

TEDx secrets to success for every speaker

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There's something extraordinary about TED. This nonprofit foundation has touched millions around the world with inspirational talks, spreading ideas that invite listeners to see the world in a new or different way. Chances are, you've been deeply affected by at least one TED talk. Try to imagine what it's like to actually participate in a **TEDx** event.

I was recently honored to serve on the Speaker Selection Committee and be a speaker coach for a **TEDx** event in Raleigh, NC. This experience gave rise to some lessons and tips worth spreading.

TED-inspired tips to enhance your next presentation

1. Have an idea worth spreading

Whenever you step up to speak, take the time to develop a compelling core message — the one simple phrase or sentence that captures the essence of your presentation. My **TEDx** experience renewed my admiration for the brilliance and elegance of a simply stated core message. The most important thing you can do as a speaker is to develop your point of view, your idea worth spreading.

Here are some stand-out examples from **TEDxRaleigh** that are clear, simple, action-oriented and easy to share:

- NO stands for "New Opportunity"
- Choose hope and dream again
- Create an experience

Dr. Kevin Snyder, **TEDxRaleigh** curator, said, "Whether it's **designing** a talk for a **TEDx** event, a workshop or a keynote presentation, it is essential to have a core message that inspires others to do something."

Pro tip: Preparing to speak at an industry event, product launch, or even a quarterly financial update? You'll maximize your impact and stand out from the crowd when you invest the time to develop a clear and memorable idea worth spreading. To learn more about how to develop your

core message, read this post: [“One Thing You Must do to be Successful When You Speak.”](#)

2. Make your story *our* story

Alan Hoffer, public-speaking coach and author of [“Presentation Sin,”](#) shares this advice, “The secret to speaking success is to turn ‘your’ story into ‘our’ story.” That translates as helping the audience to identify with what you’re saying so your message will be a catalyst for action.

Easier said than done? Here are a few strategies to help listeners connect with your message:

- Deliver with openness and vulnerability to build trust
- Include everyday examples that people can relate to
- Ask listeners a rhetorical question that encourages them to reflect on their lives

Michael Penny, an Afghanistan war veteran, spoke at **TEDx**Raleigh about the improvised explosive devices, or IEDs, that wreaked havoc and destruction. He made a lasting connection with the audience when he asked, “What’s the IED in your life?” That simple question encouraged listeners to think about how Michael’s story and his message could influence their own lives.

Pro tip: Know your audience! That makes it easier to choose relevant examples that help your listeners make the connection between your message and their situation. To learn more about how to develop your story read this post: [“Science Backs the Importance of Storytelling.”](#)

3. Connect, don’t perform

An authentic and memorable presentation takes time to develop and prepare. It requires a significant commitment to writing, rewriting, and rehearsing. As you rehearse, don’t forget to consider where to stand, how to move and what to wear. However, when it comes time to take the stage, keep it real: Talk to the audience as if you are talking to a good friend over a beer, and let the real you come through.

Like the **TEDx** Raleigh speakers, being authentic builds rapport, establishes trust, and creates a lasting impression.

Pro tip: A successful presentation is not about getting everything perfect. It's about being prepared, wanting to connect, and sharing openly with others. To learn more about authentic presentation styles: [“Presentation Preparation: The Red Zone.”](#)

Whenever you step up to speak, you have an opportunity to make a difference. Whether it is introducing a new engagement team at a client kick-off meeting, a keynote address at an industry event, or speaking at an analyst meeting, what you say and how you say it influences the outcome.

The next time you are asked to speak, use these tips to make sure your ideas are worth spreading and carry the power to create change.

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