

TED TALKS

The Official TED Guide to Public Speaking

The Talking Points

- **There's no formula for a great talk.** Public speaking is a skill to build, not acquire. There are no step-by-step instructions. However, this book will give you the tools you need to go about creating your own successful talk.
- **A speaker's job is to give, not to take.** Sales pitches and organizational boasts make for terrible talks. So is it a gift or a grab? What is it that you are gifting to your listeners with your talk?
- **Slash back your topics to a single big idea and connect every point to that theme.** Don't let yourself or your talk get distracted. Any good speech has a theme or a major point that runs through its entirety. Don't be afraid to cut things you may like or think are great stories if it doesn't help really promote what you want your gift to the audience to be. Focus on what you're talking about.
- **Get personal.** People crave a sense of connection to others, whether it's their friends, families, co-workers, or a speaker they are listening to. Connection can come from unexpected places, like fear, humor and vulnerability. Don't be afraid to show how you too are vulnerable and don't let your fears hold you back. Make sure to park your ego. It's a connection killer.
- **Knowledge can't be pushed into a brain, it has to be pulled in.** You can't force people to learn or listen by shoving your point down their throat. Build your idea step by step using concepts the audience is already familiar with. How can you intrigue, entice and engage your listeners to **want** to hear what you have to say?
- **Start strong, end stronger.** Once you've gotten your audience hooked with a great opening and kept them engaged with your through line, don't let the ending fizzle. Make sure whatever revelations you've given them sticks.
- **Everyone can learn to give an effective talk.** What matters is only that you have something worth sharing, and that you share it in a way that is authentically you.