

014 – Creating a Pre-Speaking Routine

Announcer: Do you dream of making a living as a speaker, writer, or performer? Do you want to learn to communicate with clarity, focus, and power? In each episode you will learn the secrets of dynamic communication so you can make a living doing what you love.

Welcome to the Art and Business of Public Speaking with your host, who, for over 30 years has helped men and women build exciting careers, Ken Davis.

Brian: Hello, this is your cohost Brian Scheer for the Art and Business of Public Speaking, where we peek behind the curtain to discover how to create, grow and maintain a successful career as a communicator.

Today we have a special treat, a special friend of all of ours here at DCI, Michael Hyatt, Ken, and I know you had a good time interviewing him.

Ken: Right. The Energizer Bunny. This guy comes out with more helpful material for people than anybody that I have ever met in my life. And the exciting thing, not only is he a rock star when it comes to social media, he's a great friend of ours. So that's a plus plus in my book.

Brian: Whenever you sit in a room with Michael and he starts talking about something I encourage people to bring out a notebook. They've got to take some notes on the things that he is saying because he's been there, he's done that and he's seen what works. And he synthesi...

Ken: Synthesize.

Brian: Yes, thank you. He does that and he does that really well and then delivers it in a way that you can consume it and put it into practice right away. And today is not an exception. Today you will need a notebook.

Ken: You know, Brian, I asked Michael once, what is the essence of what you do? And he said, I forage for the people that follow me. He goes out and gets great material for people who want to succeed, and you're going to enjoy this interview with Michael Hyatt right now.

Ken: Mike, thank you so much for joining us today. Man, we've been friends for about ten years and we've worked together on projects and I don't know of anybody that doesn't really value the information that you put out in your Platform University. I'm just honored that you chose to be with us and to help us give great information to the folks who are interested in the business and art of communication.

Michael: Thanks Ken. I'm delighted to be with you. I've learned so much from you about public speaking. I feel like there's kind of the before Ken Davis period of my speaking career, and there's the after Ken Davis part, and I like the after part ten times better.

Ken: That's great. You know, we try to give our listeners the kind of information that will help them in the art and business of public speaking and I know you have some very valuable information to offer because you've actually made presentations for us. And I

would like you to talk a little bit about something that was very helpful to me. Information that you gave on the idea of mental preparation for speaking. How you increase your confidence my mentally preparing for when you come on stage. Could you talk about that a little bit?

Michael: Yeah, well let me tell you how I used to do it. How I used to do it is as I approached the date, I would frantically prepare, and I would kind of nervously keep preparing. So I got over-prepared. All the while this sense of impending doom was building in my soul for that moment when I would step on stage and, you know, my mind would just kind of race. I wasn't disciplined in my thinking and I would be really fearful. And sometimes it would go great and sometimes not so great. But it just felt like I didn't have control over it, and I didn't like that feeling. I liked the idea of speaking, but I really didn't like stepping on stage. It was a frightening thing to me.

Ken: Was it a fear of failure, Mike?

Michael: Yeah, I think it was partly that. I think it was this fear that I would be on stage and I either wouldn't add value or wouldn't know where to go next in my speech, which is why I over-prepared. Or it would just be boring. People wouldn't get anything out of it.

Ken: See, that comes, I am sure, as a fascinating bit of information to people who devour the content that you continually produce day after day after day. And yet I'm very grateful for the fact that you would talk about this. Have you done anything that has changed that? Or do you still struggle with that?

Michael: No, I really don't struggle with it. I think a shift occurred for me about four years ago when I just said, look. The most important thing that is happening is happening between my ears. And I have got to engineer my thinking, or reengineer my thinking or take control of my thinking and how I think about this and really reframe it.

And so, what I started to do, and this was like the most helpful thing to me, all my thinking before this was about me. How I'm going to perform. How I'm going to come off, whether people are going to think I'm smart, I'm brilliant, I have something to contribute. And I said that is the wrong orientation. And so I started really getting focused. Intentionally and deliberated, especially the 24 hours before I stepped on stage, about these people. What are their needs? I literally, in Evernote, which is a software tool I use, I crafted a set of public affirmations before speaking. In fact, let me pull those up while we're talking.

And I literally would rehearse these. I would say these out loud before I ever stepped on stage. And it was hugely helpful to me. Let me just give you a few of these.

So one of the things I would say, and by the way, these aren't affirmations like some people speak of affirmations. You know, like I'm just making up something about reality that's not true. But what I wanted to affirm was what really was true. So for me it went like this.

I would say to myself: *I'm not here by accident. God sent me to these people at exactly this time.* So as a person of faith, that's my conviction. I don't believe anything happens by accident, least of all me showing up to speak somewhere. So then I would say, that's because he has a purpose. Therefore I have a purpose in being here. So now I'm on an assignment that's bigger than me or even the person who booked me.

Then I would say: *What I have to share today is vitally important. It matters to them and to their loved ones.* I mean, Ken, why would anybody stand up on stage and speak if you didn't feel like you had something that was vitally important to the people who are listening.

Ken: Well, they're either narcissistic or insane. Those are the only two kinds of people that would do that.

Michael: Then I would say to myself, and this is more of a statement of faith: *Those that hear this will be changed forever. Years from now they'll look back on today and say it all started here.* And that's really what I wanted. I wanted this to be a transformational experience for the people that heard me.

Then I would say, again, this is more of a faith statement for me coming from my perspective, but I would say: *Through Christ I can do all things. He has given me every resource I need to succeed. I have the energy, the passion and the message to make a huge impact now and for eternity.*

Then I would say this, the last thing I would say: *By God's grace I am prepared. My heart is wide open. I will connect and see transformation.*

So the more I would say these things out loud on my feet, the more it got into my soul and the more convinced I was of it, so that I literally could lean forward in anticipation and engage with the audience. And that made all the difference.

Ken: You know, what I want those of you who are listening to do right now, this is important stuff. You need to, when you're done listening to this podcast, you need to rewind this. You need to go back to this point and write some of those down. You may not come from the same perspective as Mike, but here's what I like about what you've written. And you've heard us say this. But this come from not quite as powerfully positive a place as your statements come from. We've synthesized when we teach our SCORRE conference this statement: *It's not about you. It's not about what people think of you. It's not about your success or failure. That whole little turn of realizing that it's an opportunity - you're not there to get something from people. Applause, standing ovation, nothing. You're there to give. And I love the way you have delineated that and I'm going to rewind my own podcast here and I'm going to write those things down. That'll be great. Because they're all positive and they're all true.*

Michael: The thing about it was, it just changed my frame of reference and it enabled me to get on stage with more passion because I was playing full out now. I'm playing for a transformation. For their transformation. I'm standing for them. I want to see

something happen in their hearts, in their lives, in their businesses. And so it gave me total confidence and I do have one kind of funny thing.

Ken: I like funny things. That's my business.

Michael: So you've heard this before, but Gail put together this kind of musical trigger for me to play. It's the last thing I hear before I walk out of the green room. Can I play it?

Ken: Yeah, can you do it?

Michael: Yeah, this is great. I have this, by the way, in Evernote, in the same spot as my affirmations. So let me see if it'll play and will come out for you guys. *(Music)*

Ken: That was very encouraging.

Michael: Isn't that awesome.

Ken: Now you know, I want to affirm in the people that are listening. This is not just gobbledygook psychobabble some guy that's off on a tangent somewhere. When that little switch takes place friends, from being about you to being about the audience. When you intentionally go to pour into the lives of other people. And that applies whether you're selling widgets or whatever it is. If you don't believe that what you're selling is really enriching the lives of people or can help their business or whatever it might be, you really need to look for something else to sell.

Michael: Yeah, I mean get off the stage. Let somebody that's got conviction and got something to offer be there. I have one other kind of embarrassing thing to share.

Ken: I love it. Is it another song you're going to play?

Michael: So, I used to have this problem, too, when I would have to perform, whenever I had to stand on stage. Actually when I would go into board meetings. Where my hands would really sweat and my armpits would really sweat and my hands would get cold. So I would literally, I'm not making this up, I literally sometimes would wear two t-shirts because I would sweat through the first one and I was hoping to not sweat through the second one.

And my hands would be so cold that I was afraid that if I had to shake hands with anybody before I spoke, I would give myself away and they would know that I was a phony. So here's what I did. I totally reframed that, too. This is awesome.

So what I started saying to myself when I would notice those signs of nervousness. It used to be like this downward spiral, where the more I noticed it the worse it got. So I started saying this out loud to myself: *That's my body's way of preparing me for peak performance.* It totally crushed that spiral and changed it. And it didn't happen.

Ken: So it also stopped the symptoms, right?

Michael: It stopped the symptoms.

Ken: Wow. That gives you the freedom to concentrate on being as great as you can possibly be in that moment in time. That is fantastic. Hey, there is another element to this that I want to get to because I know there's a lot of our listeners who are anxious to get more opportunity. That's one of the things that we talk to people about all the time in our LAUNCH conference, and I know you address it in Platform University.

And you have a little presentation you give on how to quadruple your speaking invitations. Can you talk to us a little bit about that? The steps that a person can take to help get more speaking invitations?

Michael: Yeah. I think a lot of people, Ken, they wait by the phone, they hope it rings, they hope people refer them from speaking engagements they did that were successful. But this is really simple. First of all you've got to have a blog and you've got to build a platform. You've got to be out there so that when people do search for you, they find you. Because if you don't have a website in today's world, you don't exist.

Ken: That's right.

Michael: And even if you have a website, if you don't have a blog, there's no reason for people to come back more than once because they've seen everything there is to see. So when you have a blog, you build authority and you build trust. So you become the go to person that others want to go to when they want to think about booking a speaker for a certain subject. If you've established your expertise in that subject matter category, you have a much better chance of being booked. But even that's not enough.

So you've got a website, you've got a blog. Here's what you gotta have. You must have a speaking page that is easily accessible off the home page. So if you're in the business of public speaking, and you want more gigs, speaking should be one of the top navigation items on your website.

Ken: Right.

Michael: And that page needs to be constructed very, very deliberately. And what I'm going to do now is turn to my very own so that I can coach you guys through this.

Ken: That's great. I agree with this 100%. That whole idea that you said about if you don't have an internet presence, if you don't have a website, and if there's nothing there to keep people coming back to get information, you are invisible in this world. There's just no way for people to get to you.

How many times have you run into people who have written a book or have a great consulting business or something like that, and you try to find them on the internet and they're not there. You don't spend a lot of time after that. It's almost as though, well it must be a fraud because if it's not available, it's not available.

Michael: It's not real. So having a speaking page, basically what this says to the world is, I'm a speaker. I'm a professional speaker. I'm in business to speak. And you can find mine, by the way, at michaelhyatt.com/speaking. Now I no longer have it on the home page because most of the speaking I'm doing today is in conjunction with my promotions and

webinars and so forth. But it's still there, and here's what it contains. First of all, I have a welcome video. And this is basically me communicating to an event planner that I understand their world and that I'm one option among many. And just kind of being warm and accessible and basically communicating to them that I'm not a high maintenance speaker. That I'm going to be easy to work with. That I'm totally in it for their success. That I'm not there to make myself look good, but I'm there to make them as an event planner make good. So that's like 60 seconds.

Then I tell them what they can expect. And I say things like prompt professional replies to your phone calls and email messages. A personal phone consultation with a member of my team prior to your event. I won't go through all these, but basically I'm setting their expectations and I tell them a little bit about me. Not a long bio, but this is an important thing, people do not usually write bios from the write perspective. They write it from the perspective of history and what's important to them.

But what's really important for the event planner is they want to know what's important from their bio that would qualify you as a speaker that they could bring into their audience and would hit a home run and make them look good. I hate to say it, but that's exactly what they're looking for.

Ken: That's right.

Michael: So I say things – I won't read the whole thing – but I'll read the lead paragraph. I said: *I have been speaking publicly for more than 25 years and have key-noted more than 100 events. I've also appeared on more than 100 television shows including several on ABC...* So anything that you think is relevant. Now you may not have those kinds of accolades, but whatever you've got, frame it in a way that makes it relevant to the event planner.

Then, another thing I have on this page is, and this is almost the first thing they jump to – my video clips. Basically what they want to know is, can you hold yourself in front of a live audience. And so, what I did is I have a compilation video – I've done this a lot of different ways. But currently I have a compilation video. It's me talking, narrating, but then compilation video of some outtakes of me in front of large audiences and small audiences and all kinds of audiences.

Then I have a list of my most requested topics. This is important because, here's what you don't want to do as a speaker. Here's how to make your life miserable as a speaker. Just be willing to speak on anything anybody asks you, and prepare that speech from scratch every time you go out.

Ken: Say that again.

Michael: Okay, so this is a really hard way to make a living as a speaker, and it's a miserable experience. And that is where you will speak on anything anybody wants you to speak on, and you prepare it from scratch, and you make it totally custom for that organization. Here's what's wrong with that.

For me, it takes me 80 hours to prepare a speech. At least. So if I have to do that, I can take my speaking fee and divide it by the 80 hours to prepare and that's what I'm making an hour. But, here's the kicker. If you can narrow it down to three topics or five topics at the most that you're especially qualified and passionate about, and gifted to speak on, and package those as though they were products, then all of a sudden you begin to reuse these speeches and give the same speeches in many different contexts. You can still tailor make them for a specific audience, but you don't have all that preparation time.

Ken: Right. You know what I like about this, Michael? It eliminates, too, for the person who is bringing you in, false expectations. If you put out there what you're really an expert at, what you really do – for instance if someone were to invite me to come and speak on the matrix of sales compilation – I'm just making up words here. I can't do that. However, if they see something on the internet that allows them to see the nature of my presentation and what I do best, when they call, and I like to tell people this. When people have seen all of that and they call and they say, can you do this, the answer is yes, in this way. But you're not making a new speech. This is what I do. I don't believe I have ever had, and my guess is neither have you, had someone who was inquiring and you said, yes I can help you but here's how I do it, say no, we're not interested in that.

Michael: That's right.

Ken: Never had anybody turn that down.

Michael: That's very good. But I like to give people a menu. When you go to a local restaurant they don't just show up at your table and say, so what do you want? And you kind of have to make it up. No, they give you a menu of selections which my wife always sees as a palate to paint from. She creates her own from that menu. But it's kind of what you're talking about. At least it give them a track to run on.

The other thing that's really important on your speaking page is endorsements. You're trying to take the risk out of it. Understand an event planner is taking a risk. Because he's been commissioned by his boss or by his association or by his church or whatever to book a speaker for this event. His career as an event planner or a booking agent rises or falls on the quality of the talent that he brings in. So if he brings in somebody and they lay an egg in front of the audience and just don't deliver, then he looks bad. They don't blame the speaker. They do, but they blame the person who booked that speaker.

So you try to take the risk out of it, and one of the ways to do that is to have other people praise you. So to have other people say all kinds of wonderful things about your speaking ability. Now as a matter of process, whenever I get done speaking, the first email I send to the event planner is a thank you. And I also include, oh by the way, if you could give me a two or three sentence endorsement, that would be hugely helpful.

And here's three or so examples of kind of what I'm looking for. And at least 50, often 90% of the people will respond with something you can use.

Ken: That is fantastic. Again, there are so many – my brain hurts, because there are so many rewindable points here. This is not a podcast you ought to listen to just once. Just enjoy it this first time through. But the second time through, you need to have your computer, I'm still a pen and paper guy, so you can take all of those notes on this great information.

Hey, tell us just a little bit about Platform University and how that came to be. I remember I was sitting with you in a restaurant. In fact, it was that little restaurant where they serve... Oscar's. We were sitting there and we had a pad and you said, I'm thinking of writing this book called Platform. And you gave me kind of the outline of it. Well, that became a best seller on almost every level that there is out there. And people really were attracted to that because - just give us an idea of what it is and that whole idea that really attracted people and why it resonated so widely across the country Michael.

Michael: I didn't invent the term platform, but it was kind of becoming popular in our current vernacular. People were talking about building a platform and so forth. And one of the things that happened to me when I was the CEO at Thomas Nelson is I originally got into publishing because I love to help authors give birth to great ideas. And I saw myself as kind of a literary midwife.

But as publishing became more corporate and there was a lot of consolidation in our industry, I saw that it really started shifting more and more to the business side, where it wasn't just enough to write a great book. We used to say content is king. But what I started observing was that platform had become queen. So that any author who was coming to us, wanting us to publish them, they not only had to have great content, but they kind of had to be able to prove they had an audience already waiting for this.

And so in the old days of traditional media, six or seven years ago, that meant they had to have a television show or radio program or newspaper column or they were speaking 70 times a year in front of big audiences. But they had a platform. The thing that blogging made possible and podcasting made possible and all this online world made possible is basically there are no more gatekeepers. You can have a media ministry or a media business right from the privacy of your own home.

Ken: You are such an example of that. This is why you can preach this so powerfully is because your life is an example of this.

Michael: Well that you. And it's really true. I enjoy a million page views a month, and that would have never been possible in the past. When I walk down the street in my small town, I get people all the time that stop me. It's crazy. I don't have a television show. I don't have a radio show. But they read my blog or they listen to my podcast and they want to come up and introduce themselves.

I didn't need, and this is the benefit for everyone listening to this podcast, I didn't need one person's permission to create that platform.

Ken: Wow. That's amazing. You need to know this, too, though. The side benefit of that is – and we're going to be wrapping this up in just a second, and I have some exciting news for our listeners. But you need to know that Michael and I live in the same community. We get together on a regular basis. And Michael, I walk down the street of Franklin and people stop me and say, are you Mike Hyatt, and I say yes. And I just let them gush about all the wonderful success I've had.

And here's the thing. This is the truth folks. There's two kinds of ways of looking at this. And it all wraps back to the first part of our conversation. Probably the greatest thing that I think of Mike Hyatt is that he is my friend. But the second greatest thing is not his great success. I want you to hear this, Mike, because it's true. But because the hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of people that you've helped build success into their own lives. And not just financial success but personal success.

Your book *Five Days to the Best Year of your Life*, that may not be the exact title, but that was huge in people's lives. Now here's the exciting part. The exciting part is that Mike has agreed to give our listeners a membership in Platform University. And we've got about five minutes – and that is not a small gift. That's a major thing. But I would like to have you give about five minutes. Just tell me a little bit about what happens in Platform. What is that community?

Michael: Just to be clear, I agreed to give one membership.

Ken: What did I say? So, we have just crushed the empire. It's one membership. Thank you so much.

Michael: I'll come back to that and you guys are going to decide how you want to pick that one lucky person. But what happened is after my book hit the New York Times, Wall Street Journal and USA Today best seller lists, I had people calling, wanting consulting, wanting me to help them build their platform. I quickly realized that my time doesn't scale. I have 168 hours in the week just like everybody else. And I couldn't spend enough time helping people do what I wanted to do. Even though my heart would be there, I just didn't have the time.

So my friend Stu McLaren came to me and he said, you need to start a membership site where people can pay a nominal monthly fee- it's \$30 a month – and as a result of that, you'll give them your best thinking, your best coaching on how to build a platform. So every month we produce four different video segments.

The first week of the month, in fact, we're recording you, Ken, later this month, we do a master class with somebody who's a master platform builder. It might be Amy Porterfield on Facebook. It might be Dave Ramsey on using a book to build a media empire. It could be Lewis Howes on how to use webinars to build your business. So that's the master class.

The second week we do something called backstage pass. And this is where I invite you kind of behind the curtain into my world and show you some aspect of my business –

kind of how I make the sausage. Everybody else sees what's done on the front stage. I show you what's done on the back stage.

The third week we do something that we're now calling Platform U – How To. And this is done by my friend Brian Harris. He does a screencast, and he takes you step by step, click by click, through some process of platform building that maybe has eluded you in the past. Like this last month he talked about how to get an additional thousand readers for every blog post that you post.

And in the last week, we did this yesterday, we do an online, live Q&A with all of our members. We had over a thousand people on the line yesterday, where I just answer questions about the topic of the week. And we usually have the master class teacher on as well. So yesterday I had Pat Flynn on. He did our master class this month. And so he and I just took questions for an hour and it was a blast.

Ken: That is great. And that's what you get here. After we have finished this podcast you need to hang around, because we're going to tell you how you can make it possible for you to win one of those memberships. And also Mike is giving away his home to whoever...to everyone!

Michael, thank you so much for being with us today. Man, this has been a great time, and so valuable. I really mean this. We have had the greatest interviews and very inspiring interviews. And this is one of those podcasts that I really recommend that you go back through it again, take some careful notes and I can't highly enough recommend Platform University for those of you who might be considering it. Remember www.michaelhyatt.com. I tell people about that website everywhere I go.

Michael: Thanks Ken. You're such a dear friend.

Brian: As I listen to that interview I was taken notes throughout it and Ken, the speaking affirmations and how he got over that fear and the sweating and the cold hands. And then you go into a speaking page. And one of the things I really take note of, and I've heard this from him since I started working with him four or five years ago was content is king. He will always stress that, but the new thing is, the queen is platform.

Ken: Right, and I am the princess. That's why we have this podcast. So you've got the king, the queen and the princess. His timing on coming out with the book Platform, and the essence of Platform University couldn't have come at a better time. It's just exploding.

And this is a guy that, you can count on both hands probably, the number of years ago that he even got into social media. And he just saw that it had unbelievable potential. He grabbed a hold of it and what he did was not just use it for himself, but he captured it so he could tell other people what was going on as well. And that is absolutely fantastic.

You know what my favorite takeaway, Brian, was, and it moves away from the energizer bunny Michael, the kind Michael, to the person Michael. And that was when he said, it's not about you. You get over the fear of speaking by understanding that it's not

about you. That sounds like a downer, you know. But it's not. It frees you then to give whatever you have to the people you're speaking to.

And anyway, if it is about you, after a while, the laughter, the applause, the standing ovations – they lose their luster. But when you're changing lives, when you're making a difference, when you know you're there, as Michael said, for a purpose.

Brian: A vital...

Ken: A vital purpose, that's amazing. I love that.

Brian: It is. And you know, speaking from my standpoint, when he went into the speaker's page, I also want to encourage everybody out there that if you do want to get into the speaking and you want to make an impact, you have to have a speaker's page.

The speaker's page that Michael put together is one of the most excellent speaker's pages I've seen. And in fact, as I've talked to other event coordinators, they mentioned that as well. They said there's all kind of information there that was valuable for me to take to my team. And we could see it in one spot. So copy the form.

Ken: Use the format and you can still be yourself in the process. And if you use that same format and cover what he covered, you're going to have it down.

Brian: You know, Ken, you tried to give away free Platform University memberships to everyone in the world on this podcast.

Ken: I did. I tried hard.

Brian: Yeah, it was a good effort, and we all applaud you for that. However, just for more clarification, we're only giving away one membership and we're going to tell you how to do that. You've got to go to dynamiccommunicators.com, click on the Show Notes for this episode, which is episode 14, and you fill out the form in the Show Notes for episode 14. And we will notify the winner via email and make an announcement on our page as well, through social media.

Ken: So watch your email, and man, it's been great being with you today. This has been a great interview and I want to thank Michael. You got something else to add?

Brian: Well, we've got to go to the segment of our Road Tip.

Ken: I almost forgot the Road Tip.

Brian: We can't forget that. Now, Michael didn't mention this in the podcast, but he did write us and talk to you later about it and gave you a road tip. What was his road tip?

Ken: Michael's road tip he wrote was: Take a road manager. And I can't tell you how important that is. If you don't have a road manager, take a family member. Take someone you love with you. Someone to help you do what you do the best. And the minute you can afford one – I'm going to say this from experience – it will pay for itself. Especially if you've got product to sell. Especially if you've got a lot of work to do to set up your program. As soon as you can, take someone with you.

It's great to keep you on track. Morally it's great to keep you on track on what your designed to do, and helps you be the best you can possibly be.

Brian: And if you ever have an event in the Bahamas or Mexico or Bermuda, look up my name. I used to be a really good road manager. I'd be happy to help you.

Ken: I will look up your name, set it aside, and take the guy I got now.

Brian: Okay. Well I also wanted to talk about Platform University. Michael's Platform University teaches you how to build your platform. But maybe you're not there just yet.

Ken: Maybe you're just looking for advice on how to take the next steps in your speaking career. I look back and think about all of the steps we had to take. You need to check out Communicator Coaching. Communicator Coaching offers personalized, one on one coaching and insight from a team of expert advisor. And I know all of these people. These are people that have helped us along the way. And what's that link to Communicator Coaching? How do you get there?

Brian: Well, it's real simple. It's communicatorcoaching.com. Nothing hard about that. We'd be happy to talk to you about the service that we provide in that. So just send us email if you have questions, or you can sign up for that program right there at communicatorcoaching.com.

Hey, thanks for tuning in for another episode of the Art and Business of Public Speaking. We're excited that you're here and we can't wait to connect with you again next week.