

'Engaging and easy to read, it's like having Sarah as your own personal mentor'

YANG-MAY OOI, BESTSELLING AUTHOR AND TEDX SPEAKER, STORYGURU.CO.UK

HOW TO BE
BRILLIANT
AT

PUBLIC
SPEAKING

*Learn the six qualities of an
INSPIRING speaker—step by step*

SARAH LLOYD-HUGHES

Praise for *How to be Brilliant at Public Speaking*

'A clear step-by-step guide that helps you craft a compelling speech and deliver it as an authentic, inspiring leader. Engaging and easy to read, with practical advice. It's like having Sarah as your own personal mentor.'

Yang-May Ooi, bestselling author and TEDx speaker, StoryGuru.co.uk

'Public speaking has been turned on its head. There's no such thing as a born speaker, there are only people who work out what they really care about, what they have to offer the world and follow the simple steps in this book.'

Justine Simons OBE, Head of Culture for the Mayor of London

'Practical, accessible and very useful. This is a how-to manual for public speaking that's a godsend to the fearful-speaking newbie, as well as an excellent checklist for the pro.'

David Pearl, Founder, Pearl Group

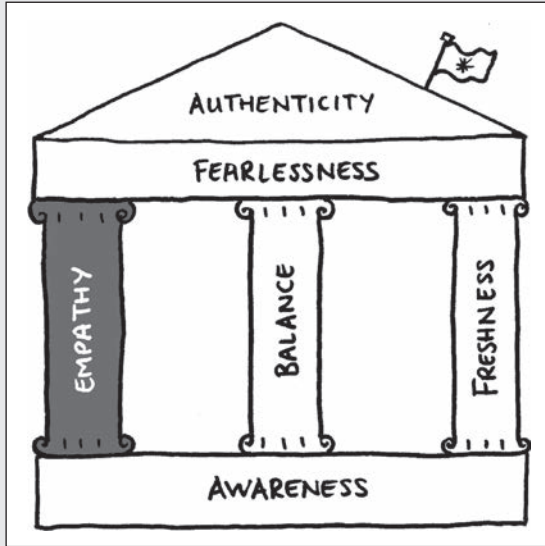
'Sarah brings a passionate, savvy and human approach to public speaking. Whether you're daunted by who is in the audience or just want to find ways to make your stories more engaging, this book is packed full of practical tips and wise insights to give your speeches and presentations the wow factor.'

Graham Allcott, author of *How to be a Productivity Ninja*

'A must-read for every TEDx speaker preparing for their inspiring talk. Practical, insightful and easy to read, with valuable tips on how to become a confident and authentic public speaker. Simply brilliant!'

Lynn Tabbara, Curator, TEDxCoventGardenWomen

Empathy

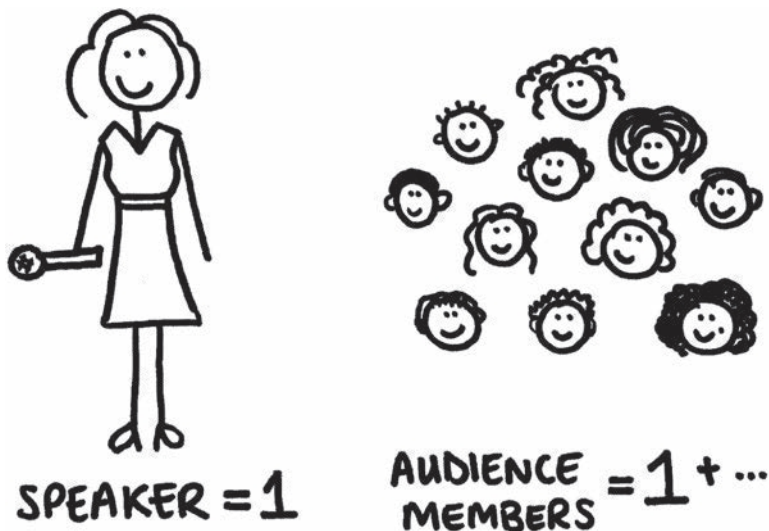


In Part 2:

- How to completely switch your mindset away from self-obsession and towards serving your audience.
- The power of preparing with your audience in mind and how to do it successfully.
- How to give your audience what they need (rather than only what they want).
- Tips for managing difficult audience members.
- How to frame a talk so that everyone wants to listen.

A basic equation, if you will. Next time you're engaged in a piece of public speaking, count the number of people on stage speaking at any one time. Then count the number of people in the audience.

Which is the greater number? Assuming you're not having a real public speaking nightmare, I'd imagine the audience number is greater, right? So who does it make more sense to focus on, yourself, the speaker, or the x number of people in the audience?



Empathy means prioritising your audience and putting them at the heart of your talk. It is something that speakers forget consistently. Why? Because we so easily get stuck in the egocentric speaker tendency I mentioned in Chapter 2. We're being looked at, so we imagine we're being scrutinised. We start worrying about our content (what do I want to say?), our personality (am I good enough?), even our clothing (do I look professional enough?). And we completely forget about our audience.

Speakers who drop their ego and step into the mindset of the servant speaker will engage the audience and connect them deeply to the topic. They answer the audience's concerns and questions just as if they were mind readers. They have the audience buzzing with a feeling of 'Yes! That's me!' combined with the resonance of 'Wow! This is really helpful!'

The egocentric speaker

- Constantly thinks of the speech in terms of 'me' or 'I'. Even when you think you're over it and ask yourself to focus on the audience, you still have to take care. The egocentric speaker may think, 'Yes, let's focus on the audience . . . I wonder what they think about ME.' This is still egocentric!
- Can be more nervous or self-obsessive because they see themselves as under attack from the audience.
- Misses clues about how the audience are feeling.
- Ends up being *less* impressive because the audience's needs aren't considered.

The servant speaker

- Knows and understands the needs of their audience.
- Understands how the audience feels about the topic – and meets them there.
- Manages hopes, needs and expectations so that different types of audience members are satisfied.
- Lets personal judgement of the audience slide and instead thinks, 'How can I help these people?'

With no empathy, a speaker ends up with an audience who are against them. Like Edgar Mumble's audience, this could mean silence and negative feedback. Or a lack of empathy could lead to awkward questions, rude comments and even people walking out of the room.

How do you know you have empathy?

As you start to develop empathy with your audience you'll notice positive effects, such as:

- audience members listening more intently and contributing in ways that seem to further your aims
- indications that the audience relate to your message, such as:
 - shining eyes
 - nodding
 - strong eye contact

- laughter with your humour
- enthusiastic participation.
- comments in feedback forms like ‘that was spot on’, ‘just what I wanted’ and ‘it answered all my questions’
- your own speaking experience feeling easier or more pleasant.

Research gives two reasons why empathy is so important. Social psychologists describe the feeling of closeness between an information giver (the speaker) and receiver (the audience) as ‘immediacy’.¹² If an audience feels more immediacy towards the speaker, they will learn more effectively. Second, as developments in neuroscience are showing, there is a positive link between the emotional state of your audience and the amount they learn.¹³ In other words, happy audience members literally store and retain more information.

Powerful empathy and breaking rapport

However, a word of caution is needed. It’s possible to be so ‘matey’ or informal that you are empathising with your audience at the expense of your material, for instance understanding their difficulties so much that you don’t tell them the true and powerful solution.

There’s a Tibetan parable about a little boy who is stuck down a well. His mother hears his cries and finds him cold and alone all the way down at the bottom. And she is so saddened by her lonely little boy that she jumps down the well to be with him.

Of course, the mother should run and get a rope to pull the boy out of the well. It’s obvious. Yet sometimes we ‘jump down the well’ to be with our audience as we want to be liked by them. Your purpose as an inspiring speaker is not to be liked, it is to create change. Sometimes change can feel difficult, or unpopular. True empathy is to wish to benefit your audience when you speak and to do whatever is necessary to get there. We’ll return to this idea in Part 5.

How do you develop empathy?

Developing empathy is a process of looking at public speaking in a different way. The shift from egocentric to servant speaking may be natural for you, or it may take some practice. Once you’ve learned this shift in mindset, it will remain strong. You will begin to know

instinctively how to build empathy with an audience and your public speaking will benefit dramatically as a result.

This part focuses on the following tools to build empathy:

1. Before you speak:
 - empathetic preparation
 - setting up your environment.
2. During and after your talk:
 - setting agreements with your audience
 - different audience types and what to do with them
 - breaking rapport for impact
 - holding empathy beyond your performance.

