



**An excerpt from
The Truth About Public Speaking: The Three Keys to Great Presentations
by Ed Barks**

YOU SWEAT WHEN YOU ARE ASKED TO SPEAK IN PUBLIC. What's the big deal if your heart starts racing, your mouth goes dry, and your voice starts quivering?

After all, who cares about advancing your career, generating more sales for your business, carrying the day for your public policy issues, or earning esteem in the eyes of your peers?

Here is the truth about public speaking: If you aspire to anything beyond run-of-the-mill in either your professional or personal life, you need solid presentation skills.

A nervous CEO inspires little confidence on Wall Street. A fidgety business owner fails to win customers on Main Street. An edgy project manager proves unable to get the ball rolling. An ill-at-ease government official scores no points for her prime initiatives.

Yet public speaking involves much more than conquering a case of the jitters. Bookstore shelves groan under the weight of volumes that dwell on nerves. I want to make the positive case regarding the benefits of delivering presentations...

It is how you perform in front of the room that counts. Note that I say it is what you do, not only what you say. Presentation skills—including your nonverbal abilities—are critical in opening up your audience to your message...

Each chapter begins with its own set of Three Keys—specific objectives that tell you what you can expect to learn.

What you read on these pages will give you the same truth my clients gain when I lead them through a public speaking workshop. In teaching presentation skills to corporate, association, government, and non-profit leaders over the years, I have found the Three Keys to Great Presentations a remarkable—and fun—learning tool.

The ideas incorporated here are for you if you can see your reflection in these profiles:

- A highly technical mind that struggles to translate things into plain English
- A nervous individual who begins to quake at the mere thought of delivering a presentation
- A business leader who has just been promoted to a position of greater responsibility
- A middle manager who wants to climb the corporate ladder
- A CFO who needs to deliver complex quarterly results in an easy to understand manner
- A board member for a non-profit organization who needs to reach out to potential donors and volunteers

- A manager or team leader who must find a way to motivate team members
- A public relations professional who wants to be taken more seriously by senior management
- An expert charged with talking to the media
- A human resources officer seeking a seat at the executive committee table
- A salesperson in need of stronger interpersonal skills

...I encourage you to develop a greater thirst for lifelong learning. That is why my goal here is to provide an organized method that you, as a speaker, can use to improve your craft on an ongoing basis.