Give virtual presentations.

## **How to Use This Book**

The best way to learn how to put together a great presentation is to put together a real one from beginning to end. You can learn a lot about presenting just by reading through this book and thinking to yourself, *Wow, yeah, I never thought about it like that*, or *Of course: that makes perfect sense!* But the best way to get the most out of your time is to actually work through creating, rehearsing, and delivering a real presentation for a real audience.

# Guide to Symbols

To make this book as easy to use as possible, we will highlight certain types of information throughout. Pay particular attention to the information next to the following icons:



**TIP:** Information that includes the secrets, shortcuts, and key ideas that will make your presentation better and your life easier.



**DO THIS:** Clear, easy-to-understand lists of best practices and techniques that will make your presentation better and your life easier.



**DON'T DO THIS:** Clear, easy-to-understand lists of things that will make your presentation less effective and your life harder.



**FOR EXAMPLE:** Anecdotes, short stories, or case studies that illustrate key points.



**YOUR TURN:** Simple exercises that will walk you through the process of brainstorming and developing your presentation.

## Chapter 8.

### Introducing Yourself and Others

*Every audience is different and your introduction matters. . . . Getting them to want to hear what you have to say increases the likelihood that they will absorb the message.*

—Darren LaCroix, 2001 Toastmasters World Champion of Public Speaking

#### **What You Will Learn in This Chapter**

1. The three main ingredients of an introduction.
2. How to formally introduce someone else.
3. How to casually introduce someone else.
4. How to formally introduce yourself.
5. How to casually introduce yourself.

#### **Why This Is Important**

Knowing how to introduce yourself and others is an important skill in your professional and personal life. Almost every day there is a business or social event at which you have to make both formal and casual introductions and, on some occasions, you may have to introduce yourself before you begin to give a presentation or speech.

#### **The Three Main Ingredients of an Introduction**

Every well-written introduction consists of three main ingredients:

1. A strong opening hook and something about their credentials.
2. An engaging story and why the other people should meet them.

3. A “tease” about what the audience will gain from listening to the speaker.



**KNOWING HOW TO INTRODUCE YOURSELF AND OTHERS IS A SKILL YOU WILL  
USE ALMOST EVERY DAY.**

## **How to Formally Introduce Someone Else**

People who deliver presentations at conferences or other formal gatherings are usually highly accomplished in their field, and the people who attend those gatherings are usually interested in hearing about their accomplishments. But it’s a mistake to simply list the other person’s job titles or degrees when introducing them. Those things are important, but the main thing the audience wants to know is how the other person’s experience relates to their own goals.



The following introduction was given for a speaker at a writer's conference (names changed for privacy).

The audience was composed of aspiring young writers who wanted to learn how to get their own books published and mid-level publishing house executives who wanted to meet the next big thing. The person giving the introduction was the head of a recently-very-successful publishing house.

1. *A strong opening hook (and something about their credentials).*

“Ladies and gentlemen, you’re about to meet the author of *The Destruction of Pompeii*, a book that’s won two national book-of-the-month awards and has broken the record for back-ordered historical fiction novels.

“I am delighted to introduce my friend, Joan Christopher, who graduated from Bates College with a degree in creative writing before getting her M.A. in Renaissance poetry and her Ph.D. in Roman literature before writing several very successful novels.”

Note that the first part begins with a hook that mattered to that audience: the fact that she broke the record for back-ordered novels. This is of keen interest to an audience who wants to succeed in publishing. You need to figure out a way to hook your audience in a way that’s relevant to your guest.

Immediately after the opening hook, note how the name of the speaker was mentioned and how few notable and relevant achievements were shared (for instance, he didn’t go into detail about the title of her M.A., her dissertation, or her other books).



Don’t overwhelm your audience with too many details.



Everyone’s life story is complex: Focus on the few details that will most interest your audience. Your introduction is just a bridge to connect people. Keep things short. Your goal is to pique interest and then get out of the way.

*2. An engaging story (and why they were invited to speak).*

“Above and beyond those achievements, I’d like to tell you why she’s here today: Dr. Christopher literally saved Concord Press from going under. Over the past 10 years, she’s traveled all over the country in a red Volkswagen Beetle at her own expense to promote Concord Press’s mission to make tomorrow’s writers known today. Because of her, Concord Press is now recognized as the nation’s best publisher of historical fiction. In fact, the press publishes the work of over a dozen writers, all under the age of 30. Some of them were found at conferences like this one.”



**FORMAL INTRODUCTIONS ARE MINI PRESENTATIONS OF THEIR OWN.**



After you have the audience’s attention, it’s very useful to include a story that relates to that specific audience in a way that piques their interest.

Sometimes quirky details like travelling in a “red Volkswagen Beetle” can help create elements of surprise. If you don’t know the other person that well, ask the person being introduced to help you. In fact, most of the top professional speakers prefer to have a hand in the writing of their introductions.

*3. A tease about what the audience will gain by listening to the speaker.*

“I’m excited to say that Joan, as she prefers to be called, is here to tell you the five best ways to get your work noticed by not only Concord Press but by other publishers as well. Please put your hands together to help me welcome Dr. Joan Christopher, author, VW road-warrior, and publishing house savior!”



The last part of the introduction should always tease the audience into the presentation by telling them what they’ll gain without going into specific details.



**KEEP IT SHORT AND FOCUSED ON YOUR AUDIENCE.**

This is the most important part of the introduction because it lets the audience know what *they're* going to get out of the meeting.



Tease the audience by telling them the benefits of staying and listening.



Don't just list the other person's credentials.



**SOMETIMES FORMAL INTRODUCTIONS NEED TO FOLLOW PRESCRIBED RULES.**

Remember to tell your audience what they're going to hear but don't give away the goods. In other words, tell them that they're going to hear the "five best ways to get their work noticed," but don't go into the details. Leave that

to the speaker. World Champion public speaker Craig Valentine puts it this way: “Tease ’em but don’t tell ’em.”

## How to Casually Introduce Someone Else

Casual introductions should always be short. The main thing you need to remember when introducing anyone is that your goal is to:

1. Pique the interest of your audience.
2. Give credibility to the people being introduced.
3. Inspire conversation by identifying something that they have in common.



**Casual introductions happen all the time.**



A student named Phoebe recently introduced her friend June to her English teacher with the following words.

“June, this is my English teacher, Professor Roberts. June’s only a sophomore, but she entered the university Speech Communication Competition this year. Even though she told me she was terrified to get up in front of all those people, she did it anyway. And with lots of practice and determination, she won second place and took home \$500. By the way, June, you can give me some of that money any-time you want.”

Note that Phoebe identified both of them to each other (June as a sophomore student and Professor Roberts as her teacher). When Phoebe connects her audience through related interests (speech and communication), they immediately have something in common.



Even if you’re not sure about how close their interests intersect, the effort alone is usually enough to break the ice.



**MASTERING THE ART OF CASUAL INTRODUCTIONS CAN HELP YOUR CAREER.**

For instance, even if Professor Roberts doesn't really care as much as he should about speech and communication, he and June have now been appropriately identified and introduced to each other.



Here is one of our favorite introductions of all time. It's a true story.

"Have you ever had car trouble and couldn't get around very well, but you still really, *really* needed to get where you were going? You still need to go grocery shopping and get to meetings to try to get a job. Worse, imagine that you just moved to Los Angeles, your car gets stuck in reverse, and you don't have enough money to get it fixed. This is before the days of Uber, so you're all on your own— and anyone who knows LA knows that you can't get around without a car. What would you do? Well, if you're this man, you drive your car in reverse down side streets, praying the cops don't see you until you finally land a job and can afford to get your car fixed. Ladies and gentlemen, I'd like to introduce you to the man who drove around Los Angeles in reverse for five full weeks: Mr. Gary Sloan!"

## How to Formally Introduce Yourself

You might be called upon to "formally" introduce yourself to a new group of people when you interview for a job, attend a meeting, or before you give a presentation.



Anytime you're asked to talk about yourself, tell a short story that *reveals* rather than *tells* them who you are: your work ethic, organization, creativity, ability to work with others, reliability, organization, self-discipline, etc.



If you were conducting a job interview, which one of these answers makes you want to know more about the person?

**A:** “My name is Kamari Arman, and I have a Bachelor of Science degree in business with a concentration in finance. I’m good with numbers, I like to work hard, and I graduated with a 3.1 GPA. Right now, I’m looking for a job in my field. My father said that I keep good records.”

or

**B:** “When I was 12, my father was laid off from his job as a construction worker and decided to start his own business flipping houses. I was too young to operate the power tools, but I wanted to help out in any way I could, so I decided to keep track of all the supplies we needed to buy. Even when I got old enough to actually do some of the heavy lifting, my Dad kept me in charge of the financial records because we started making a real profit, and I knew how to keep the books in ways that helped the whole business.”

The first answer is just a long list of attributes that doesn’t reveal anything about the person and also sounds kind of self-serving. But the second answer (the one with a story) reveals a *lot* about Kamari without coming across like bragging. Through his story, we learn about his dedication to family values, his work ethic, and the fact that his skills have real-world value.

The story version definitely makes the listener want to know more. The “just the facts” version isn’t nearly as compelling. Stories reveal hints about the person behind the facts. This is what your audience really wants to know.



The most important thing to remember when asked to talk about yourself is to tell a story and keep it short..



**MASTERING THE ART OF SELF-INTRODUCTIONS CAN HELP YOUR CAREER TOO.**

The goal is to pique their interest, not deliver all the facts.

## **How to Casually Introduce Yourself**

When you need to introduce yourself in a more casual manner, your stories can be extremely short. Like all other types of introductions, your main goal is to pique your listener's interest so they want to know more about you.



Not sure how to pique the interest of your listener? The easiest way is to express an interest in *them* and be open and honest.





Here are a few examples of easy ways to initiate a conversation.

1. “Hi I’m Sharon. What brings you here?”
2. “Hi, my name’s Natalie Wilson and I’m a freshman finance major. I was told to come to this meeting so I could meet other freshman business majors. I’m glad to meet you. What brings you here?”
3. “Hi I’m Ben. I couldn’t help but notice your shirt. I went to that concert too! Were you there or do you just dig the band?”



**Keep casual self-introduction simple and focused on them.**

## Responding

Responding to others who introduce themselves to you is just as easy: If you are asked a question, just reply honestly and then try to learn something about the other person. Some people get intimidated when talking to strangers, but if you keep things simple, there’s really nothing to worry about.



Here are a few strategies to fall back on if your mind goes blank.

*Focus on the present.* A common version of this strategy is remarking on the weather, but you can draw people's attention to anything that seems interesting: "I've never seen a jacket like the one that guy is wearing. He looks like a superhero." Or just tell them what brought you to this moment and ask them how they came to be here as well.

*Ask for help.* You can ask anything, really: "Do you know where the Kehinde Wiley exhibit is?" "Do you know what time it is?" or even "I don't really know anyone here. Do you have any suggestions for not feeling awkward?"

*Ask a question about things that might interest them.* "What's your most/least favorite band/food/sports/drink?" "Would you ever wear a jacket like that?"

*Focus on helping them.* One of the most important sociological facts is that many people feel a little lost when meeting new people. One of the easiest ways to take the focus off your own discomfort is to focus on helping someone else relax. Offer to introduce them to anyone else you know there, and then *voila!* You've created an instant group of new acquaintances.

*Remember that eye contact, smiling, and engaged body language are always more important than what you say.*



Here is the general rule of thumb when meeting new people: *Don't be interesting—be interested.* It's easier on you, and better for them.

## Final Thoughts

It doesn't take the skills of a rocket scientist to master the art of introducing yourself and others. It does, however, require you learn how to craft a compelling story and to deliver your introduction with confidence and poise.

It's useful to give some thought to the stories you might tell to reveal things about how you operate in this world. This will be especially useful when interviewing (which we cover in the next chapter). With a little practice, you can present yourself through multiple stories that you can use whenever you interview, present, and speak.



**BODY LANGUAGE SUCH AS EYE CONTACT AND A SMILE GO A LONG WAY.**

And, as always, you'll want to practice your delivery. When you practice, make sure that your tone of voice and body language resonate with enthusiasm and energy. Saying the right words goes a long way toward making a positive impression, but you need to make sure that every part of your message (words, voice, and body language) point in the same direction.



**INTRODUCTIONS HAPPEN ONLINE AS WELL.**

## Summary

Knowing how to introduce yourself and others is an important skill in your professional and personal life. Almost every day there is a business or social event at which you have to make both formal and casual introductions, and upon some occasions you may have to introduce yourself before you give a presentation or speech.

When you're asked to introduce someone "formally," it's usually because you have a position of responsibility or you have a personal connection to that speaker. Every well-written formal introduction consists of three main ingredients: a strong opening hook and something about their credentials. an engaging story and why the other people should meet them. and a tease about what the audience will gain from listening to the speaker. You can make even the simplest and most casual introduction more meaningful if you pique your audience's interest so that they want to know more about the person you are introducing.

When you formally introduce yourself at a business meeting, conference or training session, you should include the same ingredients for introducing others. When you need to introduce yourself in a more casual manner, your stories can be very short. Dig deep into your story file to uncover things that are engaging and inspiring about yourself. Ask your close friends and family to help you add to your list, and soon you'll be prepared for nearly any event. With a little practice, you can present yourself through multiple stories that you can use anytime you interview, present, or speak.

As always, practice your delivery. Make sure that your tone of voice and body language resonate with enthusiasm and energy. Remember that eye contact, smiling, and engaged body language are always more important than what you say.

## **Exercises**

1. Make a list of stories that can be used for formal and/or self-introductions. Will the listener understand the relevance of your story? Are your values clear without listing them?

Stories can be mined from many parts of your life experiences. Ask yourself the following:

- What challenges have you overcome?
- What excites you?
- What you are most proud of?
- How you are different from others?
- What amusing events you have experienced?
- What stranger-than-fiction events have happened to you?

2. Craft two versions for each story: a short version and a longer version.
3. Practice out loud and make sure it's conversational.
4. The easiest way to practice is to tell the stories to a friend or group of friends.

## **Test Your Knowledge**

1. Which is NOT a main ingredient of any introduction?
  - (a) An engaging story.
  - (b) A strong and relevant opening hook.
  - (c) A self-centered statement.
  - (d) Knowledge about your audience.
  - (e) What your audience wants to hear from the person/speaker.
2. What type of story is probably NOT advisable when you introduce yourself to someone you just met? Stories about the following:
  - (a) A challenge or challenges you have overcome.
  - (b) What you both have in common.
  - (c) What work-related event you are most proud of.
  - (d) Your appearance in traffic court.
  - (e) An amusing event you have experienced.

3. A formal self-introduction is used when:

- (a) you deliver a paper at a business conference.
- (b) you're in line at Starbucks.
- (c) you introduce yourself to friend you haven't seen in a while.
- (d) you meet your best friend for lunch.
- (e) you run into an old friend in the elevator.

4. Fill in the blank. The main thing you need to remember when introducing anyone is to \_\_\_\_\_ your audience so that they want to know more about the person you are introducing.

- (a) amuse
- (b) shock and startle
- (c) shut down
- (d) insult
- (e) pique the interest of

5. Fill in the blank. When you make an introduction, the first step is to know \_\_\_\_\_.

- (a) what will interest your audience.
- (b) how long your audience is willing to listen.
- (c) the exact age of your audience.
- (d) what kind of jokes to tell.
- (e) [all of the above].

Key to Test Your Knowledge: 1. c., 2. d, 3. a, 4. e, 5. a.

## **Additional Resources**

“How to Introduce Another Speaker in 3 Steps.” YouTube (Karl Kwan). November 3, 2011. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1n8pQl-2c1M>

“How to Introduce Yourself Professionally.” Indeed.com. November 23, 2020, <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/introduce-yourself-professionally>.

“How to Make a Great Introduction Speech | Public Speaking.” YouTube. August 2, 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aUbuIRfm5F4>.

“Self-Introduction | How to Introduce Yourself in English | Tell Me About Yourself Interview Answer.” YouTube. August 14, 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QgjkjsqAzvo>.

“Self-Introduction Tips and Tricks (with Examples).” Indeed.com. October 19, 2020, <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/self-introduction-tips>.



# Conclusion

Congratulations! Now you know the same tools that theatre artists, world-class speakers and presenters use to captivate, excite, and inspire their audiences.

And there's more good news: From this point on, your public speaking skills will keep getting better and better and better—because you practice your newfound skills every time you speak.

Each time you speak out loud, you give a kind of “mini-presentation.” You present when you go to the grocery store, when you talk to friends, and when you talk to family members. Every time you speak to someone else about anything, you develop and hone your speaking skills even more. That is how actors work. They practice the skills of being present not only when they're working but also in everyday life.

It's not rocket science. Every time you deliberately practice your skills, you get better. All that's required is that you pay attention to what you're doing and why. In no time at all, you'll turn your skills into habits. And the more you do it the more effortless it becomes!

Since you now have the tools on the tip of your tongue, you can easily make a conscious effort to improve a little more each time. Test out a new introduction. Excite your friends with an engaging hook. Say goodbye to a friend with a warm and loving “closing statement.” You don't have to tell anyone what you're doing, but we encourage you to use each and every opportunity to master your newfound skills.

Now go out give a great presentation. Or better yet, give lots of them!



## About the Authors

**Aaron D. Anderson, PhD**, credits the beginning of his hard-won experience to time spent as an Army Explosive Ordinance Specialist struggling to get out of a wheelchair after a year in a military hospital. Fast-forward to the present where Aaron is now probably the only person in the world to hold simultaneous university positions in Art, Business, and Medicine.

He holds an Interdisciplinary PhD in Culture from Northwestern University, an MFA in Acting from the University of Hawaii, and is one of the only non-physicians to have ever received an award for Innovation in Medical Education. His unique background has helped him found three successful companies, and, for the past 15 years, he has coached leaders on five continents, from congressional candidates and government officials to doctors, lawyers, and Fortune 500 CEOs.

**David S. Leong, MFA**, is an international consultant, speaker, author, and fight master and conflict resolution trainer. He is a Professor Emeritus from Virginia Commonwealth University, where he served as chair and full professor from 1993 to 2017. He is a member of the Board of Trustees of the College of Fellows of the American Theatre, whose purpose is to honor distinguished service and notable accomplishment by individuals of recognized national stature.

His 40-year career in higher education includes faculty appointments at the Juilliard School, Brandeis University, Northern Kentucky University, the University of Maryland, and the University of Montevallo. His Broadway and London West End fight choreography for plays and musicals has spanned over four decades. David has coached many TV, film, and theatre stars including Don Cheadle, Christopher Plummer, Woody Harrelson, Sigourney Weaver, Winona Ryder, Marisa Tomei, Joan Cusack, Frances McDormand, Raul Julia, Christopher Walken, and many more.