



“Talkers have always ruled. They will continue to rule. The smart thing is to join them.”

—BRUCE BARTON

Speaking effectively is crucial to letting others know—in your personal life and in your professional life—who you are, and what you think, feel, want. You need to speak effectively to engage or inform, to influence or persuade, to manage or lead, to advocate or motivate. Of course, the written word is an option, but not always. And it is not always the best option. Action counts for a lot, too, but spoken words are often required to get action.

**Speaking effectively is a powerful means for affecting the world we live in.**



“If you can’t say something nice,  
don’t say anything at all.”

—MOM

What do you say to yourself about you? Do you tell yourself (or say out loud for others to hear), “I’m a terrible speaker” or “Nobody wants to hear what I have to say.” STOP! Those are not nice things to say about anyone. Would you say that about your daughter? Or your son? Or a friend? Why would you say that about yourself?

**Say nice things to yourself and about yourself.  
Support your own progress, just as you would  
a loved one.**



“This time, like all times, is a very good one, if we but know what to do with it.”

—RALPH WALDO EMERSON

Speaking requires preparation AND spontaneity. We often confront surprises when we speak. The audience may be 60 people instead of the 16 we expected, or vice versa. We thought we'd have a cordless microphone and could move, but it turns out we're tethered to a fixed microphone at a podium. We were promised 60 minutes, but it turns out we have only 30 minutes, or vice versa. Then a fire alarm goes off.

**All kinds of things can happen. So, come prepared for what you think will happen, but be ready to improvise.**



“If you want me to play only the notes, without any specific color dynamics, I will never make one mistake. Never be afraid to dare.”

—VLADIMIR HOROWITZ

Imagine if someone played the piano and all the notes were quarter notes, the tempo never changed, and the volume stayed the same. How boring would that be?!

Variety is the spice of life, music, and speaking.

Interesting speakers will catch and keep the attention of the audience. They will vary their tempo, their volume. They may crescendo, then decrescendo. Change keys. Pause. Repeat refrains. Segue. Keep a rhythm, change the rhythm.

**Music reminds us to bring dynamics to our speaking.**