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Malcolm Kushner

Professional speaker

Rob Yeung

*Presenter of the BBC's
How to Get Your Dream Job*

A Reference for the Rest of Us!™  **UK Edition**



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***Public Speaking &
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Dummies®***

**by Malcolm Kushner
and Rob Yeung**



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About the Authors

Malcolm Kushner, 'America's Favourite Humour Consultant', is an internationally acclaimed expert on humour and communication and a professional speaker. Since 1982, he has trained thousands of managers, executives, and professionals how to gain a competitive edge with humour. His clients include IBM, Hewlett-Packard, AT&T, Chevron, Aetna, Motorola, and Bank of America.

A popular speaker, his *Leading With Laughter* presentation features rare video clips of US presidents using humour intentionally and successfully. He has performed the speech at many corporate and association meetings, as well as at the Smithsonian Institute.

A Phi Beta Kappa graduate of the University of Buffalo, Kushner holds a BA in Speech-Communication. His MA in Speech-Communication is from the University of Southern California, where he taught freshman speech. He also has a JD from the University of California Hastings College of the Law. Prior to becoming a humour consultant, he practiced law with a major San Francisco law firm.

Kushner is the author of *The Light Touch: How to Use Humor for Business Success* and *Vintage Humor for Wine Lovers*. He is also a co-creator of the humour exhibit at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library.

Frequently interviewed by the media, Kushner has been profiled in *Time*, *USA Today*, *The New York Times*, and numerous other publications. His television and radio appearances include CNN, National Public Radio, CNBC, *Voice of America*, and *The Larry King Show*. His annual 'Cost of Laughing Index' has been featured on *The Tonight Show* and the front page of *The Wall Street Journal*.

Need a great speaker for your next meeting or event? Contact Malcolm at P.O. Box 7509, Santa Cruz, CA 95061, call 001-831- 425-4839, or e-mail him at mk@kushnergroupp.com. Visit his Web site at www.kushnergroupp.com.

Dr Rob Yeung is a director at business psychology consultancy Talentspace. He is often asked to coach teams and individuals on presentation skills - in particular on developing their presence and charisma when presenting. He travels extensively around the world, running workshops, participating in panel discussions, and giving presentations to audiences of up to many hundreds of people at a time.

He has written for *Guardian*, *Daily Telegraph*, and *Financial Times* and contributed to publications ranging from *Men's Health* and *New Woman* to *Accountancy* and *Sunday Times*. He has published twelve other books on career and management topics including, in 2006, *The Rules of Office Politics* and *The Rules of EQ* (Cyan/Marshall Cavendish) and *Answering Tough Interview Questions For Dummies* (Wiley).

He is often seen on television including CNN and Channel 4's *Big Brother's Little Brother*. He is also the presenter of the highly acclaimed BBC television series

How to Get Your Dream Job. A chartered psychologist of the British Psychological Society with a Ph.D. in psychology from the University of London, he has also lectured at a number of business schools and universities.

Need one of the UK's leading psychologists to work with you, your team or your organisation? Drop Dr Rob an email at rob@talentspace.co.uk or visit www.talentspace.co.uk.

Malcolm's Dedication

This book is dedicated to my parents - Pauline, Hank, and Helen. Thank you for all of your love and support.

Rob's Dedication

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Contents

Title

Introduction

Why You Need This Book

About This Book

Conventions Used in This Book

Foolish Assumptions

How This Book Is Organised

Icons Used in This Book

Where Do I Go from Here?

Part I : Getting Started

Chapter 1: Giving a Presentation or Speech

Finding Out What You Need to Know

Developing Your Presentation

Polishing It Off

Delivering a Presentation

Preparing for Special Speaking Situations

The Part of Tens

Chapter 2: Getting Ready to Present

Making Important Preparations

Analysing Your Audience

Relating to Your Audience

Chapter 3: Making the Most of Research

[Gathering Sources](#)

[Getting Someone Else to Do Your Research - For Free](#)

[Researching on the Web](#)

[Chapter 4: Organising Your Presentation](#)

[Selecting Material to Include](#)

[Following Patterns of Organisation](#)

[Creating Your Outline](#)

[Timing](#)

[Organising Your Presentation Effectively](#)

[Part II : Preparing Your Presentation or Speech](#)

[Chapter 5: Building the Content of Your Presentation](#)

[Making Appeals to Your Audience](#)

[Finding Solid Forms of Support](#)

[Chapter 6: Getting Off on the Right Foot](#)

[Discovering What the Introduction Must Do](#)

[Creating the Perfect Introduction](#)

[Getting Started in Fifteen Fabulous Ways](#)

[Chapter 7: Finishing on a High Note](#)

[Making Your Conclusion Work](#)

[Creating the Perfect Conclusion](#)

[Wrapping It Up in Style](#)

[Part III : Making Your Presentation or Speech Sparkle](#)

[Chapter 8: Making Sense of Your Presentation](#)

[Editing Your Presentation - Pain-free](#)

[Making Transitions](#)

[Chapter 9: Getting the Words Right](#)

[Honing Your Tone and Style](#)

[Creating Catch Phrases](#)

[Spicing Up Your Speech with Classic Rhetorical Devices](#)

[Chapter 10: Developing Great Visual Aids](#)

[Using Charts and Graphs](#)

[Making Use of PowerPoint and Overheads](#)

[Flipping for Flipcharts](#)

[Creating Great Video \(and Audio\)](#)

[Making an Impact with Multimedia](#)

[Wowing Your Audience with Simple Multimedia Techniques](#)

[Being Handy with Handouts](#)

[Part IV : Delivering Your Presentation or Speech](#)

[Chapter 11: Overcoming Nerves](#)

[Changing Your Perceptions](#)

[Transforming Terror to Terrific](#)

[Preventing and Handling Nervousness](#)

[Chapter 12: Understanding Body Language](#)

[Understanding Body Language](#)

[Making Eye Contact Count](#)

[Dressing to Impress](#)

[Mastering Physical Positioning and Movement](#)

[Paralanguage: What Your Voice Says about You](#)

[Chapter 13: Handling Questions](#)

[Discovering the Basics](#)

[Coming Up with a Perfect Answer](#)

[Using Question-Handling Techniques](#)

[Dealing with Common Types of Questions](#)

[Responding to Special Situations](#)

[Handling Hostile Questions](#)

[Chapter 14: Handling the Audience](#)

[Reading an Audience's Reaction](#)

[Putting the Audience at Ease](#)

[Handling a Tough Audience](#)

[Handling a Nonresponsive Audience](#)

[Part V : Common Speaking Situations](#)

[Chapter 15: Giving Impromptu Talks and Introducing Other Speakers](#)

[Saying a Few Words: Giving Impromptu Talks](#)

[Introducing Other Presenters](#)

[Chapter 16: Handling Panels and Roundtables](#)

[Being on a Panel](#)

[Participating in a Roundtable](#)

[Chapter 17: Speaking Internationally](#)

[Discovering the Culture of Your Audience](#)

[Crafting Your Message](#)

[Adapting Your Delivery](#)

[Part VI : The Part of Tens](#)

[Chapter 18: Ten Types of Humour That Anyone Can Use](#)

[Using Personal Anecdotes](#)

[Analogies](#)

[Quotes](#)

[Cartoons](#)

[Definitions](#)

[Abbreviations and Acronyms](#)

[Signs](#)

[Laws](#)

[Greeting Cards](#)

[Bumper Stickers](#)

[Chapter 19: Ten Things to Check Before You Give a Presentation](#)

[Sound System](#)

[Podium](#)

[Audiovisual Equipment](#)

[Lighting](#)

[Human Equipment](#)

[Electricity and Water](#)

[Toilets](#)

[Seating Arrangements](#)

[Potential Distractions](#)

[How to Get There](#)

[Chapter 20: Ten Ways to Overcome the Fear Factor](#)

[Getting It in Perspective](#)

[Breathing Right](#)

[Handling Bodily Symptoms of Stress](#)

[Challenging Negative Thoughts](#)

[Visualising Success](#)

[Faking It Until You Can Make It](#)

[Practising, Practising, Practising](#)

[Becoming Familiar with the Environment](#)

[Diverting the Audience's Attention](#)

[Using Whatever Works for You](#)

[: Further Reading](#)

Introduction

Welcome to *Public Speaking & Presentations For Dummies*, a book that we intend to help you have audiences eating out of the palms of your hands. We show you how to use basic speaking skills to influence your boss, colleagues, customers, relatives, loved ones, butcher, baker, candlestick maker, and anyone else who matters in your life.

This book provides all the tools you need to master giving presentations and speaking in public. And that doesn't mean just formal presentations. Some of the most important presentations you ever give may not involve a microphone or a podium, like an impromptu talk about your strategy to some customers; an answer that defuses a hostile question at a business meeting; an impassioned plea to a parking attendant not to issue the ticket. Success or failure in all of these situations, as well as in formal speeches, depends on how you present yourself.

This book covers the full range of skills needed for presenting and public speaking. You can read everything from how to develop and deliver a good presentation to how to think on your feet. An old philosopher once said, 'Every time you open your mouth, your mind is on parade.' This book ensures that your parade looks sharp, sounds smart, and dazzles your audience.

Why You Need This Book

Whether you're dealing with one person or one thousand, the ability to transmit ideas in a coherent and compelling fashion is one of the most important skills you can ever develop. Communicating ideas is a basic survival skill, and it always has been. From the earliest days when we learned to speak as a species and a caveman yelled 'Fire!', people have made speeches to motivate, persuade, and influence each other.

Want to get a good job? Want to get promoted? Want to command the respect of your peers? Want to get a date? The key to success is what you say. To get what you want in life, you have to present yourself forcefully, credibly, and convincingly. Yes, you can speak softly and carry a big stick, but the real winner is the person who talks you out of the stick.

In the information age, public speaking skills are more important than ever before. We live in a society of sound bites. Communication is the currency of the realm. In survey after survey, presentation skills are cited as a key factor in hiring and promotion decisions. The days when you could rise to the top just by being good at your job are over. Boards of directors, executive committees, and customers want more. You have to know how to get your message across.

Now let's admit it. Many people get nervous about giving speeches, particularly in a formal setting. Our goal in

writing this book is to rid you of those fears forever. If you simply apply the techniques described in *Public Speaking & Presentations For Dummies*, you'll be able to give a talk more competently than many Oscar-winning performers. We're not saying you'll be the next Prime Minister, but you will see how to deliver a speech in an organised and engaging manner.

And don't fall for the big myth that you have to be 'a born speaker'. Nothing could be further from the truth. Some of the greatest orators in history were anything but 'naturals'. Demosthenes - the famous speaker of ancient Greece - was a shy, stammering introvert when he decided to become a successful orator. He taught himself to speak by rehearsing with rocks in his mouth. If all you have in your mouth is your foot, then you're way ahead of the game.

If you already have the gift of the gab, you can still pick up many tips and tricks from *Public Speaking & Presentations For Dummies*. For example, you wouldn't believe how often experienced speakers completely undermine their entire speech with poorly designed slides and overheads. If you read nothing more than the chapter on how to correct this common mistake (Chapter 10, by the way), this book is well worth your investment.

Let's talk straight. Lots of books exist about public speaking, and they're written by people who have various credentials. But between the two of us authors, we've taught at universities across the UK and the

University of Southern California, worked internationally, ghost-written speeches for leading business executives, travelled the lecture circuit as keynote speakers at major corporate and association meetings, appeared on television in the UK and the US.

We've done all that stuff and more, and that experience is what makes this book unique. It contains a treasure trove of nuts-and-bolts information based on real-life experience. You see what really works and what doesn't. Because if there are mistakes to be made, we've already made them - and now you don't have to repeat them.

About This Book

If you want to improve the full range of your public speaking skills, then read the entire book. You will become an expert communicator.

Too busy to read a whole book? Don't worry. *Public Speaking & Presentations For Dummies* is designed with your time constraints in mind. The book is divided into easy-to-read segments that cover very specific topics. Choose an area of interest, such as dealing with hecklers, and turn directly to it.

Want to know about speaking in different cultures? Well, Chapter 17 is the one for you. If you want more than a dozen different ways to kick off your presentation, see Chapter 6.

Conventions Used in This Book

So you can navigate through this book better, we use the following conventions:

- ✓ *Italic* is used for emphasis and to highlight new words or terms that are defined.
- ✓ **Boldfaced** text is used to indicate keywords in bulleted lists.
- ✓ Monofont is used for Web addresses.
- ✓ Sidebars, which are shaded grey boxes with text enclosed in them, consist of information that is interesting to know but not necessarily critical to your understanding of the chapter or section's topic.

Foolish Assumptions

While writing this book, we've made some assumptions about you and your knowledge of public speaking:

- ✓ You may be fretting about your next speaking engagement because you don't understand how to engage the audience.
- ✓ You may know nothing about giving presentations or public speaking but would like to be prepared in case you're ever asked to speak - impromptu or otherwise.

- ✓ You may know quite a bit about public speaking and have a lot of experience, but want to polish your speech development and delivery skills.
- ✓ You may know how to give a formal speech but would like to improve your speaking skills in special situations – question-and-answer sessions, panels, roundtables, or debates.
- ✓ You may know quite a lot about presenting and public speaking but you want to learn some advanced techniques like using humour successfully or adapting your style for different audiences.
- ✓ You may know that no reason exists to fear public speaking, but you fear it anyway and you want to know how to overcome your anxiety.

How This Book Is Organised

Public Speaking & Presentations For Dummies has six major parts, each of which is divided into chapters covering specific topics. The chapters are self-contained units of brilliant insight, so you don't have to plough through them in sequence. You can read chapters separately or together in any order you wish. Don't worry about missing any gems of wisdom. The book is thoroughly cross-referenced and guides you to related items of information.

Each part covers a major area of presenting and public speaking skills. The following is a brief tour of what you can find.

Part I: Getting Started

You've been asked to give a presentation, now what? How do you decide what to talk about? What if you've been given a topic you don't like? Can you change it? How do you find out detailed information about your audience? Where can you get interesting material for your talk? These are some of the questions that we address in this section. Discover how to get your presentation research off to a fast, productive start.

Part II: Preparing Your Presentation or Speech

In today's fast-paced, competitive environment, fortunes can rise or fall on the basis of a single presentation. So your talk had better be good – informative, to the point, attention grabbing, and memorable. And your speech doesn't get that way by luck or accident. Careful preparation – from topic selection to outline structure to choice of material to writing the actual speech – is the key. In this section, we show you how to develop a speech that commands an audience's attention, influences their thinking, and achieves your goals.