

10 Things You Should Give Up if You Want to Become a Paid (or just a better) Speaker in 2017!

You will get lots of advice of all the good things to do to become a paid speaker, so we thought it's about time to see what things you need to give up (aka replace with a good, proactive behavior).

Give Up:

1. Your negative self-talk.

- i. You can go to conferences, trainings, listen to webinars, buy programs, even practice your presentations at the Bureau, but if you don't put a plan in place to deal with the negative self talk ("why should anyone listen to me", "there are so many others already talking on the topic", "man, I really sucked – said too many ums, forgot a whole portion..."), you won't advance forward no matter what you do.
- ii. **DO INSTEAD:** change up the questions you ask yourself.

2. The need to always be right.

- i. Step away from 'the expert syndrome'. You can't possibly know it all. And when you allow your audience or someone else to provide some insight – it makes you more relatable. Secret is to stay in navigational control of the presentation.

3. The quest for perfection.

- i. It doesn't exist, and you will hit the law of diminishing returns (the more you do will yield lesser and lesser results).
- ii. **DO INSTEAD:** Start embracing the things that make you different. Use to give a twist to your topics, or to add to your story base, or to create new topics. Put support systems in place for your weaknesses and start focusing on your strengths and the content of your speeches. Btw – weaknesses or moments of vulnerability make you more 'human' to the audience.

4. The Quest of Speaking as the ‘end goal’.

- i. Speaking shouldn’t be your sole focus, especially now as an emerging or starting speaker.
- ii. **DO INSTEAD:** Focus on developing your differences and more relevant, engaging content. Look at speaking as simply as channel for exposure, new business, some income, etc. There are all types of platforms to master (which will increase your speaking fees in the future FYI if you do it right). You can build your speaking online in live video, on webinars, on planned / scripted video, through posts and images, on podcasts – the possibilities are endless.

5. Thinking you don’t need to practice, or lots of prep time.

- i. Think of getting up to speak like that teacher who said every student starts out with an A. When you are late to class, deduction. Miss a homework, deduction. Don’t deliver an assignment on time, deduction. Same thing with speaking. The audience gives you a 100 just for being brave enough, smart enough, ‘famous’ enough to step on that stage. But each time you read the slides/notes, stumble, fidget, panic, lose confidence, don’t deliver on your title or message.... You lose points. Sure, they all want you to succeed – but they also want something for their time too. So practice, prep, and deliver. When you can be yourself on stage, and ‘out of your head – constantly thinking of your next move’, it’s easier for you and more rewarding for the audience.

6. Your limiting beliefs.

- i. There are lots of things that hold many speakers back. From the environment we grew up in, where and to whom you have to present, to experiences you had etc. When you keep and give in to these beliefs you are giving away your power to someone else. As a new speaker – you need all the power you can muster.
- ii. **DO INSTEAD:** Get more ‘mindful’. Meaning, pay attention to what’s holding you back, making you uncomfortable, or fearful, *in the moment*. Work to understand where something is coming from, if it’s

valid AND how you can use it, learn from it, or even, include in a speech.

7. Thinking that you don't need to take your topics a level deeper.

- i. Trust me – your topic has been done before. So what makes your version so unique?
- ii. **DO INSTEAD:** Go deeper and look for the influences you bring to your topics. Your insight and experiences, things that are uniquely you – look for why people should hear this version, from you. Where can you add your stories, your insight? What kind of twist can you bring to your speeches that add value to the audience?

8. Your Notes.

- i. Give them up. Yes, as you are starting out, you need them, and may need to refer to them from time to time when you are starting out with a new topic, speaking to a new crowd. But people came to hear you, your experience and insight. Stop reading from the slides, and your notes, and look at the audience, speak from the heart – have a conversation.
- ii. **DO INSTEAD:** practice your presentation more than just in the car. Give your presentations practice at the Bureau. Apply the advice you receive and then, DO IT AGAIN! The more you become familiar with your speech, the better you will be able to customize it. Also – start your presentation development from an outline or [storyboard](#), which works best for your memory. Use colored notecards for important points you don't want to forget and want to make sure you deliver. The color alone is the trigger for the content.

9. Your Fears...of selling, of connecting, of trying new platforms.

- i. You are the only one keeping you from your big successes this year. Selling, connecting, and new platforms are scary when you're not comfortable doing them.
- ii. **DO INSTEAD:** find things that work or support you as you overcome your fears. Selling: face it – you are always going to be selling, or for a less scary term: persuading. Whether it's yourself, your point of view, the things you own, your services/products. It isn't sleazy or scary

when you have value for people, and you are confident in what you have. Instead of selling – talk about how your goods/words can have an impact, change, create a difference. Practice ‘selling’ in different forms to find what works

- iii. **DO INSTEAD:** Connecting – not networking. The speaking business, especially for paid speaking is based on relationships and referrals. If networking scares you – figure out why, and what you can do to make it work for you so you can get more opportunities.

10. One and done thinking.

- i. Don’t just give a speech once, or continually give the same speech or presentation over and over again to all different audiences. Your audiences have access to google and can get answers – any answer they want in a few keystrokes and a few minutes. Give them more.
- ii. **DO INSTEAD:** Change up how you present materials. Give your visuals a punchy update. Add relevant new material. Refer to the latest studies. Give people information and a new way of looking at things as a reward for their investment of time in you. Know your audience.

The more you give up, the more room is made for better behaviors, skills, techniques and strategies to take their place.

The more mindful you become of delivering something of value to your audience in a language and manner perfect for them, and focusing less on ‘you’, the more successful your presentations will become.

HERE’S TO YOUR SPEAKING SUCCESS!!