

017 – Andy Andrews 2

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.

Hey, this week we are bringing back our good friend Andy Andrews for part 2, called, Finding Your Style.

Ken: Finding Your Style, yes. And he also talked a lot about family which was some amazing stuff. When you peek behind the curtain with Andy Andrews there, you'd better pay attention because he's not going to be there very long. I remember you talked in the last podcast of catching him on stage if he's in the area. Well he's only on stage about 20% of the time. The dude runs through the audience and is just a bundle of energy.

So you're going to enjoy this particular podcast where he gets into some very, very important issues. This guy is a bundle of knowledge and you're not going to want to miss a minute of this.

Ken: Say Andy, so we've talked about this – By the way, I read something in your bio that just thrilled me. It said, "hailed by the New York Times Reporter as someone who has quietly become one of the most influential people in America." Andy, I've known you for about 13-14 years. You've never done anything quietly.

Andy: Yeah. That's an odd way of putting that, isn't it? I was thinking, I think that the genesis of that thought by that reporter was, I think people are surprised when they find out who I actually work with. Or the different kind of areas that I work in. I think people are kind of shocked.

Ken: It's kind of fun being under the radar, isn't it?

Andy: Sometimes, actually it is fun. But sometimes I wish I was a little more over the radar because – but I got to tell you this. If I was not under the radar, I wouldn't have figured out as much as I have had to figure out in helping some of these people. And what I mean is, you and I both know in our comedy careers, as we got better and better, and we would experience the expectation of audiences where we didn't really have to work as hard because you come out and they're already with you. They're laughing. They already like you. So you don't have to work as hard.

Well, I know that in my work with some of these companies and some of these individuals and some of these organizations, I am very aware that if I was above the radar, to a great degree I could walk in and say, all right, here's what we're going to do,

and they would already have the confidence and the faith in me and I could just kind of say it. But because I'm under the radar, sometimes I go in these places and they are already very successful. It's like, okay now. What is this? Who is this? You're going to tell us what?

And so I've got to figure out ways to express to them why they need to listen.

Ken: And there again, I'm going to call the attention of our listeners to this. You've just given a piece of advice that is career-building advice. You cannot come out to an audience of professionals, you cannot come out to an audience that doesn't necessarily know who you are, and just play the "hey, how's it going." Like you might do in a night club where people don't know you, but everybody comes out and kind of slops around.

Those first words out of your mouth, that first part of the presentation, would you say Andy, has to be built to make them hang on every word from there on?

Andy: It does. It has to do that in, and I'm adjusting what you said to fit me into it. But you're exactly right. Everything at first has to put them at a position where they are going to listen to what you have to say. Now I've got to tell you something. I sometimes appear to be a train wreck on stage. Now between you and me, if I was really that ADD I couldn't do what I do. If I was as crazy as I act sometimes on stage.

But here's the thing. What I figured out a while back is, I needed to control that room. And I needed to make sure that those people listened from the beginning. Well, there's a couple of things in life that people never turn away from. They do not turn away from a NASCAR race because they might miss a wreck. They don't turn away from bull riding because the guy might get killed and they missed. And so what I do sometimes is, I realize that I'm put in positions a lot of times with 700 men, which, what an awful audience.

So there's 700 guys, there's 1500 seats and they're all scattered out throughout and the first five rows are empty. And the first row is 20 feet from the edge of the stage in the first place. And so, these are things that you go into and if you stand up on that stage – I'm trying to create a conversation with somebody. Well you can't have a conversation with somebody standing 20 feet away from you. And you can't have a conversation with somebody through a TV screen either.

And when people are scattered out through the audience, they don't react as individuals. They react like they're watching TV. They don't even laugh. They just kind of go, heh. And so what I determined right off the bat, kind of my trademark, I suppose, is people go, you watch, he's going to come off the stage. And I'm notorious with camera people because they're like, oh. Bill Gaither says I'm the only person he's ever seen that can make Christian camera people cuss.

But I come off the stage and I'll come right off the front of it. I'll jump down because I want to get right to that audience. And I really developed it, Ken, because as you're coming up through the ranks, you're in a lot of half-empty rooms. And again, you better

get 'em. If you want to advance. If you want to get bigger, better places, you got to get those places, and you've got to be able to communicate to those people.

And so, right off the bat, I do, with my words, but also with my actions. I make sure people are going to listen. I want to get them right off the bat.

Ken: Right. This is an actual, wonderful template for helping people understand that you control the environment. How many people I see that come up to a stage, tap the mic and say, is this on? Is this on? Well you've just turned everybody off. You are in control.

Andy: Or this – Are you all having a good time? Golly, man. If you're asking people if they're having a good time, you've just told me you ain't got nothing to say.

Ken: That is so true. You know, you mentioned an interest in the little form we sent you about speaking style. And you have a real interest in that. Is this what you're talking about here? How about people who aren't Andy Andrews? How about people who aren't Ken Davis or who aren't Robin Williams? What do you suggest for those people? How do they find their style?

Andy: Here's what you do. To me, the best communicators are people who, I can be sitting in an audience of a thousand or ten thousand people, and I hung on your every word because I really felt like you were talking to me. You were talking to me. And occasionally you come to let me know hey, I'm going to talk to these other people a minute and then I'm going to get back to you. But everything about it was just like a conversation. And so the style, whatever style it is, if you look at some of the most favorite speakers of all time – Zig had a style. Denis Waitley a totally different style. I mean, Denis Waitley would stand in front of a microphone and say, life is.... And you hung on his every word.

And Zig was that guy who was a crazy thing, and you hung on his every word. And so you ain't got to be Robin Williams to get people to watch or people to listen. But I will say this, content is ultimately king. If you don't have anything to say, style will not overcome it.

Ken: That's right. And this is so true. I'm glad you mentioned this. I often make this statement that dynamics and all of the showmanship in the world, minus content, minus direction and focus, is entertainment. And that's okay, because that's what some of those – when we were doing clubs – that's all they wanted, really. They just wanted entertainment. But we've been called to something deeper and something for the most part, more valuable.

Comedians, in this day and age, are a dime a dozen. Would you agree with that? You can get a guy anywhere.

Andy: Yeah. It's unbelievable.

Ken: And someone with just content is a dime a dozen. To sit there and read facts. But the person that can combine those?

Andy: Yep. And that's why I think it is important to control your environment. And I think a lot of times that has to do explaining to the people who are putting it together why you're requesting certain things. You and I both know that you want an audience to respond as a group. Well, if you put 75 people in a room that seats 50, then man that is the place to be. Oh my gosh, look how many people wanted to be here. There's not even a place to sit.

But if you put 30,000 people in the Orange Bowl, nah, nobody came. I don't even care about this. And there's a totally different feeling from that audience. And so, when you go in a place, I always make sure – I just make sure – you would not believe it. I don't have to do as much now, but you would not believe how many times I've gone in places and physically helped them take chairs out and stack them somewhere else. Because I don't want these people sitting back there.

Ken: I would believe it.

Andy: And people say, well, why are you doing that? Let me tell you why I'm doing that. Because of my income. I want to control my environment. I want to make sure that stage is close to the front row. And if it's not, I'm coming off of it and I'm going to stand in front of that front row or walk into the audience. I'm going to make sure the lighting is adequate. I'm going to make sure they can hear me without listening so hard, and I'm going to make sure that those people are bunched together. And dangummit, if they're bunched together in the back of the room, I'll walk to the back of the room and talk to them.

And I'll tell you why. It's because when it's all said and done, these buyers, the people who book these conventions, the people at the conventions, and remember – if you're not great, your price goes down. They don't care at a certain point, but if you're getting paid a lot, they care. And the problem is, nobody ever walks out of there and says, well, the lighting wasn't good, and we were scattered throughout the audience. And we did have to listen really hard. Nobody ever says that. They just go out and go, he wasn't worth that much money.

Ken: That is so true. Listen now, I'm a-telling you that this man is telling you the truth. You need that. Perk up those ears out there and you need to listen. And here's another thing. And I know you'll agree with me on this. As you grow as a communicator, as you get into this art and business of communication, the best place to make sure those controls are in place is as much ahead of time as you possibly can. You don't want to go there and start yelling at people. If you do it ahead of time there's very little to do when you get there. Right, Andy?

Andy: That's exactly right. I have a rider on my contract. It's pretty simple in one way because it doesn't ask for anything other than water. But it's fairly detailed in the physical aspects of the room. And what that allows me to do is, if I go in and it's not right, I'm able to gently make it right. But if I go in and I say, these people are like, we set that stool right there. I hope that's okay. I'm able to say, oh yeah, that's fine. I know that

paperwork makes me seem a lot less flexible than I really am. What you did was great. Don't worry about it, and I'm able to back off of it a lot.

Ken: I'll tell you what. This is so exciting, and I know you've got a full day of work here. I'm going to change directions for just a second, but I'm not going to let you go or get to your next appointment unless you promise me right now that we can come back and have another conversation some time.

Andy: Man, you know Ken, you know I'd do anything for you. I'll mow your lawn, buddy. You are such a favorite of my boys and of Polly and me. We love you. I'll do anything you want.

Ken: So that is exactly where I'm going on. Because we are not just strangers passing in the night. I have met your boys, and I just want to tell our listening audience something. We've talked a lot about money and income and our career. But this is one of the best dads on the face of the earth. This man is a prime example of a great family man. Can you talk to our people for just a minute before we have to leave about balancing this career with family? Because, I'll just say ahead of time because I don't want to have this burden on him. This is a man who spends amazing amounts of time with his boys. His two boys are some of the most polite, prone to success young men I've ever seen in my life. And if he lets them marry anyone besides my granddaughters, you will hear that he passed away and nobody knows how it happened.

So tell us a little bit about the balance.

Andy: The balance is important. I believe that the balance can create more opportunity. Here's something very odd to me, and that is, a number of years ago I started praying – God, please give me simple ways to explain complicated things that are confusing your people. I work with really high level football coaches and national championship college teams, and Superbowl teams, and Major League baseball teams, and Ryder Cup captains and corporate people and the intelligence community and special operations with special tactics of our military. And it's all over the map.

And I obviously don't know anything about all this stuff, okay. And so, how in the world would I, number one, have the opportunity to do it? And number two, how would I be effective when I got there? It's something I figured out a while back and I think this is very helpful for everybody. And it is that if you can provide value for other people, value with your speaking, value with your consulting, value as a person. If you can provide value as a person, you'll never be without work.

Well, understanding what value really makes a difference is kind of shocking. When you really start to figure out what it is that makes a huge difference in business lives. I have found that so many times people are not productive, not because they don't know what to do. Not because they don't know how to do it. Not because they don't want it done. They're not productive because something's up with their family. Something's up with a child. There's an issue there. And when the most important thing in your life is in

disarray or in danger, it's tough to pay attention to the second or third most important thing in your life.

And so, oddly enough, helping people understand some things about dealing with their kids has put me in a position of helping companies raise their revenue and raise their level of production. Not because I know anything about their company or their industry. It's because I knew something about them as people.

I really – I have a lot of people that will say hey, I'd like to fly you in and I'd just like to have lunch with you. I don't want to take a lot of time. I just want to have lunch. Or people will say, I just want to spend an hour with you. And I have to turn that down. And oddly enough, the reason I turn it down is because I spend all my extra time with Polly and my boys. And so the curious thing is that if I did not turn those opportunities to eat lunch with people down, oddly enough I would not have become whatever this kind of person is that they actually want to have lunch with. Does that make sense?

Ken: Oh, it makes perfect sense.

Andy: Because people sometimes think when I've got to be with my family I've got to turn off my business sense. Listen, if there is a fulcrum that our society tilts upon, it's parenting. Whether anybody has kids, doesn't have kids, has raised their kids. Whatever. From the time you wake up in the morning, everything you use, everything you run into, everything you watch is somehow made or influenced by a person who was parented in a certain way or is parenting in a certain way. And it is a huge thing. And we are terribly, terribly confused about what we're doing here.

And I'll tell you this. It doesn't make me happy to say this, but I cannot find any group of people – not Christians, not Republicans, not Democrats, not the Swedish – I can't find any group of people that you could look at them and say, wow, by far, their kids turn out better than any others. It seems to be a roll of the dice across the board.

The reason is because we have compromised principles to such a degree that we don't even understand them anymore. And I'll give you a great example. I talk to people all the time, and they'll talk to me about their kids, and they'll say stuff about their kids, and I will ask this question. I'll say, What is your style? What are you after? And over and over again I hear people say, you know what? We just want to raise great kids. That is the most important thing in our life. We want to raise great kids. We wake up every morning thinking about it. We go to sleep praying about it. We want to raise great kids. And I want to say, well, there's your problem.

Because you really don't want to raise great kids. What you want to do is raise kids who become great adults. It's a totally different target. It's a totally different destination. And because it's a totally different destination, there are two different pathways that lead to those things. We know people who had great kids, don't we? They had good kids. And then something happened when they got away from home.

So we're not after raising great kids. We're after raising kids who become great adults, and that regards a different level of understanding and a different way of dealing with them.

Ken: Wow. I don't sense any passion there at all. In fact, I want to thank you. We're out of time, but I want to thank you for the time you have spent with us. And I want to thank you also – you're going to give away four free parenting videos. We want our listeners to hang in here because we're going to show you exactly how you can get that. Also, I want you to be aware that you can go to [www](http://www.andyandrews.com) – that's C Fields – no, that's not C Fields. www.andyandrews.com And the stories in his amazing books, *The Traveler's Gift*, *The Noticer*, *How Do You Kill a Million People*, the stories of his life and his philosophy and what has allowed him to impact so many lives are there at andyandrews.com. And we encourage you to go there.

And if Andy is anywhere in your area, you must go see him and don't be frightened when he comes flying off of that stage. Andy, just one real quick thing. We always ask people to give a Road Tip. And you wrote on your – do you remember what you wrote on your little piece of paper? It was very good.

Andy: I don't remember what it was.

Ken: Well I'm going to tell you what it is and then just explain it a little bit and then we'll say goodbye and let you get on to your busy day. You said "Get to town a day early." Are you kidding me? You say "Get to town a day early. There's no other choice anymore."

Andy: I wish there was a choice, but if you're flying, the airlines now – it is in such disarray, you can't count on it. And so I may go to town day of if my speech is 8pm. But I'll tell you this, I'll take the first flight out so that I have two or three backups. Here's my rule – you have a one flight day. You go from here to there. You've got a pretty good chance of making it with no problems. Two flight day, you're down to a 50/50 chance of something messing up. Three flight day? You'd just better plan for it, because it's going to happen. And occasionally, Ken you know, you and I have had four flight days, and what we ought to do on those days is just go back to bed and say, just do something else because this ain't going to work at all.

And so, truly, I, as much as I hate it, I have come to the conclusion I have to go in a day early because I cannot put these people in a position of me calling.

Ken: Yep. Sorry, I missed the flight. There was a flat tire. Hey Andy, thank you so, so much. I can't wait to see you and Polly and the boys again. And your time with us has been extremely valuable. Thank you for being a part of the Art and Business of Public Speaking.

Andy: And thank you. Tell Diane hello. And I'm just letting you know we are loving *Lighten Up and Live*. I'm just telling you, that may be the best devotional book that I have ever read. And it's the first one that I feel free to give away to non-Christians, which is very cool to me. I just love it.

Ken: That's great. Hey man, have a great day.

Andy: All right buddy, take care.

Brian: You know, balancing your career and your family has to be one of the biggest struggles for people who are going out and doing this as a business.

Ken: I know it. And I want to tell you I wasn't just, because Andy was here talking about this. This many is one of the greatest examples of a dad who is busy teaching his children how to grow up to be great adults. You know what we ought to do? Next time we're with Andy we ought to get the boys on the show, too, so that they could talk as well.

Brian: Watching his boys, and doing what they're doing in their community and hearing their stories – they have a lot to share from us and we can learn as well. I love the quote where he said, "if there's a fulcrum that this world tilts on, it is based on parenting."

Ken: Yep. And he has some great resources that those folks can get a hold of. How can they get those books?

Brian: Absolutely. If you go to our Show Notes and dynamiccommunicators.com, we're going to have all the information on how to get those four free DVDs on parenting that Andy has offered you.

Ken: That's right. And they're absolutely free. And he also mentioned, graciously mentioned, and again, he doesn't just blow hot air around. He was talking about the *Lighten Up and Live* devotional which is just catching on like wildfire. And folks can get that on our website, right?

Brian: You can go to kendavis.com to find out more information on how to get that book, and again, that's a real quick daily devotional based on your radio show that you've been doing for over 15 years.

Ken: Yeah. A lot of humor in that to get the interest of young people and adults and people that are hurting. We've had some friends that are going through some terrible things that have written and said, man, that has been an encouragement to get us to laugh and then to think about some truths that can really brighten our day.

Brian: And the endorsement he gave at the very end about that book, he said, I love giving this to people who are not of faith yet.

Ken: Absolutely.

Brian: That is a beautiful endorsement, and I'm so glad he said that.

Ken: I can't tell you what that means to me, because I don't want to just sing to the choir. I'm hoping we can help some folks right across the spectrum.

Brian: Hey, thanks for tuning in to another episode of the Art and Business of Public Speaking. Be sure to check out the full Show Notes at dynamiccommunicators.com where you can find the resources we discussed today and a downloadable transcript of the podcast.

By the way, if you enjoyed today's episode, we would love for you to rate the podcast in iTunes. This helps us get in front of more people who are interested in our message. Thanks so much for your help, and we'll see you again next week.