

So You Need to Deliver a Speech And Don't Want to Look Like an Idiot?

Creating And Delivering Funny Speeches E-Book.

Who Are These Guys?

Brad Montgomery is a professional funny speaker, corporate comedian, and motivational humorist. Brad draws on nearly two decades of experience as a pro speaker and entertainer to teach others how to use humor as a tool to help people get what they want at work and at home. Brad's website is: <http://www.bradmontgomery.com>. Brad has presented thousands of shows — everything from comedy and magic to humor-in-the-workplace seminars to motivational keynote speeches— in all 50 states and on four continents. He is a proud member of the BMG CD club.

Bill Stainton has won 29 Emmys for his skills in creating funny stuff on purpose! For 15 years, Bill was a producer, writer and cast member of *Almost Live* (a Seattle-based) sketch comedy show) which was syndicated nationally through Comedy Central and a few other sources. Now he travels across the country delivering funny motivational speeches to business and corporate audiences.

Recently Brad interviewed his friend Bill to talk about how to better create and deliver funny speeches. Speeches like wedding toasts or introductory comments to the board. The accompanying audio program is a recording of that interview. The following are some of the key points made during the interview.

Tips for Creating and Presenting Funny Speeches.

- When you are preparing a new speech, and you want it to be funny, don't try to write a funny speech. Just write a speech that is good and meaningful, and THEN come back and sprinkle in the funny. It is too hard (even for the pros) to start funny. Just start with the speech and add the funny later.
- Don't tell jokes. Nobody tells jokes well. (Even if you think you are a good joke teller, you are probably wrong.)

“Because People Learn Best When They Are Laughing.”

- The best source for humor is personal stories. If you are giving a speech (for a wedding toast, or a business audience, etc) you undoubtedly have some sort of personal connection. So look for personal stories that will reveal even more of that personal connection.
- Instead of looking for stories to tell that are funny, look for stories where you can identify the single moment *When Things Went Wrong*. For example, “He was water skiing and his bathing suit fell off.” That’s the moment things went wrong. There is no punch line, but it will end up funny.
- If tragedy+time= comedy (which is an ancient comedy formula), then you need to look for the tragedy!
- All stories have a *beginning, middle, and end*. So you need to look for all of those components in your story. And in your speech.

The *beginning* is who is involved in the story, what the characters’ goals were, setting, and all of that introductory stuff. For example, the beginning could be, “It was a bitter cold Wednesday night in March and I was driving with my wife to my brother’s house to borrow a lawn mower...” State something about the goal you wanted to achieve (eg: to borrow the lawn mower).

Now you are at the place in your story, the *middle*, when something went wrong. In this case, it might be that there was a herd of sheep crossing the road. Or that the mower had rust all over it. Or... you get the idea.

Now you need to tell the end, which is how the story was resolved. (eg: my wife took out a shotgun and shot over the animals’ heads, and we used a borrowed toothbrush and spit to clean off the rust from the mower.)

- You can think of a story format this way:

The beginning is “Get Your Hero Up a Tree.”

The middle is “Throw Rocks at Him”

The end is “Get Him Down.”

- Note: you are *not* telling jokes. When your audience hears all of the things that went wrong, you’ll get laughs. When they hear, “And THIS went wrong.... And then THAT went wrong, ... and then THIS went wrong ...” you’ll increase the laughs without any punch lines, and without any jokes.

Delivering the Story and Speech.

Don’t worry about it... you’ll be telling something from the heart and you’ll remember it just fine.

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The great thing about using stories (verses jokes) is that they are easy to remember. Since you were there, you don't have to make up anything, just tell them what you remember! You were there!

When it comes to delivering the program, don't forget to have fun. Just tell a true story from the heart. Don't worry about the gestures, the "ums" or the "pacing." Just tell a personal story and they'll love you.

Remember that they are not expecting a comedian. They didn't hire Jay Leno. They asked you! They don't even want you to be a comedian. They want you to be the CEO, or the brother of the bride, or whatever. They just want you to be genuine and authentic, and if you have some fun stories that is all gravy. And because you are not presented as a comedian, your stories won't have to be that funny to earn a laugh.

Remember to keep your funny speech (or toast) short. Audiences tune out with longer speeches anyway...keep it meaningful and short and they'll love you for it.

Don't forget that the toast is not about you... it's about your employees, or the bride and groom.

Speech-Writing Formula.

Let's look at a formula using the example of wedding toasts. (Though of course you can use this formula by adapting it to other events and needs.)

First: We all know that "Bob" the groom is _____. (Pick a *characteristic* here... generous, stubborn, smart, shy, strong, fearless, etc.) I've always suspected it, but when we were _____ (eg. "working together last year") it was confirmed.

Second: Tell a story about Bob that illustrates that characteristic: "The fact that Bob is stubborn was made obvious to me when, on a cold Wednesday Bob and I were driving to his brother's house to _____. (Have a *goal* of the story. We were trying to accomplish this, or that or...) For example, "we were driving trying to find an open bar late in the night."

Then, say, "That's when things went wrong." For example, maybe "We got a flat tire." Then something else went wrong. "And the spare was missing." Etc. Tell the story. Live it. Be there! Tell it with passion.

Then **finally**, bring it back to Bob. And that _____ (*characteristic*) _____ has paid off for Bob. (For example, let's keep with being *stubborn*. "And being stubborn really paid off for Bob, because now through sheer thick-headedness, Bob has found the perfect partner, spouse, and wife. Suzy, Bob is stubborn, and he is also very lucky to have found you. And Suzy, you're lucky to have found Bob for a million reasons. And his being stubborn is just one of them on a long wonderful list. Here's to Bob and Suzy!")

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See! This is easy. No sweat!

Summary!

- Focus on the speech itself, not on the humor. Deliver a good speech first... then sprinkle in the humor.
- Don't tell jokes.
- Tell personal stories in your speech. They will help connect you to the audience, and will be a source of humor.
- Stories have a beginning, middle and end. Look for an intro, a *That's When Things Went Wrong* section, and a conclusion or resolution.
- Remember that the best speeches are not about you... they are about your audience. (Or the bride and groom.)
- When delivering the speech, remember that since you're telling a true story, you won't have trouble remembering it. You were there!
- Relax and have fun. Nobody cares if you say, "Um" or have to stop and think, or generally don't sound like a news anchor. No sweat... they want you! You'll be great; don't hold yourself to professional standards.
- Remember that your audience just wants you to be you. They are not expecting a standup comic. They want you. So when you do sprinkle in some fun stories they will love you all the more.

For more information about delivering humor or for using humor as a tool, go to <http://www.bradmontgomery.com> where you'll find a ton of free resources and articles. As well as some great audios, programs, and videos.

Finally, if you or your group needs a funny speaker to kick off or close your convention, or to make folks laugh in between, [Just Book Brad](#).

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