

# Pitch Perfect Summary

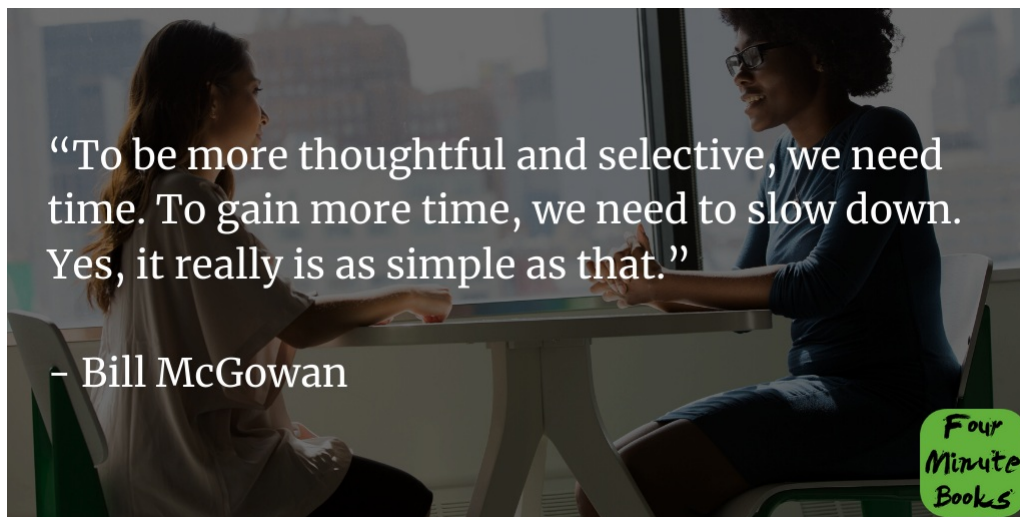
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 [fourminutebooks.com](https://fourminutebooks.com)

**1-Sentence-Summary:** *Pitch Perfect* is the ultimate guide to becoming more efficient at communication in work, at home, and everywhere you go.

**Read in:** 4 minutes

**Favorite quote from the author:**



Do you remember the last time you had to sit through a PowerPoint presentation? Chances are the slides were filled with words and the speaker wasn't that exciting. It made you wish that you were at a TED talk instead, right?

Other times you find yourself telling your coworkers a story only to be met with awkward silence when you're done. I've too often been the one telling the story and it's not fun for it to fall flat.

We'd all like to become great storytellers, be as charismatic as people who give TED talks, and feel confident while talking with others. But what does it really take?

That's what Bill McGowan's book *Pitch Perfect: How to Say It Right the First Time, Every Time* is all about. This one will give you all the courage you need for the next time you have to make small talk or convince your boss to give you a raise!

Here are the 3 most helpful lessons that will help you become a better communicator:

1. No matter how good your idea or message, it won't go anywhere if you don't know how to deliver it well.

2. Slowing down and taking your time during conversations and presentations is a sure way to exude confidence and protect yourself from embarrassment.
3. Preparation is the key to overcoming your fears and avoiding the awkwardness that comes from being too spontaneous.

You're just a few simple tips away from improving your charisma and persuasiveness! Let's dive right into these lessons!

## Lesson 1: **It's not what you say that impacts people, but how you say it that makes a real difference for better or worse.**

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So what does it mean to be *Pitch Perfect*? The concept is all about conveying the right message to the right person with the right timing and in the right way. Getting the sweet spot here is necessary for success at home and in your job.

At work, good communication skills make you more likely to get that promotion. You only get a few small chances to impress your leaders and climb up the ladder.

Let's say that your boss wants to get your ideas on what's holding your company back from growing. If you're reluctant and shy about it, you might lose a great opportunity to shine.

But on the other hand, a blunt statement about weaknesses the business has could make your boss overlook you for the promotion. **Even research confirms that the biggest problem in the way of advancement is bad communication skills.** Being racist, telling offensive jokes, avoiding eye contact, cursing, and crying are just a few examples.

This is why it's so important to get things right on the first try. If you want to get results, you've got to have pitch-perfect communication.

## Lesson 2: **If you want to be confident and avoid embarrassment in your presentations and conversations, talk slower.**

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A lot of people talk without thinking. I know it's gotten me in plenty of trouble! It's easy to get nervous and speak quickly, but you'll make a lot of mistakes. And the problem is, once you've blurted out something wild, you can't take it back.

We talk rapidly and longer when we're anxious or defensive. Our thoughts also run faster when we're nervous and then our mouth follows. You might think you sound more convincing when you do this. But it actually makes you sound more uncertain and neurotic and you can irreparably harm your reputation.

A classic example is when BP had an oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. The chairman at the time, Tony Hayward, commented by saying: “There’s no one who wants this thing over more than I do. You know, I’d like my life back.” His carelessness here ended up costing him his job.

That’s why it’s so vital that you practice speaking slowly. **Don’t be afraid of pausing and taking your time to think about what you say before speaking.** Doing this will demonstrate confidence and keep you from saying something you might regret. It helps you do this by letting your brain have the time it needs to structure your thinking.

Steve Jobs, for example, one time really wanted to express the massive success Apple had achieved. He slowed down significantly to emphasize:

| “Apple is the number one ... mobile devices company”

and then, after a long pause and in almost a whisper, he finished:

| “... in the world.”

### Lesson 3: **Spontaneity can be awkward, but preparation will help you avoid this.**

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One night Abraham Washington, a professional wrestling manager, commented on wrestler Titus O’Neil’s match. He stated: He “was like Kobe Bryant at a hotel in Colorado ... He’s unstoppable.” But Kobe was currently a suspect for raping a woman at a Colorado hotel. Washington’s lack of preparation and talking without thinking got him fired.

**These kinds of problems are embarrassing, but we can prevent them by preparing well when we have to speak.** One thing I’ve done to prepare for casual conversations, for example, is come up with a list of commonly asked questions I can ask. People usually like to talk about family, where they’re from, or your profession, for example.

I also think of how I would answer if someone wants to know more about me. It’s important in these situations to not overshare. This little bit of preparation will help you not say something that will make your new friend feel awkward.

Preparing well is like having an insurance policy on your career, especially if you’re in a position that you have to commentate, for example. For some speaking or teaching positions, however, your preparation happens throughout your life. It’s important to utilize this by preparing stories that give good examples of your points.

One way of doing this is by role-playing with friends and family. I’ve had a love-hate relationship with this technique since trying it out when I was a missionary. I hate it because it can be really awkward. But I love it because it *really* works well. Try practicing with anyone you can find to make your next presentation or conversation go smoothly.

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## **Pitch Perfect Review**

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Whoa, this book has a ton of great advice on communication skills! *Pitch Perfect* is a great book that will transform the way you think about getting your message across. Whether you're wanting to improve at casual conversation or trying to get your employer to give you a raise, this book is helpful for all situations!

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## **Who would I recommend the Pitch Perfect summary to?**

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The 31-year-old engineer who feels like they're always sharing stories with their coworkers that fall flat, the 53-year-old that gives powerpoint presentations in meetings often but feels like they're boring, and anyone who wants to improve their conversation skills.