

001 – Welcome to the Art and Business of Public Speaking

Announcer: Do you dream of 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.

Ken: And, hello! On your host Ken Davis and we are so glad that you are here. I personally want to welcome you to this podcast, the Art and Business of Public Speaking. We're going to make this very casual, but at the same time we are going to present you with information, with skills, with interviews from the speakers around the world. Every single podcast is going to bring some kind of information or skill to you that will help you in the art and the business of public speaking.

Brian: We are hoping that each and every podcast will bring something of value to you that you can take away that week and implement. There might be times when we will give you downloadables. For example, contracts. Or other things that we are going to provide to you through our show notes. And also connections to people and networking with people that are going to help you make an impact in what you are doing in your career.

Ken: And want you to know that the whole idea of public speaking goes beyond just standing on the stage behind the podium delivering a talk. This includes people who have specific communication skills, arts skills. We're going to interview people, and some of our interviewees you're going to go, wait! They're not public speakers. But they are communicators. And we are going to cover the whole spectrum.

I'm so excited about this. This started years ago when someone asked, how is it possible for you to speak to such a wide variety of audiences and hold their attention? And I didn't know the answer to that, but I thought it was about the dynamics of communication. And so we developed that Dynamic Communicators Workshop which we now call SCORRE.

Brian: And celebrating 30 years this year.

Ken: That's right! That's 30 years ago. And since I'm 31, that means I started at a very young age. But we did the Dynamic Communicators Workshop and in the development of that workshop began to discover skills, principles, information that really enabled people to change their lives. We had people who came to that one time and literally started

speaking career as a result of learning how to put a powerful speech together. We had people who develop new products. Well, it wasn't just SCORRE. People said, well now I've got the speech together, how do I market it? And so we developed LAUNCH, which was originally called The Summit.

I had a young man that worked for me who came in and used some powerful principles to take our speaking business from a little kind of mom and pop, out of the back pocket, it was marvelous. It was a marvelous career, but he showed us how we could not only expand our income, but use that income to expand the message we were bringing to people from just to a small area to around the world. Absolutely amazing.

Both that art part, which our SCORRE conference, our speaking conference is all about, and the business part, which is that LAUNCH part together. I can hardly wait as we unpack the pieces, the detailed pieces of this to help people in their careers.

Brian: You know, Ken, I know that the people listening right now are just getting started here, and we've kind of given the overview of what the podcast will deliver, but today I really want to get down and dirty with them so they can take this, take some notes from what we're going to share today and maybe take two or three takeaways from your talk.

Ken: I promise. I promise three takeaways in the area of preparing and delivering messages and in the area of business that will allow them to make their very next speech or their very next step in their career better. I promise that before we leave. And I am going to go a little more detailed on what these podcasts will cover.

Brian: And what I would say is, as we did some show prep on this and we were discussing how we're going to start this, this is almost as if we're in an airplane at 30,000 feet. And we're going to give you some information that you can actually implement and execute on right away, but, you're going to see that our podcasts down the road are even going to go deeper into these because there's a lot of details that we want to share with you.

Ken: Well, if you're in an airplane at 30,000 feet, rather than going deeper, I would rather go higher. We'll go higher and higher, if that's okay with you Brian, I would rather take them higher and higher to new heights in their career. Is that okay?

Brian: Yeah. That's a better illustration than the one I provided.

Ken: Well guess what folks? This is really the truth. A man of my voice breaking just like it did, we're going to make mistakes on this podcast. Anybody who is a normal human being will make mistakes. And so we are going to make mistakes in our own speech. We're going to slur some words. But we want to be real people helping other real people move forward with their careers and their art.

Brian: And we're going to make sure that we mock one another when we do that, right?

Ken: Absolutely.

Brian: Oh good, good.

Ken: Absolutely. Especially me toward you. I think that will work great.

Brian: Okay, let's get started here. The first area that we're going to be talking about is preparation.

Ken: Right. The SCORRE process, or putting a speech together, is so important. It is unbelievable that great speeches aren't made on the platform. They are made in the dugout. They are made as a person prepares that speech and decides how to put it together. And in the areas of preparation, Brian, we're going to talk about focus, we're going to talk about knowing and being aware of who your audience is as you prepare. We're going to talk about the importance of an opening and closing. We're going to have a whole podcast on this. But I'll tip my hand right here. Some of the most important words you'll say in any speech are the first words out of your mouth and the last words out of your mouth.

So, we're going to be going into good openings and closings. We are going to have great podcasts on those subjects. We're going to talk about how to construct a talk. The whole construction of a talk and why that's important. Why not just get up and wing it? Well, it just doesn't work, and we're going to talk about why that doesn't work, particularly for those who really want to communicate.

We're going to talk about the importance of notes and how you speak without notes. And the power that notes can bring, but how you don't have to be tied to them. We're going to talk about preparing your environment. I love this one. I just thought of this. I haven't thought of this for years. The environment you speak in you have a great ability to choose what that environment is. Even as you're invited to speak somewhere else. And that environment can make all the difference between success and failure of a talk.

Some of the environments I've been in seem like they are almost impossible for communication. I've spoken to 20,000 people sitting on a hillside looking into the sunset, shielding their eyes.

Brian: I remember that event.

Ken: Do you remember that event? And I wondered, who planned this? Who said, let's blind everybody and let's sell stuff all around the outer edges while a guy is trying to communicate. It works for music, by the way. And that's what it was designed for, that environment.

I also remember a time, Brian, and will cover all of this in more detail on how you control your environment, but I remember a time when I spoke for a youth group at the

end of the hayride. Do you know where my environment was? Do you know where it was? It was kind of cool.

Brian: Up on the hayride?

Ken: No. It was in a barn. And all of the kids that were on the hayride set on hay bales. Cool. And the lighting wasn't too bad. There weren't that many, there was probably 50 or 60 kids that were on this big train of wagons being pulled by a tractor. There was one problem with the environment. About 15 pigeons sitting in the rafters above the kids sitting on the hay bales. I don't remember what I talked about. I guarantee you the kids don't remember what I talked about. But I also guarantee that those pigeons went home and they had a ball laughing over how they were able to affect that communication. So your environment is very important. I don't know why they came to me, but it did.

Brian: Well, it made a mark on your life, I'm sure.

Ken: I think it was – what's the comedian's name? Old guy who ended up painting pictures who talked about the two pigeons? Anyway, I'm sure that those pigeons went home and said, did you see Ken Davis tonight? And then one of the other pigeons said, yeah, I spotted him.

Anyway, let's see what else we've got. Lighting.

Brian: I was going to say, I know that you are talking about when you're setting up your environment it includes lighting and your sound and the amplification of your voice.

Ken: Very soon, in one of our upcoming podcasts, very soon we're going to talk about lighting and sound and how you can help control those to maximize your communication. There's a lot of things, even an environment that you can work with, but lighting and sound - absolute essentials if you are going to do a great job. And we are going to talk about how you can do that.

The room set up - how the room is set up. What kind of room can you ask for related to how many people who were there? And how do you respond when it isn't set up right? Sometime I want to have a podcast that talks about the time that I spoke in Nashville Tennessee in an auditorium that would see about 9000 people and there were 12 there. And how we handle that and how, as a result of handling that the way we did, we literally developed a huge chunk of our career with the person that brought us.

Brian: And that will take care of the third point we come to, so hang on to that, don't go any further with that one. But I want to wrap up this first section on preparation. If you are going to encourage our listeners one thing to take away from preparation, even today, even though we are flying at 30,000 feet right now, I don't know if we go down or up - will go up - but what is the one take away you have on preparation for our audience?

Ken: This is just a simple take away, but it is the absolute foundation of great communication. And that is, that you communicate with focus. We're going to have more than one podcast just on learning how to communicate with focus. That is probably one of the key foundational elements. Not probably, it is one of the key foundational elements of our SCORRE conference. And it's the one thing people say, if I had nothing but that, if I had come away with just that, it would have been worth the price of the conference.

So I'm going to give just a little take away for that. The very next speech you give can be made better if you consider the focus. And here's how I want you to consider it. Go ahead as you prepare and write down everything you want to say. Then, ask yourself this question - why? What do I want to accomplish? What do I want the people who are listening to me to go away with? To be encouraged by? What action do I want them to take? What is my destination? I have made this saying and they are going to hear it 100 times. I have said this saying probably 1 million times before this, no exaggeration. If you aim at nothing you'll hit it every time.

And the truth is, if you prepare with focus, if you know what you're trying to accomplish with any presentation, then you can take people with you. They will go with you. Not everybody might agree with you, that everyone will understand where you are headed. Choose a destination. And that's my first take away. And it might just at this. As you do the final touches on your speech or your presentation, make sure that everything you say leads to that focus.

There's lots of other products we have that are going to nail this to the wall and show you all kinds of different ways, detailed ways you can get there. But that's the take away from preparation.

Brian: As I sit here, and I want to make sure that even though the listeners can't see you, Ken, I want to try to convey what I see in you. This passion for people to prepare with focus is deep within you and it's something you have been on a mission for 30 years to really try to get that message across to people. So focus. Ask the question why. What is the call to action you are trying to make for them? Be very focused in your preparation. That will make your first presentation the best.

Okay, going into the presentation. Now we've done the preparation. We had a speech prepared. We're getting on stage. This is kind of an exciting time. What can you give them in this area, and I know that we're going to go into a lot of details on this in the future, but kind of give them the 30,000 foot view on this.

Ken: Okay, this is the 31,000 foot view because we've already brought them a little bit higher. And you just want to make sure you're still going up in this thing. Let me ask you a question. You just said to the listeners of this podcast, I wish you could be here because I wish you could see the passion that Ken is delivering this with. And everybody in this room, everybody in our production room here knows that I wasn't full of passion maybe

10 or 15 minutes ago. It has been a long day. Kind of everybody is playing music, trying to get me excited, and they start talking about this. So what was it that you saw on that you said that communicates passion?

Brian: All I can see is him moving in his seat. His arms are flailing about. And really trying to drive home a point and you can't even see it, but I can feel it and you can probably hear it in his voice right now. And I can promise you, 10 minutes ago it wasn't there. I guess 20 minutes ago.

Ken: I needed some caffeine big time. But in the presentation part of it, that's exactly what we're talking about. The dynamics of communication. Preparation leads to great presentation, but presentation requires dynamics. No matter how good your content is...

Brian: Or contacts.

Ken: Contacts.

Brian: Yes it could be either.

Ken: Either your contacts or your content - thank you very much. Whenever I make a mistake, pointed out to our listeners. That would be great.

Brian: The mocking begins right here.

Ken: No matter how great our content, if it's delivered in a mundane, boring style, no one's going to want to listen to it. I've often said that dynamics, minus that focus we were talking about is just merely entertainment. And there's nothing wrong with that. But most communicators are passionate about something. They have the message. They want to deliver either a product or a message or something that changes people's lives.

So dynamics is important. And I'm talking about gestures there. That's why I asked you that question. I cannot keep still when I'm passionate about something. And yet I find that I think it's the fear of what people are thinking about you. Whatever it is, we're going to identify some of those things as we move on in the podcast, but some of those fears, some of those focuses in the wrong direction cause people who normally would stand in a hallway and flail their arms everywhere as they talk about things they're passionate about to get up on the platform, stand behind a microphone or podium, or go to deliver their presentation and suddenly they become diminished. And that is just - we're going to talk about how you do that.

And that includes your voice, your movement on stage. What do you do? Do you just stand in one place, or do you pace the stage like a caged lion and distract people in that way? I want to talk about how the way you dress affects the dynamics. I know people - I started out as a youth speaker. I know people who tried to dress like youth. Who

looked like – I’m sorry – idiot. It looked idiotic. Wearing stuff that youth wear. They were looking for somebody they could go to for information. They weren’t looking for somebody trying to be young.

Brian: And it was weird because that man was a 65 year old grandpa trying to wear those clothes and trying to pull it off.

Ken: Are you talking about me?

Brian: No, I’m not. Let’s move on. The last point in presentation would be?

Ken: Well I was actually talking about someone else, but if you’ve got something to say, you need to come out and say it. I do remember, by the way, when you, as a manager and a friend, said to me, you need to change your dress a little bit. You are not 30. You are 65 years old.

Brian: I remember where that was.

Ken: That’s when I started just dressing like a 65 year old. Old, dumpy clothes. But dress is important. It can distract, it can help. And things like reading the audience in presentation, thinking on your feet and so on.

Brian: Hey, you know what you’ve been doing it for 30 years. You’ve been helping people not only prepare with focus, but then present as well up on stage, and actually take that moment. The precious moments that they have up on stage, and really maximize them all the way. If you had to boil down the presentation to one tip that you would give our listeners, what would that tip be?

Ken: Well, I can’t. I can’t do that because there are so many. That’s why we have these podcasts going on into the future. And what I want to make sure is the one I’m going to give isn’t the most important one. But I promise to give one that they can grab a hold of and take home. So this may not be the most important one, but here it is. Drones kill. If you’re where you’ve got a pencil or you can write it down, write it down. Drones kill. And in the military, drones kill people. In speaking, in performance, drones kill people, too. It just puts them to sleep. It kills performance. It does kill performance.

It kills your message. So my clue is to recognize that – and we’re going to go into this much deeper in another podcast, but you have different levels of voice. You have your normal level, you have a very quiet level, a level that reaches deep down somewhere, and then you have a level that communicates passion and excitement and decisiveness. And you need to vary your voice in communication. That’s a quick tip.

Brian: All right. Great. I’m going to vary my voice because I am passionate about the third area. I love this area. This is the part where I come in as a manager a lot of times. It really, I think, creates the foundation that you’re launching all of this into.

Ken: Well, you have a company that I take advantage of that goes even further than just management.

Brian: I would definitely say that you're taking advantage of us, yes.

Ken: Did I say take advantage?

Brian: Yes.

Ken: Whatever. I take advantage of you. You get paid well for me to take advantage of you. But Frontline Group is really about helping people establish the business part. Am I not correct?

Brian: That's right. Exactly. We help come alongside them, figure out what they're trying to do, the goals they're trying to achieve, and create the strategy behind it. And there's many different places this can go with the strategy. But let's go ahead and take them through the business end of public speaking.

Ken: Right. Well this was started, this was initiated out of our LAUNCH conference where we got hundreds of letters – and we're going to do a podcast very soon called, How do I Start? And that's one of the main letters that we were getting. Emails, actually. Hundreds of emails. How do I start? That can't be answered in another email. That can't even be answered in an hour conversation. And I'm not sure I even knew the answer until people started to ask the question. And once again, you look back and I went to my manager at that time, Danny DiArmis, and said Danny, what are the principles that will help us work with these people. And one of the principles we teach is, when the market is screaming for something, how do I start to develop a product that will help them?

And so we started the LAUNCH conference. And then people were asking, Can I make a living doing this? I love doing this, but I have a job. Can I make a living? What do I speak on, they would ask. I want to be a speaker, what do I speak on? How do I develop products I can sell?

Brian: This one is huge. This one can actually sustain you for a long time to come and do exactly what this podcast is about. Not only growing your career, but maintaining your career, as well.

Ken: Maintaining it. It seems like, if you have a great product, and by product I don't necessarily mean something you can hang on to. If you have a great presentation, if you have a great speech, if you have a great performance that you have to offer, and you begin to offer it, you will have to work to maintain. Because the automatic tendency, if you do the right things, if you take the right steps, is it will grow. Because word spreads. How can I use the internet and social media to help my business grow.

We have an interview coming up with a marvelous lady who is a professional on Facebook. And her information has helped us tremendously so we're sharing it with people.

How much do I charge for my speaking? This gets so interesting. We talked to someone recently who just kind of went ballistic. Charge? I want to help people! Well, you won't be able to help people long unless you're able to maintain the business part.

Brian: And do it with a strategy behind it. Not just willy nilly go out there and start trying to charge something. It could kill your business side of things if you don't have that strategy that we will teach you.

Ken: You don't just draw a number out of the air. Willy Nilly?

Brian: It's a Hawaiian name.

Ken: It's a Hawaiian name? I knew his sister, Nelly Nilly. Amazing girl. Anyway, how much do I charge for my speaking? What if I'm a writer? Or a singer? Or have a unique entertainment package? We interviewed a man who is a painter and made an amazing career basically painting one thing. So all of those – you will find the information on this podcast to be valuable.

If you're out there presenting, if you're out there in the public, if you're out there dreaming of doing what you want to do and making a living doing it, this podcast, our conferences, the SCORRE conference and the LAUNCH conference – taking care of the business side, are going to be an amazing resource. A tool box, a resource to connect you with the people who can help you. To give you information that will help you move forward on your own and to help you build a team that can help you go there.

Brian: Hey Ken, as we come to the end of this podcast, I want you to wrap up the business end of the public speaking that we've been talking about. And again, I know last time you said, hey, you can't really boil it down to number one important – but if you had to boil this down and give them one take away from it, what would that be?

Ken: I just told you, I can't boil it down. I'm not really boiling it down. I'm going to pick one, willy nilly, because I did promise that they would have three takeaways. And this is the third one and this is so important. If you think of business just as business, as an end in itself, you might not get too far. If you think of just making a lot of money as an end in itself, you might not get too far. You might not even get too far if you say, I want to be a speaker.

My question is this, or the takeaway is this. Work hard to discover what your passion is. Because your passion is what will move you forward. My passion has been faith-based many of the years. My passion is to make people laugh. Brian, I can remember my first memory is of standing at a huge radio, and only people who are as old as I am will know

what this radio looked – it was a piece of furniture. It was a truck. And it also had a record player in it. It had everything you could imagine. A small trampoline.

But this radio was playing a comedy show, and I can remember getting in trouble because I was stamping my feet and screaming in delight over the laughter. We'll show people where to search to develop and find out what your passion is. But if you can discover what that is, then in the end your business may not be a multi-million dollar business. But it'll be a successful career.

Brian: Well Ken, that you for sharing with us all of this information and I look forward to going into this in more depth. Now I'm going to introduce a new segment that we're starting and we're going to continue through the podcast, and this will be our Road Tip. Every week we will provide a Road Tip. It might be some crazy thought or it might be something that is very practical, pragmatic. A way to really make your life easier when you're on the road, or it might even be in preparation for the road, or tools that might be helpful to you.

So today's Road Tip is going to come from the one and only Ken Davis. Ken, what is your Road Tip for today?

Ken: Don't eat roadkill. That's my Road Tip.

Brian: I didn't promise much as far as the Road Tip was concerned.

Ken: No, I've got a good one. That one just came to my mind. And our listeners will have to get used to the fact that I've been certifiably certified insane for about 50 years. Since I stamped my feet.

Here's my Road Tip for today. It is, rent a car. Do not go someplace to speak, and even if you have to pay for it yourself, now we're hoping our tips and our information will make it so you don't have to do that. But rent a car. Don't depend on other people to get you places. It makes your road time a little like prison time. You're not able to get out to get the things you need. You can't take care of emergencies. You can't set your own schedule. So one of the first tips that I'll give is rent a car.

I think we learned that way back. That is just made it very, very tense and in the end, even the people who brought us in, who thought that maybe that was a little extravagant, if they were responsible for getting us everywhere we needed to go, they found out that was kind of an uncomfortable thing.

Brian: So one thing we'll do on this podcast is even show you how to communicate to the people who are bringing you – your hosts – why it's important for you to use a rental car rather than a pickup by a person, and how to couch that conversation so that they look at it as a benefit as well.

Ken: It is a benefit for them.

Brian: Well, in every show that we have, we are going to put what we call Show Notes up and post them for you. You will be able to refer back to these show notes. This will be a great resource for you. If you're listening to this in your car or in a place where you can't necessarily take notes, don't worry. Go to DynamicCommunicators.com. Once you go there you're going to see a place there that says Show Notes. Go ahead and click on that. And you can look at these notes. You'll see the links that you have there.

In addition to that, we would love to have your questions. If you have a specific question for us that you want us to address, we would love to have that question. And there's a place there that says voicemail. You can click on there and you can leave any questions you want. Who knows? We may be using your question on the podcast in a future episode. So go there, ask any questions you want. We will do our best to answer.

Ken: We also have Brian, there, all of the resources, books, DVDs that we may mention in the podcast. We'll have a place where you can get to any of those resources that we have.

Brian: Again, let's call that your tool box. That's where you can go and find what we refer to on this podcast. And finally, this just came to mind. I wanted to make sure that I reminded people of the SCORRE conference. We are celebrating our 30th year this year. We are very excited about that. We have actually gotten some more people on board to be our instructors. We're able to get more and more people. And here's the unique feature of the SCORRE conference that I think makes it work every penny.

For every eight students, we have one instructor. There's a very personal touch to this conference, that when you leave, you're actually giving speeches each night you're there, and you're actually putting what you're learning into practice immediately.

Ken: Absolutely. And that is identified – that separates this conference from just about any other conference that's out there.

Brian: The SCORRE conference is October 26 through the 29th in Beaver Creek, Colorado, and it's at the Park Hyatt Beaver Creek. We would love to see you there.

Ken: I'd love to see them there, and I can hardly wait to see Beaver Creek again that time of the year. Unbelievable.

Brian: It's gorgeous. Well, thank you for joining us. Ken, any last words?

Ken: No. Just hang tight with us. I think that you're going to find that this podcast will be an amazing toolbox for you. And we just want to serve you, and we're hoping that every podcast, every single episode that we do will do that.

Brian: Our goal is to serve you and to help you in the art, in the business of public speaking.
Thanks for joining us.