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— *Jim Britt's* —

CRACKING THE RICH CODE

**21 Top Thought Leaders Share Strategies for
Living a Rich, Fulfilling Life**

"Success is predictable if you know what determines it. This book offers some valuable entrepreneurial insights that will strengthen your life, your business and your effectiveness overall."

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David Goldberg
Featured Co-Author



VOLUME 15



FOREWORD BY BRIAN TRACY



Speaking of Success...

(Excerpt from “Cracking the Rich Code”: Chapter 2)

With just a *little* adjustment to your speaking style, you can achieve a *lot* more success.

And it's easy to do!

Just keep this one thing in mind:

The *way* you say words influences people *5 times more* than the actual words you say.

So if you want more things to go your way, simply:

Focus more on the *way* you speak.

And when things aren't going as planned? Well then that's a wakeup call, because:

When someone says “no” to you, it's probably because of the *way* you spoke, rather than which words you said.

The key? Adjust the way you say words so your message lands clearly, grabs your audience's attention, and influences their response—in a fraction of a second. This article shows you how to do this in everyday life, leading to greater success.

Let's begin by addressing the issue with speaking: Most of us were never taught how to do it effectively. And therefore we overlook it.

Of course, public speaking is most people's # 1 fear! Most of us were never trained how to do it!

Think about it...

- Young kids: ever watch one give a school presentation? They spend lots of time studying the subject matter, writing and re-writing their report, and creating a visual presentation. They work long and hard. But their presentation is still...uh, not so good. Because they weren't taught how to speak and read a script to a group of people.
- Young adults: ever listen to them interview for an internship or a first job? Ouch! Incomplete sentences, nerves, less than confident statements, "umms" and "ya knows", hesitations,... All very easily preventable, if they had learned how to speak effectively.
- Adults: we are equally as guilty. Whether we're leading a work presentation, persuading a customer on the salesfloor, giving a toast at a wedding, being interviewed on a podcast, asking the boss for a raise, negotiating a price with a vendor, pitching your company to an investor, giving a keynote address at an annual meeting,...

We spend significant time considering (1) what words in our message will convey the right meaning, (2) what colors in our presentation will convey the right image, and even (3) what clothing to wear that will communicate the right vibe!

Yet despite all our prep, when speaking, we still usually speak in circles, get tongue-tied, use filler-words (like "umm" and "ya' know"), sound uncomfortable, and appear nervous. And afterward if we see a recording of our speech, we say, "Crap! I sound terrible!!!"

Now there are public speaking coaches. Lots of them. However by in large, most don't teach. Rather they give vague goals to strive for – like "Sound engaging." or "Don't go too fast." or "Try not to sound nervous." (Right, like that'll work.)

I believe learning how to adjust the way you say words – for different audiences, in various settings – is key to achieving greater success in life.

For 36 years, I've studied how audiences react to vocal nuances and word choices. And I've developed a library of easy-to-implement, speaking-adjustments that make it easy for our audiences to grasp our message and intent.

Some examples:

Suppose you want to get rid of nerves when giving a presentation.

Well you can't. Well usually not ... nerves typically just don't go away. And when all those coaches tell you, "Make sure you sound confident," they're not really helping you. So here are some easy ways for people to *hide* their nerves – it takes just 2 simple speaking adjustments. Together, these speaking adjustments are easy-to-do, work extremely well, and leave your listeners trusting you, feeling comfortable with you, and feeling confidence in you.

- **TIP 1:** Slow down the first word of every sentence. Simple. When you do this, you automatically lower your pitch. And speaking in a lower pitch makes you sound more confident, since nervous people typically raise their pitch when speaking. Slowing down the first word also slows you down on the entire sentence. And speaking slower also makes you sound confident, since nervous people typically speak too quickly.
- **TIP 2:** Pause twice as long as you usually would between sentences. Simple again. When you do this, you always have time to catch your breath, regroup your thoughts, and organize what you want to say next. You also avoid getting tongue-tied, speaking in circles, and losing your train of thought. When all those good things happen, you sound comfortable, calm, and in-control. Plus the longer spaces between sentences give your listeners ample time to absorb what you say and not feel that you're rushing them through your material.

Or what if you sound clunky when reading a script?

Clunky, wonky, whatever you call it, you can totally tell when someone is reading from a script. They sound unnatural. It's a real turn-off. Listeners engage with and enjoy natural sounding speech. And natural sounding speech comes from spontaneity, smooth connections of words, and clearly defined context. To do this:

- **TIP 1:** Read laterally. That is, have your eyes move a few words ahead of the word you're reading out loud. Then you'll always know what's coming up next. This will cause you to sound natural and spontaneous, and as if you're speaking with context. Plus you'll make far fewer stumbles. Nice!
- **TIP 2:** Spontaneously adlib colloquialisms at most punctuation marks – or any time you feel yourself sounding stiff. This simple technique immediately converts a stale read into a wonderful, naturally emoted one that sounds authentic with appropriate emotions. This technique works anytime the additional words are okay to include in your speaking.
- **TIP 3:** Disregard most punctuation marks. And instead connect words as you would when speaking naturally. This will completely transform a choppy, stilted reading into a natural flow. It will ensure you convert written—

English into spoken English. Words in spoken English glide from one word into the next, however when untrained people read, they tend to be very choppy like this. Connecting your words is one of the best ways to sound authentic, comfortable, and spontaneous when reading, ensuring that your listeners will enjoy listening to you and will trust you.

Sometimes you have a tightly timed presentation.

A key factor is to ensure that your listeners won't feel that you're rushing them through your material; if they feel rushed, you're liable to lose them. Hey, no worries:

- **TIP 1:** Maintain a one-to-one *volume* (that is, as if you're speaking to one person who is right near you). When you do this, your voice will appear less rushed to your listeners, since people speak louder when rushed. By implementing this speaking adjustment, you'll be able to get through more material in less time without sounding as fast.
- **TIP 2:** Maintain a one-to-one *pitch range* (that is, as if you're speaking to one person who is right near you). Likewise, when you maintain a natural pitch range, your voice will appear calmer to your listeners. And then they won't notice how quickly you're speaking.
- **TIP 3:** Use lots of body language. Interestingly, being more animated will help you flow more easily through your words and eliminate breaks between them. It will also add greater emotion to your voice that will 'cover-up' your rushed voice with interest, animation, and enthusiasm. These vocal techniques are terrific when you need to speak quickly, as they keep your listeners from feeling that they're being rushed through your material.

And sometimes you need to sound confident, on top of things, and even extra smart.

Have an important meeting, like an investor pitch? Being interviewed on a company podcast? Interviewing someone important ... or are they interviewing you? When it's imperative to sound super *on top of your stuff*, try this:

- **TIP 1:** Speak declaratively. This easy-to-do speaking technique causes you to sound significantly more confident and in-control. To do it, simply have the ends of your sentences resolve with a downward inflection, rather than an upward inflection that sounds like a question? Like this? If you know what I mean? Instead, you want a downward inflection that sounds factual. Like this.
- **TIP 2:** Leave ample time for your listeners to absorb what you say. That is, take long breaks between sentences. Give your listener time to 'take it in' and consider what you've said. Even time for them to write/type notes if appropriate.
- **TIP 3:** Once again, be sure to stay in your natural pitch range.

When you want to move your listeners, add lots of emotion into your vocal delivery.

Emotion is often the most influential attribute in spoken language. When used correctly, emotion will completely engage your listeners, prompt them to take your side in a debate, be empathetic to your cause, purchase your product or service, and even vote for you ... even if your message goes against their moral judgement! Yes emotion in your voice is that influential!

- **TIP 1:** Add a few emotional-based words to the beginning of your speech, and use them to warmup on. These are called “lead-ins,” “pre-sentencing,” and “pre-talking” (all three terms are used interchangeably). Simply use a lead-in that suits the emotion you want to convey. For example, if you’re presenting company awards at a banquet, and your speech begins with, “I’m here to present awards to our most valuable employees.”, then add this lead-in to the beginning: “Wow this is so exciting! I’m here to present...” Adding this lead-in will ensure you begin with the right tone and emotion. NOTE that if your speech is live, and you don’t want your listeners to hear it, you’ll need to *think* the lead-in. If you are recording your voice, you can record your lead-ins and then delete them later if you want.
- **TIP 2:** Physically smile while speaking. Smiling causes you to sound genuine, likeable, charismatic – even confident. All very good traits while speaking. Of course, hold off smiling when the emotion you want to convey would not have smile in natural conversation.

When you want to ‘win over’ your listeners, incorporate your genuine personality.

Personality – *your* personality, that is – causes your listeners to connect with you, like you, and want to listen to you! However, most speakers have concerns about their voice, such as: “I speak too fast” or “My accent is too strong” or “I slur sometimes” or “I stumble when I’m nervous” or... And as a result, the speaker’s personality is completely lost and over-ridden by their concerns. So you could:

- **TIP 1:** Trust your voice. Be yourself. Have fun. Let your personality shine through.
- **TIP 2:** Recognize that when you speak is not the time to worry about your vocal concerns. Rather when you speak is the time to trust your voice. Doing so will convert a boring speech in which your listeners will not feel connected to you, to an enjoyable speech that they will feel connected to you!
- **TIP 3:** Let it go. Right before speaking, say to yourself, “Eh what the heck, I’ll just enjoy what I’m about to do and not worry.”
- **TIP 4:** Don’t be concerned or stressed about mistakes. When you’re in the midst of your speaking or recording gig. Don’t worry that people think you stink. Instead when you stumble, smile and say, “Ah funny to get—

tongue-tied like that, anyway what I was saying is...” Doing so will show you’re human and confident... and you’ll be a speaker who audiences admire and listen to. Interestingly when speakers err and smile their way through, listeners better connect with them because they realize that the speaker is a regular person.

- **TIP 5: Use “lead-ins”.** If speaking colloquially is okay, then adlib them. For example, if your speech is, “Welcome to our company’s presentation on...” Smile and say, “Hi guys and gals, and welcome to...”

When it’s time to pep up your listeners, smile and be enthusiastic.

Smile and enthusiasm go hand-in-hand. When you add these traits into your speaking voice, you quickly increase listener interest and engagement.

- **TIP 1: Speak with variety.** That is, vary your pacing, spacing, emotional changes, and inflections. Be big on one word, then small on the next one. Speed up sometimes, slow down other times. Let your emotions change as they would naturally.
- **TIP 2: Raise the pitch on the last word of most sentences.** This is what we do when we speak enthusiastically in natural conversation! (Just like the exclamation point did at the end of the previous sentence!) Just listen to most people speaking naturally – you’ll hear it. However, when delivering a speech or recording our voice, our tendency is to lower our pitch at the end of each phrase. This sounds dreadfully repetitive and boring.

The above examples show that in any situation, you can greatly increase your chance of success by simply adjusting your speaking style. **Which leads to this irony...**

Before giving a speech, most people have friends and colleagues review their *written* speech. But they don’t have them review their *spoken* speech, even though the latter is 5 X more important.

Sure you may rehearse a script out loud. However unless you’ve had proper training, you won’t know precisely what to listen for and how to make your speaking style more effective. Therefore rehearsing will only reinforce bad habits. And as a result, you won’t sound optimal.

Let’s go back a bit...

Research shows that human voice is *the most* direct connection to your listeners. (By the way, you can define “listener” as anyone who’s listening to you; from investors if you’re an entrepreneur pitching a startup business, to voters if you’re a—

politician campaigning, to students if you're a teacher, to listeners if you're a podcaster, to friends and family if you're giving a toast at a wedding.)

Your voice is *even more* influential than your listeners' own moral judgement!

So why aren't people focusing *more* on *how* they speak?

I don't know for sure.

Here are some examples...

- I've spoken with the heads of numerous public speaking & training organizations over the years. I've seen their courses. They all give goals. But they don't give the actionable techniques that people need on how to achieve those goals. The president of one those organizations once saw me presenting to a group of speakers. Afterwards he called me and said, "David, we have a whole division that teaches public speaking. But after seeing what you teach, I realize that we actually don't teach – we only tell people how they should sound. You show people how to do it."
- I've researched podcast schools because they surely must teach *how to speak*. But they don't. (Really, really odd.) They teach how to get sponsors, how to create sponsorships ads, how to market your podcast, how to choose a microphone (even though not a single podcast school mentioned the most important factor in this selection process), and so on. But not one podcast teaches how to speak! And nothing about how to sound good when recording your voice!! The closest thing I found was on the website of one of the larger podcast schools – they had one sentence that mentioned speaking; it said, "When you read, make sure you're clear." What??? The school may think that their advice is educational. However I believe it's not ... it's a goal. I teach straightforward speaking-adjustments that make it easy to sound clearer.
- For numerous political campaigns, I have donated my services; not by sending money, and not by cold calling. Instead I do so by prepping candidates to speak more effectively at campaign rallies, media interviews, keynote addresses, podcasts, fundraising events, presentations, and so on. And when folks who head campaign committees saw what I did, they began setting up workshops for me in which I train large groups of politicians. The kicker: they realized that the candidates had never been taught *how* to speak effectively. I provide easy, simple techniques that make it far easier to win debates, far easier to influence voters to vote for them, and far easier to incentivize voters to donate to campaigns. Politicians have those 'ah-ha' moments once I begin introducing them to my speaking techniques.

It's clear that learning how to speak effectively is not usually taught. And it's clear that it should be.

So next time you'll speak to an audience:

Put 5 X more focus on the way you say words, rather than what words you say.

As for me?

My typical day includes speaking-coaching a variety of people with important things to say for various reasons. I regularly voice-direct voice actors who record television commercial. I voice-direct narrators who record film soundtracks. I regularly train politicians to influence and win over voters. I help authors narrate their audiobooks. I help C-level executives connect with their employees and persuade their customers by presenting better than ever. I help podcasters increase their listener engagement. I help presenters better connect with their audiences. And, very fun, sometimes I even help kids prep for college internship interviews and first job interviews.

And every day, when people who I train say, "Wow David, I can't believe that no one ever taught me this before! Thank you!", I'm even more excited to share techniques that make spoken language – the very core of communication – the most influential part of our speech – the most direct connection to our audience – and perhaps the number one key factor to our success, more effective.