

The Reluctant Workshop Presenter **Don't let these common fears hold you back.**

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A line from Caroline Casey's speech at the Green Festival intrigued me. She said, "Our security used to be in laying low. Now, our security lies in showing up."

As independent professionals, it's more important than ever to take on the challenge and speak up for our businesses. Sure, there can be fear in giving a presentation; there's a lot of judgment in the world. But, what would it mean to your bottom line if you gave a talk that was focused, relevant and naturally persuasive? For our businesses to flourish, it's time to get past any reluctance and dive in. Put together a talk for a local group, for Biznik or consider creating an on-line seminar. Do something that stretches you.

Some people I've coached have had very little fear when presenting a Powerpoint slide show for their company. But now, when it comes to talking about themselves and their businesses, the vulnerability factor kicks in. Some people have grown so accustomed to others speaking for them; the thought of standing up and using their own voice is too intimidating. Some people have been criticized so severely that they'll go to any length to avoid giving a speech. I've seen people spend thousands of dollars on advertising, using it as the only component of their marketing plan. What a waste, not only of dollars, but of precious life force.

When we understand where the fear comes from and work with it in a positive way, we'll have more business than we know what to do with. Our self-confidence will be a shining light for others. Some of the most brilliant public speakers I've seen and coached have had the worst stage fright. They simply made a decision to do what it takes to break free of it.

So, what does it take to show up and get results?

1. A belief in your product or service so strong that it overrides any anxiety.
2. A belief that you are the perfect person to be presenting these particular ideas and suggestions.
3. A true desire to help and empower someone else.
4. A well-thought out presentation that influences your target audience to take action.

When you tap into these four elements, you won't be able to hold yourself back. Look for the most appropriate opportunities to communicate your message with as many people as possible. One hour in front of a large audience is ripe with possibilities. (Beware – it can have serious negative effects if done too soon, without proper preparation.) Any major city has hundreds of networking venues looking for speakers. A simple Google search will help you find them.

Watch for these common mistakes that many speakers make and get help where you need it.

- Lack of clear, organized structure
- Poor delivery
- Little or no emotional or intellectual connection
- A weak call to action

When we step into a bigger domain, our hidden issues have a way of showing up with us. All parts of us become more visible. What made us successful at one point in our lives is usually the thing that's holding us back from our next step. Take a look. There's a lot of potential for personal growth as well as the growth of your business. When you're ready for a significant leap, I invite you to consider creating a dynamic speech or hosting a lively workshop.