

Megan Hills interviews Stephen Robinson

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How to give a memorable speech

“I thought it was going to be an ordinary team training talk,” Stephen Robinson explained. “But it turned out to be the most memorable speech I’ve ever heard – or rather the most memorable speech I’ve seen.”

“The speech started with a story that had a relevant point to it. The presenter then drew our attention to the stack of numbered envelopes in the centre of each table. He asked that we open ‘Envelope One’. It was a photograph that creatively reinforced the point just made – e.g. a photo of the chairman sitting in a boat.”

“Then another story was told, another point was made. Then the presenter stopped and asked for ‘Envelope Two’ to be opened. And this went on throughout the speech where several envelopes were opened along the way. Waiting to open the envelope for the revelation of the visual kept the audience completely mesmerised.”

“The key message”, Stephen said, “is reinforce points through visual aids in an interesting way that will stimulate the senses.”

Stephen’s Top 3 Tips for giving a memorable speech:

1. Use visual aids

Back up what you are saying with visuals. This is particularly useful if you are a nervous speaker, where the visual aids take the focus off yourself.

2. Make them feel something

As Maya Angelou once famously stated: *“People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”* Inspire an emotional reaction through stories that will move your audience personally.

3. Have fun

While it’s natural to feel nervous, try to relax and enjoy yourself. Remember that you have been asked to speak for a reason, and that the audience wants hear what you have to say.

“Pick no more than three main messages for your speech,” Stephen added. “People can’t remember much more than that. Your audience will leave satisfied that they have learned something useful.”

What Stephen Robinson says about Think Learn Succeed

“After spending time with Eleanor I always feel inspired to improve myself – to learn more, to travel more. Through her colour, vibrancy and stories, she always draws you in and makes you feel included.”

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