



What is Motivational Speaking – Part Two

In this article, I'll discuss three critical components of motivational speaking. These three components also apply to leadership.

The best motivational speakers challenge their audience members to think and act. They take ideas and principles, develop them in new and creative ways and deliver them with passion. The best leaders challenge their employees/direct reports/audience members to think and act. They take ideas and principles, develop them in new and creative ways and deliver them with passion. Successful speakers are successful leaders. If leaders are to become more successful, they must also learn how to be motivational speakers.

In his book, *The Leadership Engine*, Noel Tichy writes about “a teachable point of view.” He defines this as “both a sign that a person has clear ideas and values and a tool that enables him or her to communicate those ideas and values to others.”

The first component of motivational speaking is to create a teachable point of view.

A point of view is how you see a situation or the solution to a problem or dilemma. Creating a teachable point of view requires that you determine what you believe, and also how you want to deliver those beliefs.

Andy Grove of Intel Corporation, author of *Only The Paranoid Survive*, puts it this way, “I’m an engineer and a manager, but I have always had an urge to teach, to share with others what I’ve figured out for myself.”

Andy’s quote leads us to the second component of successful motivational speaking: to spend time in quiet contemplation.

What have you figured out for yourself? What is your unique point of view?

How can you develop an idea and deliver it in a new and creative way if you haven’t spent time in contemplation? What do I mean? Get out of the office, away from email and distractions and find an environment where you can let an idea percolate in your mind. Give it a gestation period and let it roll around. Challenge your own interpretation of the idea by reading what others have to say. Daydream with a purpose.

As I’m writing this article, I’m sitting in the Colorado Springs downtown library. I brought a couple of books with me to stimulate ideas. I’m also surrounded by a couple of thousand books if I get stuck or get inspired by a thought. And I have a clear and



Doug Stevenson is the founder and president of Story Theater International, a speaking, training and consulting company based in Colorado Springs, Colorado. His company trains thousands of professionals and executives each year, for clients that include Microsoft, Amgen, Bayer, Caterpillar, Oracle, State Farm Insurance, Hewlett Packard, Maytag, Super 8 Motels and others.

Story Theater International
2504 Shallmar Drive
Colorado Springs, CO 80915
1-800-573-6196 or 1-719-573-6195



deliberate intention to sit here and think, ruminate and allow creative ideas to infiltrate my open mind.

I've found that, for me, I have to physically move away from my working environment and into a more creative environment. So I go to the library, rent a cabin in the mountains, go for a walk with my dog Beulah, or go shopping at the mall. In each case, I am journeying out with the deliberate intention to be open to ideas, to ruminate and cogitate and allow inspiration to strike. It takes time. So...get out your Blackberry, Palm Pilot or whatever you use to schedule your time, and schedule time for contemplation to figure things out for yourself.

Having spent time in quiet – or loud – contemplation, rumination and deliberate daydreaming, you'll come away with a teachable point of view. Then the question becomes: how will you teach this idea, concept, value, principle or approach?

The third component of motivational speaking is to become a teacher.

Warren Bennis, distinguished professor of business administration and founding chairman of the Leadership Institute at the University of Southern California's Marshall School of Business, stated "The basis of leadership is the capacity of the leader to change the mindset, the framework of another person." The same is true of successful motivational speakers. The goal is to develop your teachable point of view, your idea, so completely and to deliver it so convincingly, that it changes the mindset of the listener.

It's not enough to throw a bunch of radical ideas out into the atmosphere and expect that they will change people's mindsets. Speakers and leaders have to be good and convincing teachers in order to change mindsets and create action. That means that less presentation time is devoted to reciting lists of ideas to be considered and more time is spent drilling down into the deeper meaning of a few ideas.

For an idea or concept to become actionable by the listener, it must be taught, not simply spoken. This is where many speakers and leaders fail their audiences. They create PowerPoint slides with an overdose of bullet-pointed ideas, and recite the text of slide after slide in a monotonous and numbing fashion. Does an idea, read from a slide, without any depth of development or deeper explanation, become actionable? It not only doesn't work that way, it's delusional and lazy to think it will.

People don't change their mindsets by listening. They change through persuasion. They must be won over, convinced. That requires a creative approach to speaking/teaching.



Doug Stevenson is the founder and president of Story Theater International, a speaking, training and consulting company based in Colorado Springs, Colorado. His company trains thousands of professionals and executives each year, for clients that include Microsoft, Amgen, Bayer, Caterpillar, Oracle, State Farm Insurance, Hewlett Packard, Maytag, Super 8 Motels and others.

Story Theater International
2504 Shallmar Drive
Colorado Springs, CO 80915
1-800-573-6196 or 1-719-573-6195



What does that mean for you as a speaker/leader? It means that you need to take one of the ideas that you want to share and find multiple ways to illustrate it. Rather than spending 3 minutes on the idea before moving on to the next one, you'll now spend ten or fifteen minutes on it. You'll give examples in various forms – stories, case studies, metaphors, and analogies. You'll explore a number of ways to deliver the idea, and as I stated in my last article, What is Motivational Speaking (Part One), you'll shift your focus from just delivering content to communicating meaning. Your job is three-fold: to communicate the idea, to illustrate the meaning of the idea, and to show its application to the listener.

In my 21-Step How to Write and Deliver a Dynamite Speech System, I discuss many delivery methods. By using a variety of delivery methods, you'll continually change the learning modality and sustain audience engagement. In addition to stories, metaphors and case studies, I've seen speakers use juggling, magic, music, poetry, audience interaction, audience polls, quotes, and passages from books and articles.

If you want to become a motivational speaker, internally within your organization as a leader, or professionally for fees ranging from \$5,000 to \$25,000 for a one-hour speech, it's not enough to stand and deliver. Your audience deserves more from you. Take the time to create a teachable point of view, spend time in contemplation to develop your unique perspective, and become a teacher with a variety of delivery methods. By understanding the three components I've shared with you, you'll be a more powerful and effective motivational speaker.



Doug Stevenson is the founder and president of Story Theater International, a speaking, training and consulting company based in Colorado Springs, Colorado. His company trains thousands of professionals and executives each year, for clients that include Microsoft, Amgen, Bayer, Caterpillar, Oracle, State Farm Insurance, Hewlett Packard, Maytag, Super 8 Motels and others.

Story Theater International
2504 Shallmar Drive
Colorado Springs, CO 80915
1-800-573-6196 or 1-719-573-6195