



The Public Speaking Bible

**A survival guide for
standing on stage.**

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All materials within this book are for informational purposes only. You should apply discretion combined with the consultation of both a health care practitioner and a personal trainer before undertaking any of the exercises or techniques described within this book. To the best that we can ascertain all information was correct at the time of writing. In addition, the author and his team disclaim any liability for any adverse ¹ effects that may arise from use of this book and the information contained within.

¹ Author's footnote to the editor's disclaimer: we do assume liability for any awesome effects that arise from using this book!

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ROUGH BEGINNINGS.

I NEVER WANTED TO become a public speaker, in fact, *I freakin' hated* talking in front of an audience.

But my hopes of avoiding any and all matters oratory were dashed when, as a freshly signed author, my editorial team informed me that they'd booked me for a two-week whirlwind tour.

At first, I thought they were joking. But their po-faced expressions clearly indicated that they weren't.

The bitter cruelty! I couldn't believe it; what twisted piece of fate would offer up my dream of becoming an author, only to give me a side serving of public speaking fear? When I tried to weasel out of the task, I received sharp schooling from my publishing house in the realities of the industry. If you were an author and wanted to succeed in today's marketplace, you *simply had to tour*. Exposure was a necessity and talking directly to potential customers was the one sure way to make headway. And I very much wanted to succeed. Being an author was my dream job so I pushed aside my doubts, grabbed hold of my confidence and went to work.

The first week was a nightmare. Each day I was rushed from event to event and told to stand in front of an ever-increasingly large crowd. I visited schools, book shops, academies and colleges and damn, did I make a lot of mistakes! I mumbled, I stuttered, I got my slides mixed up, I alienated a crowd by messing up my lines and in general there was a lot of blushing and soul-crushing moments. As if that wasn't enough, there were calamitous moments over which I had no control; projectors failed, audio speakers shrieked, venues posted incorrect starting times and in one crowded establishment the spectators barely stopped chatting to each other while I spoke.

At the end of the first week I went out and partied with my friends, drank a lot of tequila and blew off as much steam as possible. The following

morning I pummelled my hangover into submission with multiple espressos and paracetamol and went to work correcting my presentation, working on my animations and practising my delivery.

The second week wasn't much better. I made more mistakes, I continued to make a fool of myself and I juggled even more technical faults. But there were good moments too. I got a foot-thumping round of applause at one school and the book-signing queue at another was so long that I actually got cramp in my fingers. Cramp! More than that, the Q&A sessions and the opportunity to encourage young readers and share tips with budding writers was truly exciting. By the end of that second week I was surprised to find that I was beginning to enjoy the talks.

From that point, I started to search for more talking opportunities and with the reviews garnered from my two-week tour, managed to get my foot in the door with a professional speaking agency. In the six years since that rough beginning, I've given over 1,600 paid talks in thirteen countries. In addition to the three agencies that I work with, I have my own team chasing leads and arranging events on my behalf. And in an odd reversal, I find that I now love touring every bit as much as I do writing. In fact, I spend more of my time touring than writing and earn a far greater income through talking than I do putting pen to paper.

Crazy, right?

* * * *

With a growing focus upon lifestyle choices, public speaking is in demand more than ever before. There are YouTubers, Ted talkers, motivational speakers, personal training gurus, online super teachers, Instastars, Snapchat celebrities and more. All of which means that the old adage of 'those that can, do, those who can't teach,' no longer rings true. The public has the time, the money and the desire to improve their lives. They want to learn new skills, new languages, new hobbies and new ways to exercise. Increased disposable income, the rise of the internet and the ability to travel cheaply has caused a surging escalation of demand for public speakers.

Unfortunately, becoming a good public speaker is neither easy nor straightforward. It takes practice, a *lot of practice* to iron out the wrinkles in a performance. You must master your voice, make the best of body language, adopt crowd control techniques and learn how to deliver your speech in a way that your audience can understand. And once these steps

have been conquered, you must learn resilience to ensure career longevity and flexibility to overcome the hurdles and tripwires that will frequently arise while talking on stage.

Which is where I come in. I have a wealth of experience built upon the foundation of a thousand mistakes; some small, some large, some painful and too many that were simply mortifying! After spending weeks, months and years talking to audiences that numbered in the hundreds and thousands, I've developed a well-tested skill set that ensures I get repeat bookings and that my calendar starts to fill eighteen months in advance. I want to share these with you in the hopes that you can climb the ladder both faster and smoother than I did. But don't get me wrong, I, of course, expect you to go out and make your own mistakes. Mistakes are a necessity, they're the greatest of teachers but perhaps by sharing my lessons and experience, you will rise to become part of the next generation of public speakers that will be greater than the last.

The very best of luck and fingers crossed I get to bump into you on the Speaker's circuit soon.

MARCUS ALEXANDER

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK.

THIS BOOK IS NOT a novel, it's a *bible* ; a repository of knowledge. It's been pieced together, not with the intent of being read from cover to cover (which would be exceedingly dull!) but with the desire to provide budding speakers with all the skills required to get the job done. As a future public speaker, you are hopefully already a master in your particular field and have the ability to talk endlessly about your given topic. Because of this, you won't find any chapters in this bible that covers writing or developing a speech; there are books aplenty on that. This book, instead, looks at the skill of performing to an audience; you'll find instructions on effortless voice projection, insights to engaging and controlling listeners, oratory tips on turning dull topics into exciting performances and insider knowledge on the business aspect of the Speaker's circuit.

The Public Speaking Bible: A Survival Guide For Standing On Stage is split into five parts.

Part I – Longevity: the business know-how required to become a paid professional:

- Putting a Price on a Speech and other Business Matters.
- Personality, Attire and Unique Selling Points.
- Checklist.
- Travel, Packing and Speaker's Kit.
- Working with Clients.

Part II – Mechanics: the technical skills required for speaking and performing.

- The No-Mic Method.
- Memorising a Speech.
- Communication & Teaching Points.
- Cadence, Crowd Control and Body Movement.
- Body Language.
- Quarrelsome Audience Members and Troublemakers.

Part III – Maintenance: working insights for career endurance.

- Glossophobia – the Fear of Public Speaking.
- Exercises for Public Speakers.
- Health, Fighting Sore Throats and Keeping Your Voice.

Part IV – Agencies: a global agencies contact list.

- Agencies.

Part V – Additional Skills & Reference

- Sound.
- The Stage and its History.
- The Clap and the Handshake.
- Projectors, Slideshows and Visual Content.

Speaker's Experience

In addition to sharing my own experience, I've reached out to friends and associates who use their voice to earn a living. These include motivational speakers, lecturers, authors, thespians, singers and coaches, all of whom have supplied their best tips to help you out.

One further note on experience; I've listed many of my worst experiences in the hope that you can learn from them and avoid repeating them. I can't stress, however, how awesome it is to be a public speaker! The majority of

my experiences are full of laughs and outrageously positive but because I haven't listed these within this bible, I'd hate for you to think the career is full of potholes and obstacles. It isn't. Once you're on the path, you'll soon find that speaking is not only a lucrative career but an exciting one that offers opportunities for travel and meeting a range of inspiring individuals.

Quotes

Public speaking has a history that reaches back through the millennia. I'm a huge admirer of these early masters and have used their teachings to further my career. You'll find quotes and nuggets of wisdom from these golden orators littered through the following pages.

Images

Gaining publication permissions for large numbers of individuals is notoriously hard. Due to this you won't find any images of myself talking to a crowd within this bible. There are however images that have been cleared for marketing use on social media, if you'd like to see these please do pop over to the following Instagram feeds [@marcusalexanderauthor](#) and [@keeperoftherealmsseries](#)

That boring health and safety notice

There are physical exercises suggested within this bible. Because of this, I'm going to have to sound like a complete fool and urge that:

you confer with a physician before undertaking any new forms of physical exercise and while learning the mechanics of these exercises, you should do so with the guidance of a trained personal trainer.

Yeah, health and safety, it's the best.

PART I

LONGEVITY.

PUTTING A PRICE ON A SPEECH AND OTHER BUSINESS MATTERS.

IF YOU'RE EMPLOYED TO speak for a company, you're paid for your time and expertise with a monthly wage in which case this chapter won't apply to you. But if you are a freelance public speaker and you're making a start in the industry, you'll need to consider how much to charge for your expertise and time.

It's not an easy decision; there are no proven formulae to follow and for newbie speakers entering the industry, a lack of confidence and experience can lead to pricing patterns that aren't sustainable. Before you sell your time, expertise and services, consider shifting your definition of public speaking. Stop perceiving it as a service and instead, start to think of your speech as your product and your audience as consumers.

'As a vessel is known by the sound, whether it be cracked or not, so men are proved by their speeches; whether they be wise or foolish.'

DEMOSTHENES

In this chapter: Pricing your speech, Invoicing, Sole Trader or Limited Company, Public Liability Insurance and Business Costs.

PRICING YOUR SPEECH

Experience

If you're a speaker and you're invited to talk at an event, it's because of your expertise. Whatever your field or industry, you've spent years of your life learning your craft. You've made mistakes, tripped, fallen, studied,

experimented and generally worked like a beast to get to where you are. When you give a lecture and you deliver your insights, secrets and industry know-how, you are in effect giving all of your hard graft and personal investment away.

Of course, skills and insight should be passed on and experience should be shared. Giving others the opportunity to learn improves both industries and society. Inherently this is a good thing. But don't sell your skills for free; do not undervalue what you've achieved and do not underestimate the opportunities you're providing to your listeners.

Time – If you give a one hour lecture where you pass on a piece of knowledge that took you two years to achieve, you've given everyone in the audience a huge shortcut to benefit their career. That's two years of your time in exchange for an hour of their listening time.

Income – If you pass on a piece of expertise that historically allowed you to upsell your services or goods by an extra 10%, you've passed on extra earning potential to your audience that they weren't aware of previously.

When you price your talks, ensure you're putting the correct value on the *time* and *income* that your audience will benefit from.

Life Changing Moments

Motivational speakers might not necessarily be passing on expertise. They might not be masters in any particular field or have invested years of their lives working their way up the ranks of industry. Instead, what they are offering are life skills and the opportunity to change someone's life in a meaningful way.

Motivational speakers may offer increased opportunities for happiness, marital success, psychological insights, self-improvement, social development and a plethora of other know-how that people aren't able to grasp without guidance. These insights can completely change a person's life.

Clearly it's impossible to put a price on life changing moments but all of us have had them; we've all experienced a 'eureka' moment that caused us to change direction in our lives. As individuals who've experienced such moments, we should be able to consider how our lives have been enriched and perhaps what we would pay for similar occurrences.

Given the value of these moments, we should ensure we price our services accordingly.

Crowd Numbers

When it comes to pricing your performance, you need to consider not just your time on stage but how many people are actually consuming your product. In other words you need to factor the size of the crowd.

If you're speaking to a very large crowd, either bump up your speaker's fee or negotiate a percentage of ticket sales.

'If you put a small value upon yourself, rest assured that the world will not raise your price.'

ANON

The Five-Six-Seven Factor

If you're still unsure how to put a price on your performance, consider the tried and tested *five-six-seven rule*. This is a basic yet efficient way to scale your everyday income by a factor of five, six or seven to arrive at a billable amount that you can invoice to event organisers.

- For a one day event, multiply your daily income by FIVE.
- For a half-day event, multiply your hourly income by SIX for each billable hour.
- For a single event of one hour or less, multiply your hourly income by SEVEN.

Examples:

A programmer who historically earns £360 a day or £40 per hour would bill:

- One day event: $£360 \times 5 = £1800$
- Half-day event of four hours: $(£40 \times 6) \times 4 = £960$
- A single event of one hour: $£40 \times 7 = £280$

A landscaper who historically earns £190 a day or £21 per hour would bill:

- One day event: $£190 \times 5 = £950$
- Half-day event of four hours: $(£21 \times 6) \times 4 = £504$
- A single event of one hour: $£21 \times 7 = £147$

Freebies

As a rule of thumb, you should never offer free events – it devalues the Speakers' circuit and reduces your perceived worth to other industry experts. Having said that, there is a time and a place for offering your speech gratis:

- **Starting out** – if you're a newbie, unpolished and need experience, giving a free talk can grant you access to larger audiences and a chance to work on your stagecraft. I'd suggest giving two to three free events before charging a fee.
- **Feather in the cap** – whatever your industry, there will be high-profile prestigious events. Being able to say you performed at such an event (or venue) can act like fairy dust; the kudos and additional exposure can reap increased bookings for the rest of the year, bringing you extra revenue streams that you might not have had otherwise.
- **Increased customer base** – some events can grant you access to elite customer bases or push your product sales (if you have a product!) through the roof. If you think you can generate sales that would outweigh any potential speaker's fee, then go for it!

INVOICING

As a public speaker, you're providing a service which raises some different invoicing procedures from a goods-based business. I've dealt with clients, festivals and event organisers who wanted invoices in advance, on the day and in some cases post event. Do not expect any set rule; instead when working with a new client get in touch with their Finance department.

Inform them of your normal procedures, ask about theirs, then find a comfortable middle ground.

Your invoice to clients should include:

- Your business name, address and contact details (both mobile and email).
- The client's business name and address.
- An invoice number.
- A clear description of your services rendered.
- A total payable sum.
- Payment options – BACS details including your bank account and sort code. Indicate if you accept cheques or not.
- A payment deadline (normally within two weeks after client's receipt of invoice).
- UTR or unique tax reference if you're based in the UK.

Over the years I've been lucky and only ever had to chase one or two late invoices. However, if you have any concerns about a client or booking new venues, reach out to other speakers in your field. Most speakers are very affable and will share information about late paying clients (or bad apples!) allowing you to avoid any financial pitfalls.

SOLE TRADER OR LIMITED COMPANY

Unless you have a fondness for paperwork and accounting, there's no need for newbie speakers to register as a company; you can simply get by in your early years as a sole trader. It is only when you reach the VAT threshold that you will need to become a limited company.

The difference between sole traders and limited companies

When you start to earn money outside of employment, you become self-employed. When you become self-employed, you need to notify the government of your new status for taxation purposes. For those within the

UK, you should register with HMRC to receive your UTR (or unique taxation reference number). Once you're self-employed you have a choice to make; either register as a sole trader or as a limited company. Do note that while they sound wildly different, sole traders and limited companies are simply business structures for self-employment. The main difference between a sole trader and a limited company is largely concerned with liability. Regardless of your business, you have a duty of care not to defraud or hurt anyone else. If you do cause injury (financial or physical) you are *liable* which means you can be sued in a court of law. In the event of going to court and being found guilty, you will have to pay a fine. Some fines you will be able to afford, some you will not. This is where limited companies have benefits over sole traders. If you are a limited company and you have to pay a gigantic fine, the sum is *limited* to company assets. If you are a sole trader the courts can come after both your company assets *and your private assets* (these could be your house, your private car etc).

In short:

Limited Company – more complicated to set up, more accounting and paperwork involved but protects your private assets should you be found liable.

Sole Trader – simple to set up, reduced accounting but offers no liability protection for private assets.

PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE

Public liability insurance protects you if clients or members of the public suffer personal injury or property damage during a performance (or as a direct result of doing business with you).

For sole traders, public liability insurance can act as a shield, giving you an added layer of protection and until you convert your business to a limited company, it's an essential piece of kit! (You've set up as a limited company? Great! However, you still need public liability insurance. It's not just there to protect you; some venues demand to see an insurance policy number and won't allow you to perform without one).

BUSINESS COSTS

Accountancy and bookkeeping can be a pain; however, there's a silver lining: you can book certain costs as a tax write off! In addition to the norm, consider the following:

- Travel costs (petrol, vehicle maintenance, train tickets, taxi rates etc).
- Accommodation costs (hotel, all reasonable costs of eating while away from home etc).
- IT costs (hardware, software, web design etc).
- Clothing (all performance-specific shoes and attire).
- Training (voice coaching, industry specific education that allows you to perform as a public speaker within your field).
- Advertising (business cards, flyers, handouts, bill-boarding, online ads etc).
- Cost of content (specific adventures or experiences that you use specifically to display on stage).

Like all businesses, never pay more tax than you have to. However, it's worth noting that public speakers, by and large, tend to be a service-based business and quite an unusual one at that. To avoid any mishaps or wandering into too many grey areas, do invest an hour or two sit-down time with an accountant so you can arm yourself with a precise understanding of business costs applied to your specific performances.

'In this world nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes.'

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN