



THE DONALD COOPER CORPORATION

Speaking and coaching internationally on marketing, management and business excellence

30 things it took me 15 years to learn in this business!

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SECTION #1: THE “BIG MYTH” ... THERE’S ENOUGH BUSINESS FOR ALL OF US TO DO WELL!

1. Simply not true! There are way too many speakers in the world and only small fraction of them will make a really good living in this business. Be excellent, then clearly differentiate yourself...or move on!

SECTION #2...YOUR PERSONAL REALITIES:

2. Why do you want to be a speaker...or to continue being one? Is it because you think it's easy or glamorous? Here's the truth...it ain't easy and "glamour" is an illusion!

Here's some other good questions to ask and answer...

- 1) How good do you want to be...and how good must you be to make a living at this? How many other people speak on your subject in your market and why should anyone hire you instead of them? What **compelling difference** will there be in either your content or your delivery style...or both?
- 2) Do you want to be a local, regional, national or international speaker?
- 3) What will your business model be? Do you want to create a one or two person business or a larger organization?
- 4) Are you prepared to make the commitment and the sacrifices...and do the work?
- 5) If you're going to be successful in this business, below are two of the most important questions to ask...

Question #1: “What do you know more about than almost anyone else in the world...that a whole bunch of people with money to spend give a damn about?”

For example, as a business speaker, I deliver the “straight goods” on every businesses’ three biggest problems...

- How to create, deliver and communicate compelling customer-owning value.
- How to find and keep the best people at every level of the organization.
- How to redefine and reinvent their business to be a profitable market leader in 3 to 5 years in an increasing competitive and fast-changing world.

Having been both a world-class manufacturer of an “icon” Canadian Brand and then, an award-winning innovative retailer, featured in over 130 media exposures, I had valuable insights, real world experience and a unique perspective that immediately differentiated me and got me out of the “commodity speaker” category.

Question #2: “Do you have a way with a lyric?”

Do you have a talent for this business of speaking? Do you have a way of communicating your ideas, your stories and your feelings in a way that “grabs” people’s minds and hearts? If not, what are you going to do to get good enough to make a difference and make a living?

SECTION #3...WHAT BUSINESS ARE WE IN?... AND IT IS A BUSINESS!

3. We are in the business of...

“The clear and passionate articulation of life-changing and business-changing ideas of great importance...delivered in a way that uplifts and inspires people to do better and to be better!”

We are in the business of **“EDUTAINMENT”!**

In considering the value of being an educator or an entertainer, think of their relative salaries. A great entertainer can earn \$20 million or more a year while a great teacher gets \$40,000. We have the incredible opportunity to both educate and entertain ... and for us, that's where the money is!

4. WHAT IS OUR JOB?

The first thing I learned in this business in 1991 is this....*“Sleeping people learn nothing!” ...our first job is to keep people awake and our second job is to tell them really important stuff!”* We must grab and hold people's minds and hearts with our unique and valuable content, our compelling platform presence, humour, warmth, vocal variation, timing and eye contact.

Clients pay us to make their “pain” go away. If we're entertainers, comedians or motivational speakers, we make their pain go away only for a short while by diverting their attention, making them laugh, or by dramatically telling them about someone who's worse off than they are.

But to deliver lasting value, our job is to be clarifiers in a confused world, realists and courageous truth-sayers, idea generators, challengers, uplifters and encouragers, helping people to make real change!

So, our job is to help people create extraordinary businesses and/or extraordinary lives by communicating four things...

- 1) **WHAT** to do!...specific do-able things that will improve their business and/or their life.
- 2) **WHY** to do it!...to create urgency and focus, show them what will happen if they don't change, grow and improve.
- 3) **HOW** to do it!... specific, innovative and realistic action to take to “make it happen.”
- 4) The **BELIEF** that they can do it...and the passion, the energy and the challenge to go out and do it!

Note: “Motivational” speakers just do #4), which I believe, is 25% of the complete job!

5. DEFINING YOURSELF... ARE YOU A “SPEAKER” OR ARE YOU A “MESSENGER”?

Here's a fundamental decision you must make that will profoundly affect your career and your income!

- 1) Define yourself as a **“speaker”** and you have one way to help people...and to make money.
- 2) Define yourself as a **“messenger”** and you'll find many ways of delivering your message and generating income...
 - Keynoting, breakout sessions, training, consulting, coaching, facilitating.
 - Workshops, Public Seminars, Boot Camps, Tele-seminars. Podcasts, Blogs.

- Other speakers that you license to deliver your unique and compelling "message".
- Articles, newsletters, books and workbooks.
- CD's, DVD's.
- Your own radio or TV show...a syndicated radio show...regular appearances on other people's shows.

6. THE "DIRTY LITTLE SECRET" OF THE SPEAKING BUSINESS:

Generally speaking, the shorter the time you work, the more money you make! Typically, keynoters work for 40 to 90 minutes and get paid very well, while trainers work all day for much less. But it all goes back to the "entertainer / teacher" example from point #2 on page #1. A great Keynoter is typically a high-energy "edutainer" speaking to a relatively large audience and, fairly or unfairly, it's seen to have more value.

But here's the bizarre part...if you start out as a keynoter and then clients want you to do a full day program, you get much more for the full day. However, if you're a trainer and the client wants you to do a short program, they won't want to pay you a keynote rate. Life's unfair!

7. HOW WILL YOU DELIVER YOUR MESSAGE "LIVE"?

Given your personality, "charisma factor", experience, your personal preference and the economic realities of this business, will you be a trainer, keynoter, facilitator, coach, consultant...or some combination of these?

Be realistic! There's nothing sadder than watching a dynamite keynoter pathetically trying to be an interactive trainer...or a great trainer trying to be a keynoter. They're two very different skill sets. Few people can do both extraordinarily well.

Where would you be best to start out...and where would you like the journey to take you? What do you need to "become", in content and style, to make that happen?

SECTION #4...THE 7 STEPS TO CREATING COMPELLING PRESENTATIONS:

8. SELECT A COMPELLING "TOPIC" FOR WHICH YOU WILL BE A RESPECTED VISIONARY AND THOUGHT LEADER:

- 1) There are three levels of speakers in the world...
 - a) **Commodity** speakers who have nothing important or special to say, have not differentiated themselves and who struggle to survive.
 - b) **Experts** who are recognized as visionaries and thought leaders. They're rewarded for the unique insights and value they deliver.
 - c) **Celebrities** who get "big bucks"! There are three kinds of "celebrities"...
 - Those who are "famous" for climbing something, winning something or surviving something, who make a living telling people that "you can too!"
 - Second, media, show biz or political personalities who may or may not have anything worthwhile to say, but who people like to be with. A few years ago an association client tried to negotiate my fee down from \$7800 to \$5000 while cheerfully paying Bill Cosby \$65,000 for 20 minutes of humour after breakfast! He's famous, I'm not.

- Thirdly, there's what I call "substantive celebrities" who have combined their unique and valuable insights with an ability to market and position themselves to create celebrity status in a particular industry, or in the general population. Examples of "substantive celebrities" are Tom Peters, Dr. Wayne Dyer, Suze Ormond and Stephen Covey.
- 2) Forget being a commodity...you'll starve! What are you an "expert" on that a significant number of companies, associations or individuals will pay a lot of money to hear about? And how hard and how smart are you prepared to work to be recognized as that expert?
What are you so knowledgeable about, so passionate about, that you could become "famous" for it?
 - 3) Once you've selected your Topic, decide specifically what your unique and valuable contribution will be on that subject, based on your knowledge, experience, ongoing research and your unique view of the world? What bright new thinking, breakthrough clarity or unique perspective will you deliver that will have people come up to you afterwards to say, "I never thought of it that way before...thank you!"
 - 4) Certain "chunks" of your presentation may, over time, take on a life of their own, becoming a new Topic. e.g. my session on "The 8 Essential Steps to Finding & Keeping the Best Staff!" evolved out of my work on Service Excellence. This second Topic makes me cost effective as I can deliver two compelling presentations at the same conference, saving the client money on speakers and expenses.

Caution! Be very careful how many topics you try to be "the expert" on. So many speakers make the mistake of speaking on way too many topics...and dominating none!

9. SELECTING BOTTOM-LINE TITLES THAT "GRAB" YOUR TARGET CUSTOMERS:

- 1) Choose titles that grab clients' wallets and/or hearts. Make sure that the benefit is immediately clear and compelling.

A title should be so strong that it becomes your Brand. We created and trademarked the term **Human Marketing**[®]. Hundreds of people speak on marketing and customer service, but only one of us speaks on **Human Marketing** and it's unique approach to creating, delivering and communicating compelling customer-owning value. But, because **Human Marketing** is not in itself a "grabber", we've created titles including words that speak to every businesses' "pain".

- 2) Create a few titles dealing with your Topic. Meeting Planners are looking for titles that fit powerfully with their meeting theme or focus. For this reason, I have four different titles for my **Human Marketing** Topic.

10. THE CONTENT AND STRUCTURE OF YOUR PRESENTATIONS:

- 1) As Stephen Covey would say, "*Start with the end in mind.*" Focus on outcomes that have compelling value for your audience. Write your ending first in which you summarise your key points, reinforce the benefits, lay down the challenge and gain commitment to change!

Then, write your opening in which you will grab them and build rapport by quickly and clearly communicating how their time with you will benefit them, will be easy to understand...and entertaining.

- 2) Now that you have your opening and your closing, structure your main points into a sequence that creates natural building blocks of learning like the chapters of a book. The structure, sequence and “flow” of your presentation is so important to folks “getting it”

Then, flesh out each point with benefits, definitions, stories and examples (good and bad) and that reinforce the point and make it memorable. Finally, summarise each point before moving onto the next one.

Bonus tip: When creating a speech, include simple definitions of your key words or concepts. If “getting” your message is dependent on a mutual understanding of certain key words... define those words and then tell a story to illustrate the definition and improve retention. I’ve seen so many good ideas fall and die because the speaker and the audience were on different wavelengths when it came to the meaning of key words.

For example, in my presentation on “Creating A Winning Culture” I know that there’s a huge lack of clarity as to what a business “culture” really is and this lack of clarity will severely limit the effectiveness of my whole presentation. Webster’s definition is completely unfathomable so I show it along with my own simple definition of a business culture, which is, *“The way things are done and the way people are treated in your business!”* Remember, much of our value is in our ability to be clarifiers and simplifiers.

When creating and structuring your material, be mindful of how it could be delivered as a keynote, half-day or full-day session. If you start with this in mind, you’ll be amazed at how easy it will be to create programs of different lengths from the same body of material.

- 3) Don’t write and memorize whole speeches. Your material gets stale, you get stale and audiences hate “canned” presentations. Create an ever-growing and evolving “body of material” from which you will craft tailored presentations for each client. Each presentation should be structured so that you end on time and get all your points made in the right order...but then, within that structure, be spontaneous to make it fresh, real and in the moment.

- 4) My ever-growing “body of material” is captured on approximately 4000 electronic Power Point slides, stored in sequence on our two computers...plus outside back-up. These slides are either text slides that capture an insight or concept, or graphic images from magazines, newspapers, or photos that I’ve taken to illustrate a point, or create humour.

As I develop new insights and find great new examples of my points, I simply add them to my slide collection, in the appropriate place(s).

Because I speak in dozens of different industries, I also “file” specific industry slides in “Industry Files” for easy retrieval.

Note: We also keep on file in our computer the slides used for each client presentation so that, when they invite me back, we know exactly what I did the last time.

Some speakers still use acetate “overheads” quite successfully and many speakers (mostly “motivational speakers”) use no visual media at all. As a content speaker, creating 90

tailored presentations a year, I believe that Power Point is the way to go. But beware of "death by Power Point"!

According to surveys, here are the five biggest Power Point sins to avoid...

- The speaker reads the slides.
- Text is too small / too much text.
- Text is full sentences instead of bullet points.
- Poor colour choice.
- Overuse of "fly-ins", distracting sounds and other Power Point gimmicks.

6) To constantly update my material (and search for marketing leads at the same time) I read several business / marketing magazines and newspapers. For example, in one issue of Strategy magazine, I picked up on...

- AST Computers launches new quiet desktop computer = new insight on one more way to differentiate a product...make it more quiet.
- New auto repair centre for women opens in Vancouver = new slide on "niche markets."
- Home Depot launches new slogan "You can do it...we can help!" = new slide.
- Tim Horton's expands to USA = potential client to contact.
- Tourism Canada has \$50 million budget = potential client to contact.

I invest about 20 hours a week in reading, researching and updating my material. Great update information is all around. Constantly be on the lookout for new ideas and examples everywhere you go. Research magazines, newspapers, signs, advertising, the internet (an amazing source that can suck you into endless research) and your own life experiences.

For example, I use a slide of a sign that I found in the parking lot of a car dealership. Driving by every day, I noticed that this sign saying, "*Reserved For The Sales Person Of The Month*" had no name on it for three years and the special parking space of honour remained perpetually empty. Finally, I took a picture of it and use it to stress that, ultimately, it isn't our ideas that make a difference but the effective and consistent action that we take.

Have a camera with you at all times. You'll find amazing material. Recently, I drove by a huge sign that advertised, "*Now Open...Indoor Gofarting.*" You just don't want to miss great stuff like that!

- 7) Create relationships with major research companies. Get their latest research on your topic or industry. Clients will often have this available, no charge, if you don't have a relationship with a research company. Also, large stock brokerage companies have up-to-date research on hundreds of companies and entire industries. Contact their research department, introduce yourself, build a relationship and get outstanding free research!
- 8) Take time to reflect on your Topic and your material to develop new insights and a clear perspective of the future. This is one of our real values to our clients and audiences. Most of them are too busy to "reflect" on the meaning and implications of all that's happening around them.

- 9) Create a "MY STORIES" file to keep track all the great stories from your past as you recall them and then add new stories as they happen to you. Your own stories are powerful ways to "sell" a point and build rapport...but there must be a relevant point to them!

Every few months review your stories file, update it and refresh your memory as to the riches contained in it.

Craft, edit, tighten, practice, rewrite or retell your stories until they're the best they can be. Pick your best stories and make them your "signature stories" for which you become famous. Never use another speaker's signature story.

- 10) Some speakers use dozens of quotes from famous people...often dead famous people. In my opinion, if you use a few quotes, you show that you're widely read. If you use more than a few quotes, what you're telling people is that you, personally, don't have an original thought in your head.

Why would you want to help dead people brand themselves? Create your own profound and compelling quotes. They'll become part of your branding...and then others will quote YOU!!

11. TAILORING TO EACH AUDIENCE:

- 1) We used to use a 10 question Pre-Conference Briefing which we asked clients to send to a cross-section of attendees. Completed forms were faxed or emailed to us directly. We used these to help customize the presentation.

But people seemed to be too busy to respond, so now I do telephone interviews.

- 2) In person, or by phone, chat with the folks in charge of the company or association that has booked you to discuss their issues, opportunities and desired outcomes. Then, to develop a thorough and balanced understanding of internal and external issues and realities, talk with department or regional managers, front-line people and customers.

Create a script of questions to ask so that you find out the important stuff. I once told a meeting of pharmacy chain managers that my tour of their stores told me that they had the wrong people in many key positions...and that they should deal with it! What I had not found out beforehand was that, over the years, head office had negotiated all of the managers' authority away to a militant union. Because I wasn't thorough in my research, I was urging them to do the impossible!

I ask clients, "*What do you want these people to **think, feel and do differently** as a result of my time with them?*"

- 3) If you're speaking to businesses or associations, ask them for...

- Their Vision Statement, Mission Statement, Core Values or Guiding Principles.
- Key goals for the next 3 years.
- Company, Association or Industry research on anything that relates to your presentation topic.
- Any recent articles or media exposure, good or bad.
- Recent newsletters or industry magazines.

- Ask who spoke at their last two conferences and what they liked and didn't like about them? (Then call those speakers for their "read" on the client and the industry.)
 - Find out who else is speaking at this conference with you? Find out who the highest-ranking company or association executive speaker will be and ask for a copy of their speech. Tie your material into their key points...they'll love you for it! Call other major speakers on the program and find out what their key points are to avoid duplication and increase effectiveness.
- 4) Get first hand experience! Get out and find out what life's really like for the people who will be in your audience...and for their customers. I have...
 - Ridden on trucks and travelled with salesmen.
 - Toured factories, quarries, farms, and feedlots.
 - Sat through training sessions and pretended to be a customer.
 - Tested muffins, pizza, power tools and travel adventures.
 - 5) Use the internet. Check the client's website and what others are saying about them.
 - 6) Ask the client who the three best thinkers are in their company or industry and interview them.
 - 7) Interview some of their customers. Ask specific questions. Assure them of anonymity and find out what they really think.
 - 8) Find out some history or trivia about the client's company or industry. Find out if they have a special slogan or expression that has become part of their culture. I use trivia books on history and inventions to track down stuff that will WOW them.
 - 9) In your presentation, refer to a few prominent people in the company or Association or the company founder...but get the names right.

12. HANDOUTS AND IMPLEMENTATION GUIDES:

If you're a "motivational speaker" you probably don't need to provide a detailed Handout but you may want to have some printed "take-away" to remind people of a key point, to refer them to your website or to order your "product".

Content speakers do need to provide a detailed Handout or Implementation Guide. It will be important for your audience and it's an effective marketing tool to clients who want real take-away value.

Some speakers (but mostly trainers) create detailed, substantial Implementation Manuals, which, in many cases, they sell very profitably to clients, in addition to their fee. We provide a Handout master, which the client uses to print as many copies as they need, at their cost. I don't want to print them, ship them or lug them and then be told when I get there that I didn't make enough copies even though we produced 10% more than they requested.

13. DEVELOPING YOUR PRESENTATION STYLE:

A huge part of your effectiveness is in your delivery style. Develop a style that's congruent with your unique message, your personality and the length of the program. And, above all, develop a style that "grabs" people's minds and hearts!

You're trying to do two things on that platform. Deliver value to the audience and differentiate yourself from your competitors. Decide what "persona" will serve both of those objectives.

Master the art of vocal variation as to speed and volume. Learn the use of pauses to create emphasis, suspense and more effective humour...and to create "spaces" for the audience to think and absorb.

Learn the art of movement, facial expressions, eye contact and humour. Choose your clothing and the use of visual aids to be congruent with your "image".

Master the skill of clear articulation and of choosing just the right words, Watch other speakers, good and bad. Audio and video tape your presentations whenever possible, and study your style. Is it congruent with your message? Are you modelling the behaviour that you're trying to reinforce in your audience?

Watch politicians, preachers, movie and television actors. Try watching a movie or TV with the sound turned off to focus on all the non-verbal ways they communicate. Then, close your eyes and listen to the words to focus on how to deliver your own lines more effectively.

Don't try to create a delivery style that you're not comfortable with. Don't try to be exactly like some other speaker... but do study others to learn how to be a more effective you!

My style is to be "edgy"...to be a controversial, passionate truth sayer and thought leader. Everything about my material, my delivery, my humour and my attire is congruent with that.

I believe that there's a "line" where people are confronted with reality and new ideas...and are challenged to change. Just beyond that line is a place where they're turned off or offended. The secret is to "ride the line" and not fall over it.

Now, here's a neat thought. As you're delivering your presentation and sharing your mind, your heart, your insights and your stories, that "line" is constantly moving because you're developing a relationship with the audience. So, you can get away with saying things 30 minutes into your presentation that you couldn't get away with in the first five minutes. Simply put, you can get away with stuff on a 5th date that you couldn't get away with on a first date. If you want to always be on that line where people are truly engaged and challenged to change, you have to know where "the line" is at any given time.

Sadly, many speakers are afraid to risk knowing where "the line" is. So, they stay way back in safe territory, offend nobody and help nobody. They're "grey" and dull and boring...and they'll starve in this business! If you aren't upsetting anybody...you're probably not doing your job!

14) **PRACTICE...AND THE VALUE OF A COACH:**

- 1) There's no substitute for practice as long as you're practising the right things. The problem is that much of what we practice in athletics, in speaking and in life are the wrong things. And getting better at doing the wrong thing is not effective!

Get the best coaching you can afford as early as you can so that you can then practice the right things.

- 2) Speak as often as possible, even to yourself, in the car! Practice different ways of saying things using different words, different emphasis or different pauses.
- 3) Allow clients to audiotape or video you and you get the master for later study and to create product to sell or a demo video. Always insist on the master tape after the client has made copies for their use.

Note: Always get in writing from the client exactly what they're doing with any audio or video recording they do of you. If they're going to use it in a major way or instead of hiring you again, negotiate an additional fee or some major perk or favour as payment. And put a time limit on the use of your material.

- 4) As stated in the preceding section on developing your style, watch other speakers and performers. If you could "sell" an idea like Barbara Steisand "sells" a song, you could make a living! Improvement requires four steps...
 1. A clear understanding of where you are now.
 2. A clear vision as to where you're committed to be.
 3. A specific actionable Plan to get there.
 4. Taking the effective and consistent action required to get you there.

- 5) Getting to the Second Conversation." -- the conversation with yourself.

One day, in the middle of a presentation, I found that while I was having a conversation with the audience, I was actually having a simultaneous, but different conversation with myself - about how the people in the back right corner are responding, how those people are over there are doing, who is "sucking wind" over what and who's writing at what point and who's not.

That's when it really got to be fun...when I got to be aware of what seems to be working with this particular audience at this particular time...and what isn't. Then, I could make decisions in the moment about how I was going to articulate the next point. For example, am I going to use the word "darn" instead of "damn", because they all just climbed under the table when I said "bugger off."

SECTION #5... MARKETING:

15. WHAT DOES THE CLIENT WANT TO KNOW?

“Who is the best person, within our budget range, to help us deliver the outcomes we’re looking for?”

Therefore, your job is to become the best speaker in your fee range at delivering specific outcomes...and to become so well known for consistently delivering that value that your target customers search you out.

Note: Your most effective marketing is always to be a consistently amazing speaker!

16. CREATE A NICHE:

You can’t be “the best” for everyone and you can’t be “famous” everywhere. Pick topic or industry niches in which you will become a respected and known authority.

I’ve spoken in 48 industries but always based on my niche topic, **Human Marketing®**, which I’ve trademarked internationally.

17. CREATE PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS THAT COMMUNICATE YOUR VALUE AND CREATE CONFIDENCE:

- 1) Have a unique graphic image created that will tie all your promotional material together.
- 2) Business Cards: High quality stock, use both sides, list your titles on the back and what type of speaking you do (Keynote, Seminars, etc.). Make your card an actionable marketing document. **Tip:** One of the main reasons to have cards is so that you can “trade” for other people’s cards. When you give a card, always get a card. They may not follow up with you, but now you can follow up with them.
- 3) Brochure: State clearly what you do, the specific benefits, who will benefit and comments from those who have already benefited. All promotional material should also be available in a “bureau friendly” format if you intend to do business with bureaus. This means no contact info leading back to you.

We no longer create printed promotional material. It’s all on our website, or we print on demand.

- 4) Create a 2-3 page summary of excerpts of your clients’ most positive comments for prospects who don’t have time to read a file of complete client letters.
- 5) Create a website with your promo information well laid out along with free articles and tools or templates that you’ve created and products that you have for sale. Don’t make it so fancy that it takes a long time to download. Add a short audio or video clip. Our web site is: www.donaldcooper.com. I ain’t perfect...but it works!

The whole website subject is a book in itself. Tom Antion is an NSA member who is an expert on the creation, positioning and use of websites. He can be reached through his website www.antion.com. Another benchmark website is from Randy Gage, another NSA member, at www.gagedirect.com.

- 6) Create a demo video. The most cost-effective way is to get a client to video you. Otherwise, you’ll just have to “bite the bullet” and pay up! I believe that the most effective

demo video shows you in from a few different groups of different sizes...but that increases the cost.

It needs to be a two-camera shoot of high quality. The audience should be "miked" to record their reaction. Edit it into a 7-8 minute and a 30-40 minute format on the same demo video for those who want a fast look and those who want a longer look. Avoid audience interviews saying how great you are. No one believes them anyway.

- 7) Create a printed or electronic "Schedule of Fees" laid out clearly & professionally. Somehow, this creates the clear impression that you mean business and will not be cutting your price.
- 8) Photos should be recent and actually look like you. Don't create an visual expectation that your current body's reality can't deliver.
- 9) Have a separate fax number and a high-speed internet connection. Shared phone / fax lines make you look small time. Our business is run almost completely by email and internet and a slow dial-up connection will frustrate your clients and drive you crazy.

18. KEEP TRACK OF EVERYONE & EVERYTHING:

- 1) Get a proper contact management system, like Act, in place. You'll be trying to follow up with 100's of prospects, holds and bookings...and you'll die without it.

Note: When a Bureau puts on a hold, always ask them who the client is so that you can protect them if the client tries to go "around" the Bureau directly to you. If you don't get the engagement this year, you can create a "bring forward" file for 10 months down the road to call the Bureau to remind them to submit your name again. The Bureau will love you for that.

Similarly, if a client puts a "hold" on you directly that doesn't become a booking this year, use your contact management program to bring it forward so that you can proactively approach them 10 months later. In the interval, ask permission to add them to your free monthly E-Newsletter list so that you gently remind them about you and your value 12 times a year. (see Point #20 below for info on E-Newsletters)

- 2) Phone Log: Many phone calls are a potential booking or a detail, which, if not followed up, could eat you alive! I have 20-30 phone calls some days and a lousy memory.

Use your contact management program or, my low-tech solution. A simple 3-ring binder with lined paper and one divider. I start with a clean page each morning and document each call with the name, number, and the topic. When an issue is complete, it gets an X in the left margin and if unfinished for any reason, it gets a • in the margin. When a page is all X'ed, it goes to the back of the binder on the other side of the divider. This way I actually have a record of every phone call for the year, avoiding missed opportunities and loose ends that can kill you.

- 3) Speech Information Sheets: The careful documentation of every detail of an engagement is critical. We've developed a "Speech Information Sheet" that documents every detail and decision as it's confirmed.

19. THE POWER OF INCLUSION:

How can you bring more value to your client and to yourself by including more people in your presentation?

- 1) Suggest that clients consider including more people in your audience and show them how this will bring them extra value at little or no cost. For example, invite them to consider...
 - additional people from the company.
 - customers and key suppliers.
 - editor of their Industry Trade Magazine(s).
 - members of local Chamber of Commerce or Regional Development Authority.
 - local media (offer to do media interviews or appear on phone-in radio or TV shows, all of which brings extra publicity for the client...and for you).
 - local business students (help grow the customers of tomorrow and create more media potential).
 - if you're speaking in a smaller community, ask what other business leaders could be invited to make it a community affair.
- 2) When booked to speak in a particular city, review your data base for prospects and Bureaus in that city and invite a few of them to attend your presentation (with your client's permission, of course).
- 3) When speaking at a hotel or conference centre, look at the event board to see who else is having a conference at the same time. Track down their meeting planner, introduce yourself briefly, get their card and invite them to sit in on a bit of your presentation if they have time. Follow up with them later. Find out when they will plan their next meeting and send a copy of your client's letter stating what a great job you did while speaking at that same facility.

20. CREATE A VALUE-PACKED, FREE MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER AND A "FEEDBACK" FORM:

First, the **Newsletter**. This is smartest marketing thing we've ever done! It gently keeps our name and our value in front of clients and prospects 12 times a year.

And, it has allowed us to create a database of loyal fans to whom we market our "products" and our Public Seminars on a very cost-effective basis.

The secret of a successful E-Newsletter is short, "punchy" articles of real value and no more than 10% of the content devoted to "selling" your stuff.

Post past issues of your Newsletter on your website and also create a "Free Articles" section on your website where all of your past articles are available, listed by topic grouping, for easy searching.

Next, the **"Feedback & Follow-up"** form. The last page of your presentation handout should be a form that provides an opportunity to sign up for your E-Newsletter. The rest of the page can be used to solicit feedback, quotes about your presentation, and referrals. This allows you to build your database, provide specific quantified evaluations back to clients and follow up with hot prospects re new business!

21. “WORK THE CHAIN!”

- 1) Some of our most successful marketing comes from “working the chain”...(our term for using the links between associations and corporations to create more business). There are two interrelated “chains.”

THE ASSOCIATION CHAIN

- National associations, that are linked to...
- Provincial/city chapters, that are linked to...
- USA/International affiliates, that are linked to...
- Related associations, that are linked to...
- Other assocs. they know.
- The companies in the audience
- Spouses in the audience
- Other topics for all of the above

THE CORPORATE CHAIN

- Their trade association
- Other divisions of the company
- USA/Overseas branches
- Other executives they know
- Their local Chamber of Commerce
- Causes they belong to
- Other topics for all of the above

When you’ve been a big hit with an association audience, you will undoubtedly get business from some of the folks in the audience. Your “Feedback & Follow-up” sheet will deliver those leads. But, in addition, ask the association management about possibilities with affiliated associations here or abroad. Also, ask about other opportunities with that same association. They often have regional conferences...and you’re now a proven performer.

When your client is a corporation, and you’re a big hit, ask if they will recommend you to their industry association. It’s amazing how many will. They may even sponsor you at a major industry Trade Show as a way of raising their profile in the industry. Then, all the other companies in that industry see you...and that leads to more business!

Jump-starting “the chain”. Sometimes the best way to get into a “chain” is to speak to specific groups for a lower fee or no fee. This is mostly true of associations where you can get yourself in front of a large number of key corporate prospects.

I once accepted a slightly reduced fee from an American association on a tight budget that resulted in a \$220,000 contract for tapes and speeches from just one business owner in the audience.

22. BE A “FREE” FULL FEE SPEAKER!

- 1) Help clients find sponsors who will pay your fee. More than half of my work is now paid for by someone who wants to, or has to, “suck up” to some company or association. Many clients have still not picked up on this possibility, so it’s your job to suggest it.

A small optical chain could not afford my fee, so I suggested that they invite their top lens and frame suppliers to “participate.” Each would get to do a short product knowledge talk to the optical company’s staff and they were also invited to bring up 10 or their staff to my presentation. The client got my presentation at virtually no cost to them and I got a follow-up booking to speak at the International Sales Conference for the lens supplier.

- 2) A variation on this theme is to approach major players in an industry with the idea that they create customer appreciation events with you as the speaker. Many companies are looking for ways to add value to their customer relationships and creating speaker events is a much better way of doing that than having a cocktail reception, dinner, etc.

These customer appreciation events are best held in the morning when folks are fresh, the cost of feeding them is much lower and the number of “no shows” is the lowest.

23. ASSORTED MARKETING TIPS:

- 1) Always refer any engagement that you cannot accept to a Bureau that supports you or a Bureau that you want to build a relationship with. They'll love you for it! A few Bureaus pay a “finders fee” for such referrals. Be very careful about recommending another speaker directly to a client unless you know their work very well and know exactly what the client wants. You can burn yourself by recommending a speaker that bombs or that isn't a good fit!
- 2) Tell prospects that you will only accept an engagement if they undertake to allow you access to some of their best thinkers, so that you can do the research required to create a tailored, high-value presentation. Then, make sure you deliver! This approach of only accepting those engagements where you will have the opportunity to deliver real and specific value creates great confidence in your professionalism.
- 3) Help clients get their priorities straight! An association called me a few years ago to inquire about my fee. Someone had told them I'd be perfect and they wanted to know how much “perfect” was going to cost them. When they said that they couldn't afford my fee, I asked a few questions and discovered that they were planning an open bar for 450 people at the Friday night reception. I suggested that they encourage responsible drinking by having one free drink ticket and then a cash bar. Then, with the money they saved, they could hire a decent speaker.
- 4) If you've done several successful projects in one particular field, make up a one page “Special List” of those clients with their quotes about the value of your presentation. Send the list to their competitors offering your services to them. Create the feeling that they had better hire you fast before they fall too far behind!
- 5) Create “products” to sell, not only to create additional income, but also as a powerful part of your marketing. Articles, books, CD's, DVD's and Workbooks create confidence, bring lasting value for the audience and are an important part of your marketing. In addition to the usual CD's, DVD's and books, there are dozens of other products that can reinforce your message such as buttons, T-shirts, wallet cards with your key points, diplomas, etc. Create products!

Many clients are justifiably hesitant about speakers with products to sell and some now prohibit speakers from bringing product. They've been burned by speakers who use half of their platform time to plug their stuff. My policy is that if I can't bring my “product” to help people take action on improving their business and their life, I won't accept the engagement. My guarantee to the client is that I will mention my “products” for 15 seconds and only after I have been “thanked” at the end. No one has turned me down yet.
- 6) When speaking to an Association, we offer our value-added articles to their industry magazine as long as they will include a brief plug for my speaking and products and recommend our website.

24. FOLLOWING UP:

- 1) Write "thank you" letters, or emails, within a few days of an engagement. Include the presentation rating info and comments from your Feedback & Follow-up" forms (we're assuming here that it was amazing). Also, call the client within three days to personally thank them.

If a Bureau was involved, call them to report how it went, pass on any leads that you picked up and send them a copy of the "thank you" letter to the client. All "Thank you" letters should include an offer to be of further help in any way.

Always ask for a letter of comment / recommendation. These letters will be one of your most powerful marketing tools. If you don't get the letter and you know you were a hit, call the client, tell them that you know they're very busy. Ask them what they would say if they had time to write the letter. Then, ask permission to put those thoughts in an email which you will send to them to edit and print on their letterhead. This takes some guts...but it works!

Bonus tip for building your business with Bureaus:

When you speak to a client that booked you directly and you're a big hit, ask them if they ever use Bureaus, and if so, which one. Then, when you get a great "thank you" letter from the client, send a copy to that Bureau and you'll be sure to have their attention.

SECTION #6...THE PRESENTATION:

25. A GREAT PRESENTATION STARTS THE MINUTE YOU GET THE BOOKING!

- 1) Confirm all details using your "Speech Planning Sheet"
- 2) Start your research immediately. Create a Research File for each event. See my notes on "Tailoring Your Presentation" in Section #11 on page #7.
- 3) If you're a "content" speaker, create a detailed Handout that encourages retention and supports action. Always travel with a back-up copy of your Handouts in case the client has forgotten to make copies & cannot find the master you sent.
- 4) Send the client a detailed list of your A/V requirements and room set-up suggestions. Know what kind of room set-up works best for your presentation to various audience sizes. We have actual room set-up diagrams for various kinds of seating arrangements showing stage, screen, lighting and seating layouts.

Get the name & telephone number of the company supplying the A/V and staging. Call them directly a few weeks before your presentation to confirm that everything is understood and will be done. Find out what can't be done and figure out how you're going to work around that.
- 5) Get permission to offer your product.
- 6) Send a dynamite, short description of your presentation for their Conference Brochure. Do not leave it to them to write this. They'll usually get it wrong. Have current black & white and colour photos available, preferably, electronically.
- 7) If your client is an Association, as soon as the engagement is booked, offer a few of your best short articles to their industry trade magazine along with a "plug" for your presentation

at the upcoming Association conference. This creates a little “celebrity status” for you ahead of time which will likely increase your audience size and make you look like a big hit to the meeting planner.

You can also offer short articles to corporate clients well ahead of time to use in their event promotional material. This is especially useful if it’s a dealer sales or marketing event.

- 8) Show up as early as possible and contact the Meeting Planner as soon as you arrive. If you have tight connections, call along the way to assure them that you’ll be there.
- 9) When going to the USA, make sure that you’re able to get over the border by getting a multiple entry visa from the US Dept. of Immigration at any Canadian airport with pre-clearance. We could do a whole session on this one. It’s getting harder and harder. Call me if you need info.

26. YOUR VOCAL “SYSTEM” IS YOUR LIVING...KEEP IT HEALTHY:

- Learn to breath from your diaphragm, not your upper chest in order to project without straining your vocal chords. I had bad laryngitis at least twice a year until I learned this.
- If you have any sign of lactose intolerance, avoid dairy products for 24 hours before speaking. Dairy products cause phlegm and congestion in many people.
- Don’t strain your voice with conversation in loud rooms. The noisy reception the night before can wreck your voice for your speech tomorrow.
- Drink lots of water (bottled preferably) and not lots of alcohol or coffee. Stay hydrated. The air in airplanes is dryer than the desert and hotels rooms in winter are just as bad. On flights, drink one glass of water for each hour in the air.
- Humidify your hotel room by blocking the ceiling vent with tissue or the hotel shower cap, then turn the shower on full hot with the plug in the tub drain. (do not try this with stall showers) Keep the vent blocked and repeat the process every 6 hours. Before flying or while in a dry hotel room, I also coat the inside of my nose and my lips with Vaseline.
- Always drink warm water before and while speaking. I add Throat Coat tea, available at health food stores. It makes a big difference. If your throat is strained, sip this tea every once in a while during your presentation. You can work it into the natural pauses in your presentation to create dramatic effect. If you doubt this, watch old George Burns TV shows and see what he did with a cigar. (I said George Burns, not Bill Clinton)
- Eat little or nothing before speaking. It makes you sluggish and causes burping in many people.
- Exercise 20 minutes a day when on the road, even if it’s a brisk walk in the fresh air.

27. ATTEND CONFERENCE EVENTS:

Some speakers think it’s best to remain aloof and be the person of mystery. I disagree! Attend conference events. Develop a list of subtle questions that will give you up-to-the minute insights to add to your material. Get a feeling for their sense of humour; especially humour that you can use in your speech. Just be careful of your voice at those loud receptions.

28. PREPARING THE ROOM:

- 1) As soon as possible, check your presentation room for sound, lighting, staging, seating, screen location and size, A/V equipment. Note: Always request new batteries in mikes and slide clickers. If you do multiple days, replace batteries every day.
- 2) Sound checks: If you move around when you speak, sound-check the entire area. Avoid feedback. Remember that a room full of bodies absorb sound, so set the volume a bit higher than you think is required.

There are many opinions about mikes...lapel or hand held. I'm a lapel guy myself. I use my hands a lot and to me a lapel mike allows me to be much more natural. Fans of hand-helds, (and there are many), praise the range of vocal variation possible by moving their mike.

I travel with my own Freedom lapel mike. They are excellent. {Available from Bill Johnson in Phoenix, Arizona – (602)- 870-3333. It's a good idea to request a back-up mike. Since I carry my own mike, I still ask the client to order one and it becomes the back-up.

If the audience and the room are small, don't use a mike. It's pretentious and makes you look like a wimp.

- 3) Lighting:
 - Very few meeting rooms are well designed to create the best lighting for speaker and audience, but you can almost always improve a bad situation if you're there early enough and know what to do.
 - Lighting is so important! If you don't project anything on a screen, it's all much simpler...but if you do, the goal is to have darkness around the screen, light on you and enough light on the audience to take notes, to follow your handout, and to stay awake... especially after lunch!
 - Get the hotel staff to help you with lighting. Adjust lighting by using the switches and dimmers as best you can and mark the setting you have selected with masking tape on the side of each switch because someone will always change them on you after you've spent half an hour getting it right.
 - Next, you may still have too much light over your screen. Get the staff to unscrew some of the lights in the area of the screen (behind & directly in front until you get the best result). Often the facilities staff will not co-operate. Insist, firmly but nicely that they do. I find that asking them for the General Manager's extension number generally works.
- 4) Room temperature is also important. Get that looked after long before you start. Large rooms take time to correct.
- 5) Be your own stage manager.
 - Check sectional stages for squeaks. If caused by the sections binding against each other, get the crew to fix it or push business cards into the seams where the problem originates.
 - Using masking tape on the floor or stage, outline the areas where you can stand and be well lit and not be blocking the image being projected on the screen.
 - If you use a screen, it should not be centre stage, if at all possible. You should be centre stage. The screen should be to your left (the audience's right). Having the screen on your right is not as good, but acceptable.

We make this clear as part of our room set-up suggestions sent way ahead of the event. The problem is that if many of the other presenters are speaking from a podium that's set to one side of the stage, the client will generally want the screen to be centre stage...and you're stuck with the situation. In these situations, it's essential that you use masking tape to mark off the area directly in front of the screen where you must not stand if the program is "front projection"...or where you should not stand for long, if it's rear projection.

If the room is wide, a screen on either side of the stage will be required with your slides being projected on both. Always get the biggest screen(s) you can. Small screens kill your slides and make you look small time. (and the audience will always blame you for the small screen). I've often paid the AV people myself to get a bigger screen if the client is stuck with no more budget (do this in a very kind and sensitive way so as not to embarrass the client).

Also, adjust the projector to "fill" the screen. It's much more professional and maximizes image size.

- If the audience is larger than 45-50 people, use a stage of some kind. Do not use a stage with smaller groups.
- Understand the psychology of the stage. Each part of the stage has different power and meaning. Moving to the appropriate stage area will increase your effectiveness.

Down-Centre	=	Power, Intensity
Up-Centre	=	2nd in strength, but more aloof
Down-Right	=	Intimate, touching the heart
Down-Left	=	Lighter moments
Up-Left & Right	=	Weakest areas

Note: "Stage right" is to the speaker's right and "down stage" is closest to the audience.

6) Seating is very important and should be dealt with in your preconference info package sent to each client long before the presentation, but I've had rooms changed the night before and clients have thanked me in the end. For anything longer than an hour, classroom seating is by far the best for the audience. Theatre style, especially with chairs and rows crammed together, is not only uncomfortable, it's oppressive...and, as a practical matter, taking notes in your lap just doesn't work.

Psychologically, theatre seating is also not the best. People go to a classroom to learn and to the theatre to be entertained. If you want people to learn, put them in a learning environment.

Chairs should be at least 6" apart and rows 20" apart. Two off-centre aisles are always better than one centre aisle. If the room is very wide, both theatre and classroom style work better set in a slight arc, making it more comfortable for everyone to look into the centre.

Also, the first row of seating should not be more than six or eight feet from the stage. More than that creates a "pit" between you and the audience into which much of your energy and passion falls and dies. When the first few front rows remain unoccupied the problem is even worse.

Using masking tape, close off the back two or three rows so that people are encouraged to sit closer to the front and also to leave seats at the back available to latecomers.

The third kind of seating, of course, is “rounds”...those wonderful round banquet tables that leave half the audience with their backs to you. If possible, get the client to put only four people to a table, using only the part of the round table that's facing the stage so that everyone is facing you. Of course, if you're speaking after lunch or dinner and this is where they've been eating, that isn't going to happen.

Avoid “deep” U-shaped set-ups if you project anything on a screen. You and the screen have to fight for centre stage and you will have your back to part of the audience much of the time.

- 7) Put a large glass or two of warm water with Throat Coat Tea on the stage. (Throat Coat Tea is available at most health food stores)
- 8) Put a small digital clock on the podium or other visible location. On a piece of masking tape on the clock write the time of any planned breaks and the finish time. When the time on the tape is the same as the time on the clock...shut up, you're done!

29. PREPARING YOURSELF:

- 1) Physically, how do you look? Check hair & clothing, take your name badge off, fly zipped up is good, tuck microphone wires inside your clothes. Give yourself the “once over” in the mirror before you go on.
- 2) Psychologically, are you focused on the needs of your audience? Are you prepared with an energy level appropriate to the audience size? Develop your own final preparation ritual from stretching to meditation or prayer. Whatever works in preparing you to make a difference in these people's lives.

Note: If the program is running late, check with the Meeting Planner as to whether you should do your agreed length of program or shorten it to get them back, or partly back, on schedule.

30. YOUR INTRODUCTION:

- 1) Introductions are important. While the audience is listening to your introduction, they're deciding whether or not to listen to you. Your introduction must answer these 3 questions...
 - What value will I get from this?
 - What are this person's qualifications?
 - Is this going to be interesting or dull?

Please note, nobody cares that you married your childhood sweetheart, have two lovely children, a dog named Susie, enjoy long walks, Harley reunions and gardening. Leave it out, unless it specifically answers one of the three questions above.

- 2) The client should have received your carefully crafted (and no more than 40 second) introduction well before the event, as part of your preconference package...but always carry a spare. Your introduction, typed large and on one page, should come with the specific instruction that it is to be read exactly as written. It's more difficult to do a great speech after a lousy introduction.
- 3) At least a half hour before you present, search out the person who will be introducing you and go over your introduction with them. Remind them to please read it as written. Make sure you know their name so that you can thank them as you come on. Ask them to practice reading your introduction, with feeling, but not too quickly, at least twice before going on stage.

- 4) Do not be introduced by a big shot who will then be leaving the room. It devalues your presentation.

SECTION #7...IN CONCLUSION:

These are not the only things that you need to know about the business of speaking. In fact, many of these points may not be even right for you and your speaking career. But I do hope that some of these points will be helpful. Speaking, like all of life, is a journey. A wonderful journey, if you choose. We have the profound possibility of creating extraordinary lives...for ...ourselves and for thousands of others!

Regards...Donald Cooper