

The key to being an effective speaker isn't memorising or rehearsing your piece to perfection...

It's having a good story. I noticed that everyone joined the Speakers Club doing their A1 assignment (making a start) with so much ease as compared to other assignments, one of the reasons being: most new members have their own stories.

Humans are addicted to stories. Stories are a great way to communicate a point. We all relate to being read stories when a child, reading them ourselves, and, if you have children, grandchildren, and younger siblings – reading stories to them. A well-crafted, engaging story, in turn, also helps to improve those fundamentals of vocal variety, engaging eye-contact and even the quality, subtlety and expanse of your gestures. From a listener's point of view, a well-crafted story is always much more memorable and more engaging than dry facts and data.

No one is born with the innate ability to be a great public speaker. It is something that we learn over time. Maybe 1% of people may have a natural knack to learn how to speak publicly. We can all be very jealous of those people. Believe you me, everybody

tells stories - that's how we as human-beings communicate. You have stories within yourself. It is just a conversation with the other person about a problem, where you work, how you felt, how it is resolved. That's all it is and you do this all the time over the phone, in the hallway, and when we stand up and give a formal speech, we throw away the story. Please don't do it. Stories help us connect to solutions and form bonds with others who have navigated similar journeys.

As I write this article, I refer to Ken Robinson's talk (https://www.ted.com/talks/ken_robinson_says_schools_kill_creativity), the most-viewed TED talk in history. Not surprisingly, it is rich with lessons for speakers. Story is the most digestible, understood, and easy to retell communication medium in the world. And a really juicy story will keep the audience on the edge of their seats... quite literally.

Dr. Ramana Sundara
Vice-President, Eastern District

NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2018 YORK

The National Conference to be held in York is fast approaching. There is now a steady flow of bookings, and if you haven't already done so, you are urged to add your name to the list. It will be a fine opportunity to meet old friends, make new ones, and enjoy informative and amusing speeches.

Much of the promotion has already been done, so here are a few points to consider when preparing for your visit:

- car parking is limited. York is extremely well connected by train, and the station is only 5 minutes walk from the hotel, so please consider this option

- there is a 20% discount for wine when ordered at least 2 weeks in advance. The form is printed below, and have been emailed to those who have booked.
- please submit delegated vote forms by 21st April.

There is an energetic and committed team behind the organisation of the event who will do their utmost to ensure that everyone has an enjoyable conference. See you on 27th April!

Martin Bishop
(Conference Convenor)