

ANABAPTIST DISCIPLES OF CHRIST

THE PASTOR'S TALK AND WALK

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**“FOR AFTER THAT IN THE WISDOM OF GOD
THE WORLD BY WISDOM KNEW NOT GOD, IT
PLEASED GOD BY THE FOOLISHNESS OF PREACHING
TO SAVE THEM THAT BELIEVE.”**

Defining the Terms

Homiletics	<i>(noun)</i> The study of the composition and delivery of a sermon or other religious discourses
Hermeneutics	<i>(noun)</i> The branch of knowledge that deals with interpretation, especially that of the of the Bible.
Preach	<i>(verb)</i> To deliver a sermon or religious address to an assembled group of people. To earnestly advocate.
Expository	<i>(adjective)</i> of, or relating to, exposition.
Exposition	<i>(noun)</i> A setting forth of the meaning or purpose. Discourse, or an example of it, designed to convey information or explain what is difficult to understand
Inductive	<i>(adjective)</i> A method of reasoning in which the premises are viewed as supplying strong evidence for the truth of the conclusion. The derivation of general principles from specific observations
Context	<i>(noun)</i> The circumstances that form the setting for an event, statement, or idea, and in terms of which it can be fully understood and assessed.
Contextualize	<i>(verb)</i> to place, or study in context. Communicating a message in ways that are understandable and appropriate to the listener's cultural context.

A Note to the Preacher

I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these things to you so that, if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth. Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness:

*He was manifested in the flesh,
vindicated by the Spirit,
seen by angels,
proclaimed among the nations,
believed on in the world,
taken up in glory.*

Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared, who forbid marriage and require abstinence from foods that God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, for it is made holy by the word of God and prayer.

If you put these things before the brothers and sisters, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, being trained in the words of the faith and of the good doctrine that you have followed. Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness; for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come. The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance. For to this end we toil and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe.

Command and teach these things. Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching. Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you. Practice these things, immerse yourself in them, so that all may see your progress. Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.

Do not rebuke an older man but encourage him as you would a father, younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, in all purity.

Honor widows who are truly widows. But if a widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show godliness to their own household and to make some return to their parents, for this is pleasing in the sight of God. She who is truly a widow, left all alone, has set her hope on God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day, but she who is self-indulgent is dead even while she lives. Command these things as well, so that they may be without reproach. But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

Let a widow be enrolled if she is not less than sixty years of age, having been the wife of one husband, and having a reputation for good works: if she has brought up children, has shown hospitality, has washed the feet of the saints, has cared for the afflicted, and has devoted herself to every good work. But refuse to enroll younger widows, for when their passions draw them away from Christ, they desire to marry and so incur condemnation for having abandoned their former faith. Besides that, they learn to be idlers, going about from house to house, and not only idlers, but also gossips and busybodies, saying what they should not. So I would have younger widows marry, bear children, manage their households, and give the adversary no occasion for slander. For some have already strayed after Satan. If any believing woman has relatives who are widows, let her care for them. Let the church not be burdened, so that it may care for those who are truly widows.

Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain," and, "The laborer deserves his wages." Do not admit a charge against an elder except on the evidence of two or three witnesses. As for those who persist in sin, rebuke them in the presence of all, so that the rest may stand in fear. In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of the elect angels I charge you to keep these rules without prejudging, doing nothing from partiality. Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, nor take part in the sins of others; keep yourself pure. (No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments.) The sins of some people are conspicuous, going before them to judgment, but the sins of others appear later. So also, good works are conspicuous, and even those that are not cannot remain hidden.

Let all who are under a yoke as bondservants regard their own masters as worthy of all honor, so that the name of God and the teaching may not be reviled. Those who have believing masters must not be disrespectful on the ground that they are brothers; rather they must serve all the better since those who benefit by their good service are believers and beloved.

Teach and urge these things. If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness, he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicions, and constant friction among people who are depraved in mind and deprived of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain. But godliness with contentment is great gain, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.

But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus,

who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which he will display at the proper time—he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.

As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.

O Timothy, guard the deposit entrusted to you. Avoid the irreverent babble and contradictions of what is falsely called “knowledge,” for by professing it some have swerved from the faith.

Grace be with you.

Brother Paul

The “Foolishness of Preaching”

***1Co 1:21** For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.*

What is preaching?

What is the goal of preaching?

What is the best compliment someone can give to a sermon?

What is the worst word someone could say about your sermon?

A Biblical Case for Expository Preaching¹

Mike Bullmore

What is expository preaching? A sermon is expository if its content and intent are *controlled* by the content and intent of a particular passage of Scripture. The preacher says what the passage says, and he intends for his sermon to accomplish in his listeners exactly what God is seeking to accomplish through the chosen passage of his Word.



Preacher, imagine God sitting in the congregation as you preach. What will be the expression on his face? Will it say, “That’s not at all what I was getting at with that passage.” Or will it say, “Yes, that’s exactly what I intended.”

The biblical case for expository preaching starts with the connection between the gift the ascended Christ has given to the church in pastor-teachers (Eph 4:11) and the biblical injunction for pastors-teachers to “preach the word” (2 Tim 4:2). Those who preach should preach their Bibles.

Perhaps the best place to begin demonstrating the legitimacy of identifying preaching and preaching the word is the book of Acts. In Acts, the phrase “the word of God” is regular shorthand for the substance of the apostolic preaching. In Acts 6:2, for example, the apostles say, “It is not right that we should give up the preaching of the word of God” (see also Acts 12:24; 13:5, 46; 17:13; 18:11.) The phrase also frequently appears as “the word of the Lord” (8:25, 13:44; 15:35-36; et. al.) and not infrequently it is shortened to “the word” (cf. 4:29; 8:4; 11:19). In the book of Acts, there is a clear and consistent identification between the apostolic preaching and the phrase “the word of God.”

While the substance of the apostolic preaching was the good news of reconciliation with God through Christ Jesus, that message was delivered and explained almost invariably by means of an exposition of Old Testament Scripture. So preaching in New Testament times involved the preaching of “the word of God,” and an essential component of such preaching was the exposition of the Old Testament. This in turn leads us to the conclusion that the Old Testament Scriptures must be included in our conception of “the word” to be preached, a conclusion confirmed by both the direct (e.g., 2 Tim 3:16; Rom 3:2) and indirect claims (e.g., Rom 15:4) of the New Testament.

¹ <https://www.9marks.org/article/biblical-case-expository-preaching/> February, 2010. Mike Bullmore is the senior pastor at Crossway Community Church in Kenosha, WI.

So this “word” is the word about Jesus, as anticipated in the Old Testament and now explained in the apostolic preaching. This is the word that is “spoken” (Acts 4:29), “proclaimed” (13:5), and to be “received” (17:11) as “the word of God.” This same identification is maintained throughout Paul’s letters. Without hesitation, he calls the message he proclaims “the word of God” (2 Cor 2:17, 4:2; 1 Thes 2:13) or simply “the word” (Gal 6:6).

Even in the context of Paul’s charge to Timothy to “preach the word” there is confirmation of this identification between preaching and preaching the word of God. Timothy would have known immediately what “word” Paul meant. As Timothy’s biography highlights, it surely included both the “sacred writings” and the apostolic message—“what you have learned and have firmly believed knowing from whom you learned it” (2 Tim 3:10-17).

The conclusion we are to draw from all of this is that the “word” we are to preach is the body of truth consisting of the Old Testament Scriptures and the apostolic teaching regarding Christ—i.e. the New Testament. Thus, identifying the “word” with our Bibles is appropriate. *This is what those commissioned as “pastor-teachers” are to teach.* Our job is to proclaim “the word” which God has spoken, preserved in Scripture, and entrusted to us. The spiritual life of God’s people depends on this word (Deut. 8:3). That is why a young pastor is charged to “devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching” (1 Tim 4:13). If this charge makes any claim on us today, and it does, then the source of our preaching is to be entirely coextensive with our Bibles.

What will this look like? In our sermon preparation, it will look like taking defined passages of God’s Word and studying them carefully so that we “rightly handle the word of truth.” In the pulpit, it will look like the picture we see in Nehemiah 8:8: “They read from the book . . . clearly, and they gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading.” God has both purposed and promised to use this kind of preaching to accomplish one of his great aims—the gathering and building up of his people.

Session One

Give Attendance to Reading / Hermeneutics

II Timothy 2:14-19

Remind them of these things, and ¹⁴charge them before God not to quarrel about words, which does no good, but only ruins the hearers. ¹⁵ Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, **rightly handling the word of truth.** ¹⁶ But avoid irreverent babble, for it will lead people into more and more ungodliness, ¹⁷ and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, ¹⁸ who have swerved from the truth, saying that the resurrection has already happened. They are upsetting the faith of some. ¹⁹ But God's firm foundation stands, bearing this seal: "The Lord knows those who are his," and, "Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity."

Introduction

How do contemporary audiences listen?

Great communication is based on **liking** our audience instead of **fearing** them.

Bill Hybels lists two essentials for audience analysis:

The first is "to *understand the way they think*.... The second prerequisite to effective preaching to non-Christians is *that we like them*."

The ability to communicate abstract ideas is unique to human beings and is a part of bearing the image of God.

The alternative to expressing ourselves with communication is violence.

You earn the right to speak by:

Experience

Study

Character

Being a good listener

"Most preachers go on preaching for years after people quit listening."

-Calvin Miller

What is Expository Preaching

1. “A Sermon is expositional if its _____ and _____ are controlled by the content and intent of particular passage in the Bible.”

Calvin Miller says that the greatest of all sins is, “to tell the truth without being owned by it.”²

Sermons do not exist to _____ or _____ they exist to teach.

We are servants of the Book, we preach from it for three reasons:

1.

2.

3.

“For we are not, like so many, peddlers of God's word, but as men of sincerity, as commissioned by God, in the sight of God we speak in Christ.”

-II Cor. 2:17

2. Two Forms of Expository Preaching:

A. Textual

B. Consecutive

a. It _____ the congregation to the larger scope of the Bible, and a more complete range of interests and concerns.

b. It _____ that portions are covered that may not naturally preached.

c. It _____ preachers from unwittingly shaping how their congregations read the Bible.

² Calvin Miller, *The Sermon Maker* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002) 20.

d. It _____ variety to sustain interest.

It meets the need for relevance without letting the need for relevance dictate the message.

e. It _____ the preacher in thinking and preparing ahead of time.

Therefore, having this ministry by the mercy of God, we do not lose heart. ² But we have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways. We refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God's word, but by the open statement of the truth we would commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God. ³ And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. ⁴ In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. ⁵ For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake.

II. Cor. 4:1-5

Examples:

Old Testament:

Genesis 37-50

New Testament:

Hebrews

Session Two

Give Attendance to Exhortation and Preaching

I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: ² preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. ³ For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, ⁴ and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. ⁵ As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

-II Timothy 4:1-5

I. What are the Issues

There is a _____ between _____, _____ and _____.

In order to become good students and teachers we must understand the essentials about _____.

II. The Process

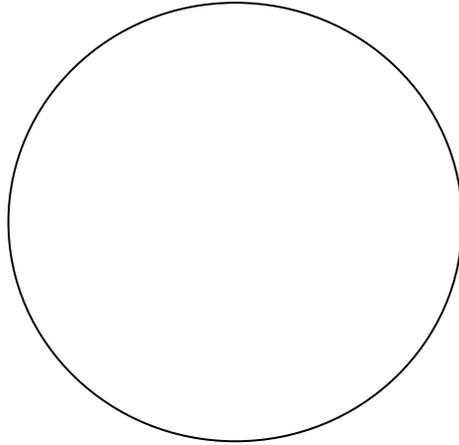
“For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and **hear** with their ears, and should **understand** with their heart, and should be **converted**, and I should heal them.” (Matthew 13:15 KJV)

III. How can our Preaching engage?

1. How can we help our people _____?
2. How can we invite them to the _____?
3. How can we relate in a way that calls them to _____

IV. Our own Study

A. The three phases of study are:



_____ - What does the text say?

_____ - What does the text mean?

_____ - What response does God desire from us?

A. Goal – To answer the question: What does the text _____?

“To read the Bible as for the first time.” -Hendricks

V. Hindrances to good observation

A. _____

What we believe to be _____ does not change what is actually _____.

“Preconceived beliefs are barriers to finding truth” -Bercot

B. _____

The Bible is the best _____ on the _____.

C. Our own _____.

Conclusion

A. The first goal of Bible study is to see what the Bible _____.

B. Our observation is tainted by _____.

C. We begin with the _____.

Building the Context

Mechanical Layout—Tearing apart a passage to find its meaning. This takes work! We would rather have some else do the work for us. Resist the urge!!

Etymology - The tracing back of a word to understand its literal meaning.

Two Examples:

“Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.”

-John 5:39-40

“Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.”

-Prov. 29:18

The meaning of a word should be gathered from the scope and context of a passage, and not the scope of the word.

The Goal

To find the meaning that the _____ originally _____.

A. Seek the meaning

1. Interpretation of Scripture is key to becoming a good teacher. We must know not only what the Bible _____ we must begin to understand what it _____.

B. The goal of proper interpretation is to find the _____ meaning intended by the author.

What does it mean to _____?

What are levels of _____?

What is the _____ intended meaning?

Matthew 5:13

Context is King

A. Use the _____ of the passage to determine its _____.

B. Context: the _____ of a text or statement that surrounds a particular word or passage and determines its _____.

C. What is the _____.

D. To begin this process, use the _____ of the passage

Crafting the Sermon

I. Introduction

There are any number of ways to prepare sermons. All of them require work. Do not assume that the method will produce magic.

II. The Process

- A. Read the _____.

- B. Read and reread the _____.

- C. _____ the main point.

- D. _____ the Passage.

The Shape of all Good Sermons

Give Attendance to Doctrine and Teaching

Session Three

If you put these things before the brothers, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, being trained in the words of the faith and of the good doctrine that you have followed. ⁷ Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness; ⁸ for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come. ⁹ The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance. ¹⁰ For to this end we toil and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe.

¹¹ Command and teach these things. ¹² Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. ¹³ Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching. ¹⁴ Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you. ¹⁵ Practice these things, immerse yourself in them, so that all may see your progress. ¹⁶ Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.

Making Application

“It is less important to ask a Christian what he or she believes about the Bible than it is to inquire what he or she does with it.”

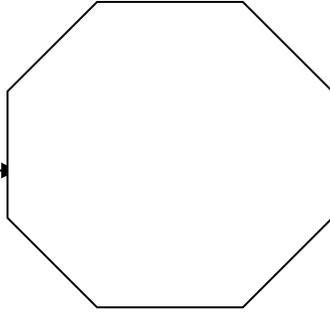
-Leslie Newbigin

- A. The Challenge of Application – to actually do it.
- B. The goal of application—To make the _____ God desires.
- C. How do we come to understand the response God desires?

The Goal of the preacher – to present the Scriptures in such a way that the listener wants to _____.

Is There Direct Application?

Action

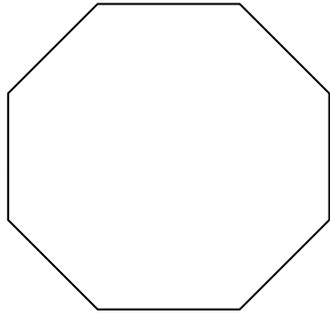


3 Direct Applications



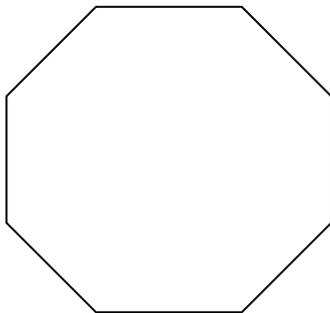
Is There Indirect Application?

Abstraction



How to find application by Abstracting?

1. What is important here?
2. How can I say it in a more general way?
3. What in my life has the same pattern



Example: II Samuel 24:18

What is important here?	Specific to Abstract	Abstract to Specific

Seven basic elements of any communication interaction

Source - the originator of the message

Message -verbal and non-verbal, including words, facial and body expressions, visual aids, and vocal tones.

Receiver- audience or group that hears the message

Channel- the means of communication

Feedback- the message verbal or nonverbal that the receiver sends back to the sender

Noise- any interference in the transmission of the message may be external or internal

Environment- time, place, and occasion in which the sending and receiving occurs.

Character qualities required for speaking

a. Integrity

Quintilian a great Roman teacher of rhetoric said,

“The orator. . .whom I am concerned to form, shall be the orator as defined by Marcus Cato, “ a good man skilled in speaking” But above all else he must possess the quality which Cato place first and which is in the very nature of things the greatest and most important, that is, he must be a good man.”

b. Sensitivity

c. Knowledge

“Blessed is the man, who having nothing to say, abstains from giving in words evidence of the fact.”

d. Desire

e. Skill

Disclaimer: The following article is not written from a Christian perspective. I was hesitant to share it because of that. On the other hand, sometimes the people “out there” can teach us a great deal about the world in which we live and work. Please use it with discretion and understanding.

9 Public-Speaking Lessons From The World's Greatest TED Talks

By Carmine Gallo

*This post is part of a series of articles based on Gallo's book, **Talk Like TED: The 9 Public-Speaking Secrets of the World's Top Minds** (St. Martin's Press). This article was originally posted by Forbes on March 4, 2014.³*

Depending on your perspective, 2006 was either a really bad year for public speaking or the start of a world-changing transformation. In that year the famous TED conference began streaming 18-minute presentations from the world's top minds for free. Today TED talks are viewed more than two million times a day and, in my opinion, they have become the gold standard in public speaking and presentation skills. It also means that, like it or not, your next presentation will be compared to a TED talk.

During a trip to Paris last December I met with a group of young business professionals who said they were tired of speakers who gave “old school” PowerPoint presentations. “What exactly would you consider ‘new’ school?” I asked.

“You know, like TED,” they said.

The South China Post newspaper recently reported that TED-style events are exploding in Hong Kong “in a big way.” Independently organized “TEDx” events are catching on across Asia. On a trip to Japan where I gave a keynote I was approached by several people who said, “We love the American style of speaking.”

“The American style?”

Yes, you know, like TED.”

It doesn't surprise me anymore that wherever I travel in the world, I hear about TED. TED talks are translated into 90 languages, which is more than the Harry Potter series. TEDx events have been held in 145 countries. Teachers across America are showing TED videos to students to help satisfy the new Common Core educational standards, which place a greater emphasis on public speaking and presentation skills.

³ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/carminegallo/2014/03/04/9-public-speaking-lessons-from-the-worlds-greatest-ted-talks/#72711acc4a9d>

After analyzing 500 of the best TED talks, interviewing speakers whose TED presentations have been viewed nearly 20 million times, and pouring over research by leading neuroscientists, I've reached the conclusion that the human brain is wired to love the TED style. People simply can't get enough of TED talks because they are truly addictive.

The good news—having to raise your game to the TED-style is not a bad thing. In fact, adopting the techniques that have brought some TED speakers global acclaim will make it much more likely that you will persuade your audience to act on your ideas. I've identified 9 common elements to all TED talks and each of these are scientifically proven to increase the likelihood that your pitch or presentation will be successful, whether you're pitching to one person or speaking to thousands.

1. Unleash the master within. Passion leads to mastery and mastery forms the foundation of an extraordinary presentation. You cannot inspire others unless you are inspired yourself. You stand a much greater chance of persuading and inspiring your listeners if you express an enthusiastic, passionate, and meaningful connection to your topic.

2. Tell three stories. Tell stories to reach people's hearts and minds. Brain scans reveal that stories stimulate and engage the human brain, helping the speaker connect with the audience and making it much more likely that the audience will agree with the speaker's point of view. Recently I wrote this column about Facebook COO Sheryl Sandberg. Her original TED talk was going to be "chock full of facts and figures, and nothing personal." Instead she told three stories and ignited a movement. Stories connect us. Tell more of them.

3. Practice relentlessly. Harvard brain researcher Dr. Jill Bolte-Taylor had this "stroke of insight" that has been viewed 15 million times on TED.com. Dr. Jill rehearsed her presentation 200 times before she delivered it live. Practice relentlessly and internalize your content so that you can deliver the presentation as comfortably as having a conversation with a close friend.

4. Teach your audience something new. The human brain loves novelty. An unfamiliar, unusual, or unexpected element in a presentation jolts the audience out of their preconceived notions, and quickly gives them a new way of looking at the world. Robert Ballard is an explorer who discovered Titanic in 1985. He told me, "Your mission in any presentation is to inform, educate, and inspire. You can only inspire when you give people a new way of looking at the world in which they live."

5. Deliver jaw-dropping moments. The jaw-dropping moment—scientists call it an 'emotionally competent stimulus'—is anything in a presentation that elicits a strong emotional response such as joy, fear, shock, or surprise. It grabs the listener's attention and is remembered long after the presentation is over. In this column on how Bill Gates radically transformed his public-speaking skills, I demonstrate how Gates learned to incorporate a jaw-dropping moment into many of his public presentations, including his now famous TED talks.

6. Use humor without telling a joke. Humor lowers defenses, making your audience more receptive to your message. It also makes you seem more likable, and people are more willing to do business with or support someone they like. The funny thing about humor is that you don't need to tell a joke to get a laugh. Educator Sir Ken Robinson educated and amused his audience in the most popular TED talk of all time: *How Schools Kill Creativity*. Robinson makes humorous, often self-deprecating, observations about his chosen field, education. "If you're at a dinner party and you say you work in education—actually, you're not often at dinner parties, frankly, if you work in education..." Robinson makes very strong, provocative observations about nurturing creativity in children, and he packages the material around humorous anecdotes and asides that endear him to the audience. Lighten up. Don't take yourself (or your topic) too seriously.

7. Stick to the 18-minute rule. A TED presentation can be no longer than 18 minutes. Eighteen minutes is the ideal length of time to get your point across. Researchers have discovered that "cognitive backlog," too much information, prevents the successful transmission of ideas. TED curator Chris Anderson has been quoted as saying that 18 minutes is "long enough to be serious and short enough to hold people's attention."

8. Favor pictures over text. PowerPoint is not the enemy. Bullet points are. Some of the best TED presentations are designed in PowerPoint. Others use Apple Key-note or Prezi. Regardless of the software, there are no bullet points on the slides of the best TED presentations. There are pictures, animations, and limited amounts of text—but no slides cluttered with line after line of bullet points. This technique is called "picture superiority." It simply means we are much more likely to recall an idea when a picture complements it.

9. Stay in your lane. The most inspiring TED speakers are open, authentic, and, at times, vulnerable. Researcher Brené Brown even gave a TED talk on the topic of vulnerability and how her own research led to her personal journey to know herself. Opening up paid off for Brown in a big way. Oprah discovered Brown on TED, invited Brown to be on her show, and today Brown is a bestselling author and regular contributor to *O, The Oprah Magazine*.

Make no mistake. Your ability to persuasively sell your ideas is the single greatest skill that will help you achieve your dreams. Follow these nine rules and you'll astonish, electrify, and inspire your audiences.

*Carmin Gallo is a popular keynote speaker, internationally recognized communication coach, and author of the new book, **Talk Like TED: The 9-Public Speaking Secrets of the World's Top Minds**. Carmin Gallo is an independent, objective communication expert not affiliated with TED Conferences, LLC. Learn more at talkliketed.com.*