Tips on becoming a great communicator

In history, the persuasive, inspiring speakers have changed the World. Consider Lincoln and his 2 Minute 'Gettysburg Address', Churchill's rousing call to arms during the Blitz and Nelson Mandela in the reconciliation of South Africa.

"I have a dream", so said Martin Luther King and there would not be a black man in the White House if Obama was not so eloquent? Perhaps those soaring stars are too high for you, but they all started as nervous novices.

1. Let the topic work through your sub-consciousness; brainstorm the theme to find your direction – your message and only then commence putting it down. The idea is to flesh out your story in your head.

2. Use a mind-map to follow your theme and direction and then test your ideas with questions and imagination.

3. Write it out in full – warts and all and then read it, record it and see what resonates. Then, make amendments to elevate your message – language, personal stories and anecdotes.

4. Find your headline and fashion an arresting opening around and also your final words (what you are leaving with them).

5. Use opening words to find your conclusion – tell them what you are going to say, then tell them and then tell them what you said – three chances at your message.

6. Polish and re-polish it to make it the greatest you can achieve.

7. Look forward with positive enthusiasm to your speech/presentation – you will get better every time you do it.

8. When called on, stand, smile, walk slowly to the front and look at everyone; pause before speaking those powerful first words and use gesture for emphasis.

9. Use the power of three to emphasise and reinforce your message

10. Speak slowly and use silence for effect – it's your vocal/visual impact – use light and shade for emphasis.

11. Make sure you have something worthwhile to say ad enjoy your opportunity to share your story.

12. Read the audience and if possible, adjust your message for maximum effect – a humour spot may help.

13. Finally, listen to others and consider how it could be done better