

Sherman's 21 Laws of Speaking

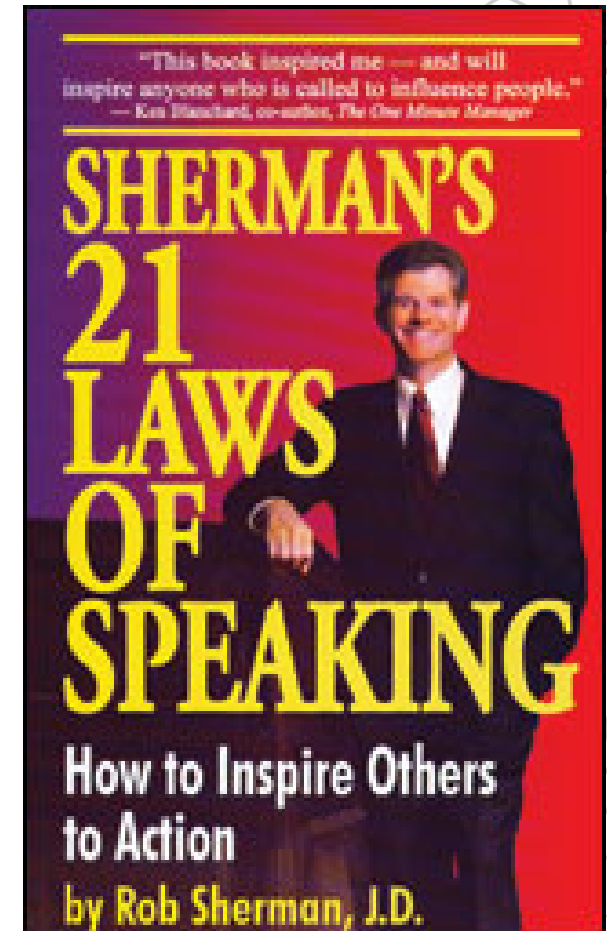
Rob Sherman, JD © 2001, www.shermanleadership.com

US trial lawyer and public speaking expert Rob Sherman believes good leaders need to be good communicators. His book provides several practical tips for how professionals can move their audience to action through effective communication – and we hope help you grow your wealth from work.

“Just 5 min in front of your audience can be worth more than a whole year behind your desk”

“Every audience is a jury voting you up or down”

“Most people recall much more about a speakers personality and style of delivery than their content”



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Structure your talk to avoid “who cares?”

Your purpose is to add value to your audience (to inspire, teach, persuade, call to act ...)

Finish this sentence: “As a result of hearing this presentation my audience will”

- **Distil your major objective into a 10 sec statement**

Limit yourself to one objective – otherwise you will lose your audience

- **“Present a powerful single concept and make it memorable”**
- **“Most successful speakers on the professional circuit are specialists”**

Research your audience and their motivations (and topics to avoid)

- **“The more you know your audience, the more they’ll want to know you”**

Outline your presentation then ruthlessly test each part with “Who cares?” – delete if no one

Never read your speech. Start with an outline then create and follow a sheet of sequenced keyword prompts (write out your speech only if you’re having trouble preparing an outline)

The first 30-60 seconds are critical – write and memorise that to get off to a good start

Some opening options: a startling statistic, an attention getting question, a current headline, a short anecdote (humorous?), customer or shareholder letter, witty quotations, interesting definition, survey result, provocative statement, audience quiz, ask the audience for topics ...

Some effective closes: summarize, emotional story, pose questions, issue a challenge, predict the future, ask for help, recap with a funny story [also consider memorising last 30 secs]

“It takes considerable preparation to be spontaneous” – Bob Gerold

Practice?

“See it or hear it” video or record yourself, but use to improve, not self-criticism

Practice

- in front of the mirror
- with another colleague
- with the same equipment
- in the same room
- with a real audience
- with a speaking group (eg. Toastmasters)

Arrive early and set-up

Arrive early, test equipment
Arrange audience to be close (move/rope off chairs)

Sit in all corners of the room to check visibility

Cover windows behind you

Ensure lights are on you and not behind you

Aim for bright and cool room

Ensure room is quiet and food served before/after you speak

Relax!

- slow/ deep breathe (increase alertness, O₂ to the brain)
- talk to audience before (easier to speak to friends)
- remember the audience wants you to succeed

Write your own introduction

Important you are introduced properly and credibility lent

Type in large font a 60 sec / 120 word intro and hand it to

whomever introduces you – you can't take any chances

Stress the benefits of the topic AND your credentials for speaking on the topic

If introducer knows you, encourage her/him to personalize to further establish your credibility

Encourage a lively welcome
“Please give a warm ...”

Vary your spoken tone, inflection, volume, pace and watch your body language

Pitch, Power & Pace

“Art of voice” masters speak quickly, then suddenly slowly, raise voice to emphasize then speak in a whisper to get your attention

Thoughtful comments demand slow and solemn

“All words cannot have equal value”. Drill: repeat phrase ‘We must finish this race’ 5x with emphasis on each word

Learn to ‘ARTicUlate’ – some lip read to improve hearing

“People cannot process words as quickly as they are spoken” – use powerful *Pause*

Replace fillers “um’s, ahhs” with silence : less is more

Watch your body language

“Audience doesn’t remember what you say. Remember what they see” – Patricia Fripp

Don’t hang on the lectern

Avoid swaying

Palms open conveys sincerity

Link gestures to help visualize descriptions (eg. big) or convey emotion (eg. frown)

Larger crowd, larger gesture

Use clothes that communicate your credibility

“3 sec rule” for eye contact, don’t “machine gun”; focus on one eye to avoid a stare; look for friends if you’re nervous

Engage your audience – ask Q, “raise your hand ..”, music?

Speak 10 “You’s” for every “I”

Remember your speech is about them – not you
Convert your “I” sentences to “You”, “We”, “Us” ...

• eg. change “I think it is important” to “You will find ..”

Lincoln’s Gettysburg address

• 10 “We’s”, 3 “Us”, 1 “I”

JFK’s “...ask what you can do for you country” speech

• “We, us, our, you, your” 51x

• “I” 4x

But be careful to avoid overusing “you” otherwise you will sound like a Preacher

About Visuals and Q&A

Visuals should support not dominate

Speak to your listeners not the visual
Some speakers avoid words on slides

- Redundant with what you say
- Others limit # words to ten or less

Pro's introduce meaning before visual

Pre-complete flip charts, leave a blank page to "turn off" [or push 'b' or 'w' on Power Point show]

Use handouts carefully (not at all, for a quiz, use colour eg. 'refer to your yellow sheet')

Illustrate with a prop?

Question your Q&A

"Presentations that end strong, can finish on a whimper with many Q&A's"

Alternative: "we'll take questions for ten minutes before I conclude"

1. LISTEN and make full eye contact
2. Don't interrupt and finish question
3. Repeat the question for others
4. Use the questioner's name if know
5. PAUSE before answering
6. Compliment the questioner
7. Keep answers brief
8. Move eye contact to audience
9. Don't bluff if don't know
10. Link Q back to presentation
11. Introduce 1st hand experience
12. Don't take Q's off topic

About Professional Wealth and these summaries

About Professional Wealth

We are an independent personal wealth advisory and money management business serving clients in Sydney and Melbourne

We focus on professionals and those who value professional service

We strive to set a new level of professionalism, by

- providing unbiased high quality advice
- being free to recommend a broad range of investment and insurance solutions
- being remunerated only by our clients, refusing all commissions and rebates
- making education an important part of our offer

About our Executive Summaries

We regularly review interesting writing on wealth topics that we think our clients will find useful

Our summaries are of the authors' views and we encourage you to read their work to learn more

These should not be considered personal advice as your needs and circumstances will vary

Please contact us or your personal advisor to explore further how you can *Make Work Optional™*

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