

SIMPLEST GUIDE IN PUBLIC SPEAKING

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Writing a book, no matter how “simple” it may seem, is a journey that demands passion, patience, and the unwavering support of others. As I reflect on the pages of this work, I am filled with deep gratitude for the individuals and organizations whose influence, encouragement, and belief helped make this dream a reality.

First and foremost, my heartfelt thanks go to Paradigm Initiative for granting me the incredible opportunity to serve as a presentation facilitator for the AjegunleLIFE Project for over six transformative years. Training more than a thousand vibrant youths in the heart of Ajegunle, Lagos, has been one of the most fulfilling chapters of my life. That experience not only sharpened my teaching skills but deepened my conviction that public speaking is a tool for empowerment, change, and destiny redefinition.

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This book is not just mine. It is ours, a celebration of community, mentorship, purpose, and shared victories.

Thank you for walking this path with me. I will never forget.

With deepest gratitude,

Favour Dakoru

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the “Simplest Guide in Public Speaking.”

In a world inundated with countless books, videos, and masterclasses all promising to elevate your presentation skills, we often find ourselves overwhelmed by advice that feels disconnected from our lived experiences. Many of these resources are tailored for different cultures, contexts, and communication styles. While they may be helpful, they often leave the African or diasporan speaker feeling like a square peg trying to fit into a round hole. What captivates an audience in Shanghai or captivates a boardroom in Chicago may fall flat in a town hall in Ibadan or a community center in Peckham, London. It's time for a guide that truly understands our terrain, our people, our rhythm, our energy, and most importantly, our stories.

This book is that guide.

It is crafted for you, the everyday Nigerian, the aspiring diaspora trailblazer, the streetwise hustler turned thought leader, and the professional seeking to make a real impact with every word. This is not a textbook filled with jargon and complex theories. It's a practical, culturally tuned, and deeply relatable tool that reveals the simplest and most powerful principles that have helped countless individuals transform their public speaking abilities from shaky to sharp, from forgettable to unforgettable.

Let's be honest. Most of us grew up hearing "Public speaking is for people who are naturally bold." But if you've ever told a story to your

friends that had them laughing, clapping, or crying, you've already tasted the magic of connection through words. Remember those childhood moments, standing on a stool to recite a poem at your end-of-year school party, or leading a praise session during church fellowship, or even hyping your favorite football team with passion in a viewing center? Those moments weren't rehearsed TED Talks, but they were powerful forms of public speaking. The difference between then and now is intentionality. This book helps you become intentional about that power.

Here in Nigeria, and across many African communities, public speaking is embedded in our culture. Our elders gather in village meetings and speak with authority. Our market women have mastered the art of persuasion long before sales scripts were invented. Our pastors preach with such passion that their messages stay with you for days. Our musicians lace their lyrics with messages that inspire nations. These are all forms of public speaking. The challenge, however, is channeling that raw, natural talent into organized, strategic, and impactful presentations, whether you are addressing a crowd of ten or ten thousand, online or offline.

This guide simplifies the entire process into six unforgettable principles. These steps are not just theory, they are the real-life blueprint that I, and many others, have used over the years to communicate effectively on diverse stages, from street corners in Ajegunle to boardrooms in Abuja, from youth summits in Ghana to digital workshops with audiences in New York and Toronto.

Whether you are a teacher delivering a lesson, an MC hosting a wedding in Abeokuta, a red carpet compere at an awards night in Los Angeles, a pastor preaching in Accra, a politician addressing constituents in Enugu, or a business owner pitching your idea to investors in Dubai, you are a public speaker. And every word you say

has the potential to inspire action, influence thought, or ignite change. That is the power you hold. This book shows you how to harness that power effectively.

In today's digital world, presentation tools like slides, projectors, microphones, and video conferencing software offer endless possibilities. But these tools are only as effective as the speaker behind them. Many professionals outsource the creation of their presentation slides, and while this can be convenient, it can also become a pitfall. Picture this: You're scheduled to speak at a tech summit in Lagos. The hall is packed. You step onto the stage and suddenly, your laptop crashes. The slides your assistant prepared are gone. You're left staring at a blank screen. Panic sets in. But imagine if you had created those slides yourself, understood every transition, and memorized the structure of your content. That's the kind of confidence this guide empowers you with.

Learning to create your slides using programs like PowerPoint is not just about being tech-savvy, it's about ownership. It's about being able to stand tall and deliver, no matter what goes wrong. Whether you're in a high-powered boardroom in Lekki or a community center in Chicago, being in control of your presentation helps you stay grounded and credible.

Now, let's not pretend like time isn't a factor. Many people will say, "I don't have time to learn PowerPoint," or "I'm not a tech person." I understand. Life is busy. But consider this: the two hours you spend learning how to organize your slides could save you from two years of missed opportunities. Plus, in a world where knowledge is abundant and easily accessible, there are countless people online and offline who are ready to teach you these skills for a token. The question is, how committed are you to being excellent?

Public speaking is not about perfection. It's about connection. And connection begins with preparation, knowing your material, mastering your flow, understanding your audience, and being flexible enough to adapt when needed. That's why this guide also emphasizes the need to deeply understand your content. So even if the power goes out or your mic fails during a speech at a youth conference in Port Harcourt, you can still deliver like a pro.

Think of this book as your coach, your companion, your mentor-in-print. It's filled with real examples, practical exercises, and deeply insightful tools to guide you. You don't need a PhD in Communication to apply the principles in this book. What you need is commitment. With just six principles, yes, only six, you'll begin to see remarkable changes in how you speak, how you're perceived, and how your messages land with impact.

I have personally seen young people who could barely introduce themselves during training sessions grow to become compelling hosts at international events. I've watched market traders become motivational speakers, and introverted programmers become TEDx presenters. This transformation is real. It can be yours.

So, make this book your go-to reference. Highlight it. Revisit it before every speech. Share it with others. Use it to rehearse. Carry it with pride. Because every time you prepare for a presentation, whether in a town hall, a classroom, a social media live session, or a virtual pitch meeting, you're stepping into greatness.

Enjoy the journey. And when you succeed, and you surely will, I look forward to hearing your story.

Smiles!

NOTE

Understanding the fundamental principles that govern success in public speaking is like discovering the laws of flight, it doesn't matter who you are or where you're from; if you apply the principles correctly, you will soar. These principles, referred to as laws in this guide, are not based on trends or fleeting techniques. They are time-tested truths, drawn from years of close observation, trial, and real-world success. When embraced and applied, these laws create conditions where excellence in communication becomes inevitable.

Public speaking is often described as one of the most feared activities in the world. Some say people would rather face death than speak in public. This fear is not unfounded. We've all had that moment, whether in a classroom, a boardroom, a church, or at a wedding, where our throat dries up, palms sweat, and words get stuck somewhere between the heart and the tongue. That moment of panic can feel eternal. But what if I told you that mastering a few key laws could transform that fear into a powerful force? That the same stage that once intimidated you could become your arena of triumph?

This book is about giving you that edge. A guide to help you speak not just with confidence, but with influence.

Let's bring it home: Imagine you're a young Nigerian entrepreneur pitching your idea at a business grant competition. Your product is solid, your figures are tight, but your nerves betray you. The judges shift in their seats, uninterested. Now, flip the script. Same entrepreneur, same product, but this time, your voice is steady, your presence magnetic, and your story persuasive. The audience leans in. The judges nod. You win.

That's the power of applying the laws in this book.

And this power is not limited to boardrooms or conference halls. It shows up when a teacher in Warri inspires students with a history lesson, when a pastor in Abuja delivers a sermon that moves hearts, or when a bride's sister in London gives a toast that brings the room to tears and laughter in the same breath. Public speaking is not only for "keynote speakers." If you speak to people, on WhatsApp status, in a business meeting, on a podcast, in a classroom, at a town hall, or at a family meeting. you are a public speaker. And you need to be good at it.

The great thing is that you don't have to start from scratch. The blueprint is already in your hands. These laws have been used. intentionally or intuitively, by some of the finest speakers our generation has ever seen.

Think of Barack Obama, whose speeches are remembered not just for the content but for the cadence, warmth, and command of presence. Or Bill Clinton, who had the unique ability to make a room of 10,000 feel like a one-on-one conversation. These aren't just gifted men, they are practitioners of proven communication laws. The difference between talent and mastery is training.

In the Nigerian and African context, we see similar excellence. Fela Durotoye didn't become one of Africa's most sought-after speakers by chance. He honed the craft. He studied the art. And he applied the laws. His voice has moved nations, mobilized youth, and inspired entrepreneurs. Praise Fowowe, a family life coach and speaker, captures rooms not just with facts, but with deep emotional insight, humor, and practical storytelling. These men, and many others like them, understand something most don't: public speaking is a skill, and like any other, it can be learned, practiced, and perfected.

You don't have to be famous to benefit from this knowledge. Maybe you're the go-to spokesperson at church announcements. Maybe you anchor the family WhatsApp group. Or maybe you've been given a chance to moderate a panel discussion at a youth conference. Whatever your platform, these principles can help you shine brighter, speak clearer, and connect deeper.

It's also important to acknowledge that speaking as a Nigerian or African in today's global stage comes with its own unique expectations, and opportunities. Whether you're addressing a crowd in Port Harcourt or presenting on Zoom to an international audience in Canada, your ability to adapt your delivery without losing your identity is crucial. This guide equips you with that agility. You will learn how to strike a balance between being authentically you and effectively universal in your approach.

Now let me be clear: this book is not promising to turn you into a Fela Durotoye overnight. But it does promise to give you the tools he, and others, use every single time they step up to speak. Tools that work if you work them.

Each law in this book is simple but powerful. They are not written in technical jargon or flowery language, but in the plain, relatable terms of everyday people. That's because public speaking, at its core, is about connection, not perfection. It's about sincerity, structure, and style. It's about knowing who you are, understanding who you're speaking to, and delivering a message in a way that sticks.

Whether you're a teenager preparing for a debate, a professional pitching a business idea in the diaspora, a social media influencer trying to engage your followers, or a teacher aiming to impact lives, these principles are for you.

So take your time with this book. Revisit the pages. Practice the principles. Own your voice. Because when the time comes, and it always does, you want to be ready not just to speak, but to move people. The laws in this book will guide you from nervous whispers to confident declarations. From hesitating in the shadows to commanding the spotlight.

Let's walk this journey together. Welcome to a new chapter in your life, the chapter where your voice begins to matter more than ever.

Chapter One

The Law of Eye Contact

Unlocking Connection, Trust, and Influence

The eyes, often called the “windows to the soul” are one of the most powerful tools a speaker can wield. Long before words are spoken, eyes communicate. They tell a story of their own. They reveal confidence, fear, honesty, doubt, joy, or tension. In the realm of public speaking, eye contact becomes far more than a mechanical action, it becomes a bridge. A bridge between you, the speaker, and the minds and hearts of your audience.

The Silent Language of the Eyes

Have you ever been in a room where someone entered and, without saying a word, commanded attention just by how they looked at people? That’s not charisma by accident. That’s visual engagement, one of the most compelling tools in any speaker’s arsenal.

Eyes transmit nonverbal cues faster than words. In fact, according to psychological studies, the majority of communication is nonverbal, and eye contact plays a leading role. When you stand before an audience and intentionally make eye contact, you’re not just looking, you’re saying, “I see you. I respect you. I want you to hear what I’m saying.” That single gesture is capable of breaking barriers, even before your first sentence.

But beyond perception and energy, eye contact allows you to gauge

your most important feedback system: the audience itself. Are they engaged? Are they confused? Are they inspired? Are they nodding in agreement, or struggling to stay awake? Your eyes become sensors that help you make real-time adjustments to your tone, speed, and content.

What Eye Contact Actually Does for You

When done right, eye contact does the following:

1. Builds Trust: We naturally trust people who look us in the eyes. In a presentation, direct eye contact fosters credibility. If you look away too often, your audience may sense fear, dishonesty, or lack of confidence, even if your content is solid.
2. Increases Retention: People are more likely to remember what was said when the speaker made eye contact. The eyes help lock in memory and sharpen focus.
3. Commands Attention: We are wired to respond to gaze. A speaker who actively connects visually is harder to ignore.
4. Reduces Fear: Ironically, the very thing many new speakers fear, eye contact, is one of the best remedies for stage fright. Why? Because when you make eye contact, your attention shifts outward instead of obsessing inward about your fear.
5. Encourages Feedback: Whether you're speaking in Lagos, London, or Los Angeles, good eye contact helps you "read the room." If people are distracted, frowning, nodding, or smiling, you'll notice it, and you can respond accordingly.

Common Mistakes in Eye Contact and How to Fix Them

1. Looking Over Their Heads

One of the most common errors, especially for beginners, is to look above the audience's heads. Some do this to avoid nervousness. But the problem is that the audience can tell. You come across as disconnected or robotic. The secret is to look into their eyes, not over them. If you're feeling nervous, you can look just between the eyes—it still gives the illusion of direct contact.

2. Fixating on One Person

Some speakers latch onto a single face—often someone smiling or nodding. While it's comforting, it alienates the rest of the room. Instead, divide your eye contact. Think of it like watering a garden—you need to sprinkle attention across the entire field.

3. Staring or Not Blinking

Too much of a good thing can be harmful. Don't fix your eyes on someone like a statue. It becomes unsettling. Instead, blink naturally, and every few seconds, move your gaze to another person or section of the audience.

4. Avoiding Eye Contact Entirely

Sometimes, nerves lead speakers to stare at their notes, slides, or the

floor. This completely severs connection. If your message matters, your audience deserves your eyes.

Cultural Context Matters

As you rise as a speaker, especially across diverse platforms from TEDx stages to town halls, from classrooms in Nairobi to boardrooms in New York, you must understand cultural nuances around eye contact.

In many African communities, especially among the Yoruba or Igbo, younger individuals are taught that too much direct eye contact with elders can be interpreted as disrespectful or prideful. In Asian cultures, especially in China and Japan, prolonged eye contact can be seen as aggressive or intrusive, especially in hierarchical or formal settings.

Contrast that with Western cultures like the U.S., Canada, or much of Europe, where steady eye contact is interpreted as respect, confidence, and transparency.

So what's the solution? Research your audience. Understand who they are, what they value, and what's appropriate. If you're speaking at an intergenerational African event, balance your gaze respectfully, making eye contact, but with warmth and humility. If you're presenting to international executives, direct eye contact may be expected and appreciated.

Practical Exercises to Master Eye Contact

Here are simple drills to help you strengthen your eye contact game:

1. Practice with a Mirror: Rehearse your speech while looking into your own eyes in the mirror. Get used to your presence and learn to maintain contact.
2. Record Yourself: Watch for natural blinking, pacing, and gaze. Are your eyes darting or focused?
3. Use the “One Thought, One Look” Rule: Every time you complete a full thought or sentence, shift your gaze to another part of the audience.
4. The 3 Second Rule: Hold eye contact with one person for about three seconds, long enough to connect, not long enough to creep them out.
5. Use a Mental Grid: Divide your audience into left, center, and right. Make sure each section feels included by rotating your eye contact evenly.

Eye contact is not just about sight, it’s about insight. When you truly see your audience, you begin to speak in a way that matters. You tune into their mood, their needs, their energy. And more importantly, they feel seen. In a world where distractions are abundant, one of the most powerful gifts you can offer your audience is your full, focused presence, eye to eye.

Mastering this law may seem simple, but it is foundational. If your voice carries the message, your eyes carry the connection.

The Law of Eye Contact is the first step in turning your speech into an experience and your presence into something unforgettable.

The spotlight is on you. Now...look them in the eye.

ACTION STEPS

Take 10-15 minutes to deliver a short speech or presentation in front of a mirror, friend or group of friends. Focus on maintaining natural eye contact throughout your delivery. Remember, it is not about avoiding blinking but about establishing genuine connections with your audience

through your gaze.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

-

How comfortable did you feel maintaining eye contact during your practice session?

-

Did you notice any differences in the audience's response when you maintained eye contact versus when you did not?

CHAPTER TWO

The Law of Content

Mastering What You Say Before You Step on Stage

If you've ever sat in a lecture hall, yawning through a dull presentation, or maybe attended a seminar where the speaker blew your mind with just a few words, you've already witnessed the difference content can make.

In the world of public speaking, the content of your message is your currency. It's your power. And it's what separates great speakers from forgettable ones. While delivery, voice modulation, body language, and even your fashion sense matter, it's the substance of your message, what you say and how well you say it, that truly leaves an impact.

Content Is King

You might have heard the phrase "content is king" used in digital marketing or social media. But in public speaking, it's the law.

You can have the charisma of a celebrity, the stage presence of a rock star, and the confidence of a lion, but if your content is weak, scattered, or unclear, your speech will land flat.

Think about the last time a speaker gave you goosebumps. What did they say? Chances are, they weren't just loud or funny, they said something that mattered, and they said it well. That's the essence of content: meaningful, relevant, and well-structured ideas delivered with

clarity.

Start with Mastery: Know Your Stuff

Here's the truth, students don't like being lied to (No one does anyway). And they can tell when you're bluffing.

Before you stand before any audience, be it your classmates, a conference crowd, or a community group, ask yourself:

"Do I understand this topic deeply enough to teach it?"

You don't have to know everything, but you must know enough. Enough to explain it simply. Enough to handle questions. Enough to inspire confidence. This is where research becomes your best friend. Use it to gather facts, current trends, stories, case studies, statistics, whatever it takes to build rock-solid content.

In school, we research for assignments. **As a speaker, you research to change lives.**

Structure is Strength: Build the Skeleton

Great content isn't a jumble of ideas, it has structure.

Here's a proven format you can use:

1. Introduction: Capture attention with a story, quote, or question.
2. Body: Break down your key points (usually 3–5). Explain, illustrate, and emphasize.
3. Conclusion: Recap the main points. End with a strong statement or call-to-action.

Let's say you're speaking on "Leveraging Technology for Academic Success."

Intro: Start with a quick story "Last semester, I almost failed a course... until I discovered a free app that saved my grades."

Body Points:

The distractions vs benefits of tech

Must-have apps for students

How to manage screen time and boost focus

Conclusion: "The right use of technology doesn't just help you pass, it helps you excel. Let's be smart with our smartphones."

Boom! You've just created a powerful message.

The Power of Stories, Humor & Quotes

Stories make your speech stick.

Humans are wired for storytelling. A good story makes your content relatable and memorable. Whether it's a personal experience, a friend's hustle, or a tale from history, stories engage the heart and brain at once.

Humor breaks tension.

Don't try to be a comedian. Just be real. A funny observation about hostel life or an unexpected twist in your story can crack the ice and keep your audience attentive.

Quotes add credibility.

Throw in a quote from Nelson Mandela, Chimamanda Adichie, or even Elon Musk, and suddenly your point sounds richer. But make sure you use quotes sparingly and meaningfully.

Repetition = Retention

Have you ever heard Bishop David Oyedepo say something like:

"What you don't know, you don't know. What you won't learn, you can't know."

That's repetition with wisdom.

This is called the Law of Repetition. The best speakers repeat key points in slightly different ways so the audience doesn't just hear it, they remember it.

If your message is, "Time management is key to academic success," don't just say it once.

Say it, show it, repeat it.

"If you don't manage your time, your time will manage you."

"Your GPA is a reflection of your calendar."

"Smart students don't just study hard, they study on time."

Speak in Simple Sentences

You're not in a courtroom or a science symposium. Unless your

audience is made up of professors, avoid complicated words and jargon. Use clear, simple language.

Big words don't impress, they confuse.

Clear words connect.

For example: Instead of: "The ramifications of procrastination on academic performance are dire."

Say: "If you keep postponing your studies, you'll end up failing."

Mic drop.

Slides Are Support, Not Substance

PowerPoint slides are tools, not the main act. Avoid reading your slides word-for-word. Instead, use them to show what you're saying.

Add:

Photos to tell a story

Graphs to show data

Bullets to highlight points

Always rehearse your slides. A messy or confusing presentation is like driving without directions. You'll confuse your audience and lose their trust.

Remember: You are the message, your slides are just the map.

Every Opportunity Is a Showcase

Every speaking opportunity, even in class or group projects, is a chance to showcase your growth.

College and polytechnic students often miss this. They wait for “big” stages. But the best way to become a Smart Speaker is to treat every opportunity, even a 3-minute talk in your department meeting, like it's TEDx.

Let your content shine. Let it reflect your preparation. Let it prove your growth.

Preparation Is the Real Flex

If there's one thing that will forever separate amateur speakers from the elite, it's this: preparation.

Great speakers don't wing it. They plan. They rehearse. They time themselves. They visualize their audience. They refine their slides. They ask friends to listen and give feedback.

Even if you know the topic inside out, prepare like your reputation depends on it.

Because it does.

Final Thoughts: You Are the Message

At the end of the day, your content is not just what you say, it's who you are. It's your ideas, your experience, your passion, and your vision.

Own it. Craft it. Respect it.

In every lecture room, hall, or event where you speak, let your message be so clear, so deep, so rich, that no one forgets you.

Because when your content is solid, your impact is inevitable.

ACTION STEP

Dedicate some time to brainstorming and outlining key points for a topic that interests you or an area you would like to improve your knowledge on. Focus on simplicity, clarity, and engaging the reader or listener. This could be a topic related to your profession, a hobby, or something you are passionate about.

PEER REVIEW

Share your outlines with a friend or colleague and ask for feedback on the structure and clarity of your content. Offer to do the same for them in return. This exchange can help you refine your communication skills and gain valuable insights even in the absence of a formal presentation.

CHAPTER THREE

The Law of Time Management

Because Every Second Counts on Stage and in Life

It was a hot Friday afternoon at a university auditorium in Lagos. The program was scheduled to begin at 12 noon. The hall was filled with students, lecturers, some clergy, and industry executives invited to speak on “Leadership and the Next Generation.”

By 12:20, the first speaker, an energetic youth leader, took the mic. He was brilliant, no doubt. His story was inspiring. The crowd was nodding, clapping, even cheering at some points. But by 12:50, the atmosphere changed. Students started checking their phones. Lecturers whispered among themselves. One executive quietly stepped out.

Why?

The speaker had long exceeded his 15-minute time slot and showed no sign of ending. “Let me round up with this last point,” he said, then went on for 20 more minutes.

His message was golden, but his delivery violated one of the most sacred laws of public speaking: The Law of Time Management.

Time Is a Non-Renewable Resource

In the fast-paced world of speaking and leadership, time is not just

money, it's your reputation.

Whether you are a student presenting a final year project, a pastor delivering a Sunday sermon, a teacher handling a class period, or an executive pitching to investors, your ability to manage time is a reflection of your discipline, your preparation, and your respect for others.

There's a quote often attributed to Benjamin Franklin:

"Lost time is never found again."

If you waste it, you've lost something you can't get back. For speakers, wasting time, either by rambling, arriving late, or exceeding your time slot, costs you credibility, influence, and audience trust.

The Myth of "It's Just a Few Minutes"

Let's talk about the phrase most commonly heard from speakers who lack time discipline:

"Let me just add one more thing..."

One more thing turns into 10 more minutes.

Then 15.

Then you're being told to wrap up while you're still halfway through your PowerPoint slides.

This happens not because the speaker is unintelligent or uninspiring, but because they failed to prepare and respect the clock.

Imagine a pastor scheduled to preach for 35 minutes at a church conference. The lineup includes three other ministers. But he preaches for 1 hour 10 minutes, not realizing that the remaining speakers will now have to rush, cut out sections, or get bumped off the schedule entirely.

Was the message anointed? Perhaps.

But was it timely? No.

A message delivered late is like a meal served cold, it loses its flavor, even if it was well-prepared.

The Secret Weapon: Planning Backwards

Professional speakers, corporate trainers, and top clergy use a trick known as backward planning.

It works like this:

1. Know how much time you've been given. (e.g., 15 minutes)

2. Break it down into segments.

2 minutes for opening story or quote

10 minutes for three main points

3 minutes for conclusion and call-to-action

3. Practice with a timer. Always rehearse with a stopwatch. If you plan to speak for 15 minutes, rehearse for 12. Why? Because adrenaline often stretches our speech under pressure.

This system works for a teacher preparing a lesson plan, a pastor

organizing a sermon, or a student about to defend their project.

Time-Managed Presentations = Memorable Presentations

Let's flip the script. Picture this:

A university lecturer was invited to give a keynote at a TED-style education event. She was known for being detailed, even long-winded at times. But on that day, something changed. She gave a power-packed, 10-minute talk that moved the audience and earned her a standing ovation.

She walked off the stage to applause, and to invitations for more speaking engagements.

Her secret? She cut the fluff. She stuck to her outline. She rehearsed with a clock.

She respected the Law of Time Management, and the crowd respected her.

Punctuality is Part of Time Management

Let's be clear: Time management isn't just about ending well, it's about starting on time too.

If you arrive late for a speaking engagement, no matter how talented you are, your first impression is compromised.

Imagine an executive invited to speak to a graduating class at a polytechnic. The students are seated. The MC is stalling. The organizers are fidgeting. You arrive 35 minutes late, flustered, making excuses.

No one remembers your message after that, they remember how long they waited.

Being punctual is more than professional courtesy. It says, "I value your time as much as mine."

Pastors, executives, teachers, listen closely: When you respect time, your words carry weight. When you don't, your wisdom gets lost in the noise of distraction and disappointment.

Keep It Tight, Keep It Right

The most impactful presentations are not the longest, they're the most intentional.

Here's what time-conscious speakers do:

They start strong. No unnecessary apologies or irrelevant backstory.

They stick to the main points. Every point earns its place.

They use transitions. "Now that we've covered this, let's move to our final idea."

They end on time. A powerful conclusion delivered before the clock runs out hits harder than a brilliant ending that never comes because the mic got cut off.

A 10-minute speech that respects time will often be more memorable than a 45-minute marathon filled with detours and digressions.

Tools, Tips, and Timers

Want to become a master of time on stage? Here are some practical tools:

Use the stopwatch on your phone to rehearse.

Design your slides with timestamps. (e.g., Slide 1-3: 3 mins; Slide 4-6: 5 mins)

Set personal alarms to stay on track during longer sessions.

Record your practice runs and observe where you drift or ramble.

Read books like “Eat That Frog” by Brian Tracy or “168 Hours” by Laura Vanderkam to master time management in life and speaking.

Final Words: Mastering Time, Mastering Impact

Whether you’re on a campus, in a corporate boardroom, or standing behind a pulpit, your ability to manage time speaks volumes.

It says:

I am prepared.

I respect you.

I value excellence.

The Law of Time Management is not about being robotic or rushing through your speech. It’s about being strategic, structured, and impactful within the time given.

Because when you master your minutes, you multiply your message.

And in the end, that's what great speakers do, they show up on time, deliver on time, and leave on time, with their message still ringing in the hearts of the people.

ACTION STEP

Use a timer or stopwatch to limit yourself to a 5-minute presentation on any topic you are comfortable with. Record yourself delivering the presentation and afterwards, review the recording to assess how effectively you managed your time. Take note of any areas where you may have gone over or under time, and consider ways to improve your time management skills for future presentations.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Law of Charisma

In the vibrant streets of Nigeria, where voices rise above the din of traffic and marketplaces pulse with stories, charisma stands as a force more powerful than a microphone. The most memorable speakers aren't always those with the deepest vocabulary or the most degrees; they are those who can command a room, light up a crowd, and leave an imprint on every heart that listens. This is the essence of the Law of Charisma.

Charisma is not a gimmick. It is a blend of authenticity, passion, presence, and personal expression. It cannot be mimicked; it must be cultivated. If you've ever watched Pastor E.A. Adeboye, you'll notice how calm and soft-spoken he is, yet his presence alone can silence a crowd of thousands. On the other hand, someone like Dr. Paul Enenche bursts with fire, passion, and vivid expression, moving his audience with energy and conviction. Both are charismatic, yet their styles are worlds apart. This underscores one truth: charisma is not a personality type; it is a personality expressed.

Let me take you to a moment in the University of Lagos where I once attended a public speaking engagement. There was this one speaker, Ijeoma, who stepped on stage with no notes, just a confident smile and her Ankara blouse radiating color. She started with a question:

"Have you ever been told you're too much?"

The hall erupted in laughter, especially from the students who knew what it meant to be misunderstood. In just seconds, she had everyone hooked. Why? Her energy was contagious, her expressions alive, and her confidence unwavering. That day, she didn't just win the heart of the audience; she won our respect.

Charisma draws people in. It makes the audience feel something, a connection, a spark, a pull that goes beyond words. In public speaking, it is not enough to just talk. You must speak in a way that your presence alone becomes memorable. This is where passion plays a pivotal role. When you talk about something you care deeply about, it shows. Your eyes light up, your voice carries rhythm, and your energy fills the room.

Think about your favorite Nigerian musician. Maybe it's Burna Boy, Asa, or Davido. When they perform, they aren't just singing lyrics. They are sharing an experience. The same principle applies to speaking. Your audience is not looking for perfection; they are looking for passion. But let's be real, charisma is not all hype and high energy. It's also in the quiet strength of your character. It's in how you treat your audience before and after your talk. It's in the way you carry yourself, the respect you show, the stories you tell, and the values you uphold. During a conference in Ikeja, I watched a guest speaker walk into the room 15 minutes early. He wasn't announced yet, but he greeted the ushers, smiled at a janitor, and even helped arrange chairs. When it was time for him to speak, he didn't need an introduction. The audience was already

won over. That's charisma, when who you are aligns with what you say. Discovering your charisma means knowing yourself. Are you the humorous type, like Ali Baba or Bovi, who can wrap deep truths in laughter? Or are you the poetic type, like Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, whose calm and precise delivery pierces minds and moves hearts? The key is not to copy anyone blindly but to borrow brilliance while finding your own voice.

Let me share a story from the University of Lagos. A guest lecturer was invited to speak on entrepreneurship. He came in dressed simply, without much flair. Some students underestimated him. But when he began, he shared his journey from selling recharge cards at Surulere to owning a logistics company with over 30 staff. His honesty, humility, and humor transformed the atmosphere. The students laughed, asked questions, and even lined up for selfies afterward. What made the difference? Charisma grounded in authenticity.

Charisma is your superpower. It helps you connect, communicate, and compel. Whether you are a student leader, a teacher, a pastor, or a business executive, your influence will multiply when people can feel your heart through your words.

Here are a few tips to grow in charisma:

1. Know your story: Share real-life experiences. People connect with people, not robots.
2. Embrace your energy: Speak with passion. Be enthusiastic about your subject.
3. Master your body language: Eye contact, gestures, and posture can communicate more than words.
4. Develop emotional intelligence: Read the room. Respond with empathy. Adjust your tone.
5. Be approachable: Smile, listen, and be kind. The way you make people feel is part of your charisma.

Remember, in Nigeria, we don't just listen with our ears; we listen with our hearts, our eyes, and even our body language. Your charisma is what brings your message to life. It's what makes a teacher unforgettable, a pastor magnetic, a lecturer engaging, and a student speaker admired.

In the end, the Law of Charisma teaches us that people may forget what you said, but they will never forget how you made them feel. So speak with fire, walk with grace, and let your presence tell your story before your words even begin.

ACTION STEP

Grab a notebook or open a note taking app on your phone. Throughout the day, jot down moments where you felt particularly confident or charismatic. It could be during a conversation a meeting, or even while presenting an idea. Be specific about what made you feel that way and note down any feedback you received. This exercise will help you become more aware of your natural charisma and identify areas for improvement.

CONFIDENCE BOOST

Find a quiet space with a mirror. Spend just a few minutes practicing confident body language. Stand tall, with your shoulders back and head held high. Practice making eye contact with your reflection, and experiment with different gestures and facial expressions. Notice how these small adjustments can make you feel more confident and charismatic. Keep refining your body language until it feels natural and effortless.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Law of Dress Code

Being a presenter or public speaker, your appearance is the initial silent dialogue with your audience. Before you utter a single word, your audience has already formed a perception based on how you look. Your attire, grooming, and overall presentation echo volumes about your professionalism, your preparation, and even your personality. This non verbal language is powerful, and it can either reinforce your message or distract from it. Thus, understanding and mastering the law of dress code is a crucial component of every speaker's toolkit.

The Strategic Power of Appearance

Your clothing is not merely fabric draped over your body. It is a strategic communication tool. Every time you step on stage or in front of a camera, you're entering a contract with your audience. They are granting you their time and attention, and in return, they expect value not just in words, but in presence.

Respecting the event's dress code is your first nod to the occasion's importance. It shows that you understand the tone, the culture, and the expectations. Whether it's a corporate event, a youth seminar, a religious gathering, or a community town hall, dressing in alignment with the context signals your sensitivity and readiness. When in doubt, it's better to be slightly overdressed than underdressed. It communicates that you care.

Dressing for the Audience

One of the most overlooked aspects of speaking preparation is researching your audience. You wouldn't wear a flashy, sequined jacket to a conservative business meeting or show up in a three-piece

suit to speak to high school students. Your audience's age, profession, social background, and even cultural context should influence your wardrobe choices.

If you're speaking to young entrepreneurs, a smart casual outfit with clean sneakers and a stylish jacket may resonate more. If it's a panel at a financial institution, a well-fitted suit with a conservative tie is more appropriate. Think of your clothing as a bridge, helping your message cross over from your mind to theirs.

The Environment Matters

Environmental factors must be considered. Will the event be held indoors or outdoors? Is the venue air-conditioned or open-air? Will you be on an elevated stage or on the same level as your audience? What is the weather forecast? These questions are not trivial; they influence comfort, movement, and perception.

An outdoor event in Nigeria at noon under the blazing sun requires light, breathable fabrics, preferably in brighter colors. You don't want to be drenched in sweat before the first applause. Conversely, speaking in a chilly, air-conditioned hall might require layering with a blazer or sweater. Your comfort translates to confidence. If you're fidgeting with your outfit or adjusting your sleeves mid-sentence, your audience notices.

Dress Code Beyond Clothing

Dress code extends beyond garments. Your hairstyle, accessories, grooming, and even scent matter. A clean, neat hairstyle suggests discipline and personal care. Avoid extravagant styles unless they align with the brand you're portraying or the audience you're addressing.

For both men and women, moderation is key. Ladies, minimal jewelry that complements rather than competes with your message is ideal. Gentlemen, your belt should match your shoes, and avoid over accessorizing with chains or flashy cufflinks.

The Art of Color Coordination

Colors communicate emotions. Bright colors often exude energy and positivity, while dark colors signify authority and formality. Understanding how colors blend is essential. For men, a vibrant shirt paired with black or navy pants and a tie that is slightly darker than the shirt creates a visually balanced ensemble. Avoid an all black outfit unless you're going for a specific dramatic effect. Even the iconic Men in Black knew the value of contrast, they wore white shirts under their black suits for a reason. (Chuckles)

For women, bold colors can be empowering when used thoughtfully. A red blazer, for instance, conveys confidence. Pastel tones can evoke warmth and approachability. Avoid clashing colors unless you're a style icon who knows how to own it. The goal is not to distract, but to enhance.

Grooming and the Power of Scent

Personal grooming is non negotiable. Your nails, breath, and general hygiene speak before your words do. A subtle fragrance adds an extra layer of charm. It's a small detail, but a pleasant scent can uplift spirits, especially if you're speaking at a long, exhausting event. But be mindful, go easy on the cologne or perfume. You want to leave a memory, not a headache.

For men, a clean shave or well maintained beard makes a difference. For women, neatly styled hair and light makeup (if used) can create a

polished, professional look. These touches build trust and show that you took time to prepare for your audience.

Footwear: The Unsung Hero

Never underestimate the power of good shoes. Your shoes tell a story of how far you've walked, how seriously you take yourself, and how you approach life. Shiny, well kept, and comfortable footwear is more than a finishing touch; it is a cornerstone of your presentation.

Imagine wearing stylish shoes that hurt your feet. Halfway through your talk, you're shifting your weight, wincing slightly. That discomfort becomes a distraction. On the other hand, a clean, comfortable pair of shoes boosts your posture, keeps you grounded, and gives you that final layer of confidence. Think of your shoes as your foundation. Build strong.

Intention in Every Thread

As you step onto that stage, remember that your attire is not an afterthought. It is part of the performance. Your look should say: "I respect you. I respect this moment. I am ready." Whether you're standing before five people or five thousand, show up with intention.

There is a story told about a young speaker who once showed up at a CEO summit in a rumpled shirt and worn-out shoes. Despite the brilliance of his ideas, the audience's takeaway was: "He wasn't ready." Contrast this with another speaker who wore a modest, sharp outfit, carried herself with poise, and spoke with clarity. The response? "She looked the part, and she played it well."

The law of dress code is not about vanity. It's about value. It is about

showing up with the excellence your message deserves. It's about visual alignment with your verbal expression. When you honor this blow, your audience sees a speaker who is not just heard but seen with intention and care. And that, my friend, is unforgettable.

ACTION STEP

Create a vision board or Pinterest board showcasing your ideal speaking attire, considering factors such as venue, audience, and personal style.

WARDROBE ASSESSMENT

Take some time to assess your current wardrobe and identify pieces that align with professional speaking engagements. Make any necessary additions or adjustments.

CHAPTER SIX

Law of Preparation

"Success is where preparation and opportunity meet." **Bobby Unser**

There's a powerful truth that separates the good from the great, the average from the exceptional, and the unprepared from the unforgettable. That truth is preparation. If you want to become a remarkable public speaker, someone who holds people's attention, moves hearts, and influences minds, then you must understand and embrace The Law of Preparation.

Let's start with a simple question: If you were called upon today to speak in front of a thousand people, are you ready? Would you be able to confidently walk up, own the stage, and deliver something memorable? Most people would panic. But why? Because deep down, they know they haven't prepared.

Preparation is the Foundation of Confidence

Have you ever watched a student walk into an exam hall with a smile, sitting with shoulders squared, already certain of their victory? That's the power of preparation. The opposite is also true, if you've ever gone into a test without studying, you know the feeling: shaky hands, a racing heart, a foggy mind.

It's the same with public speaking. When you've taken the time to prepare, your message, your mindset, and your materials, you'll feel unstoppable. Preparation eliminates fear and replaces it with confidence.

Think of a pastor stepping up on Sunday morning to deliver a sermon. If that pastor has studied the scriptures, prayed, and thought deeply

about the message for the congregation, something powerful happens. Their words carry weight. Their delivery flows naturally. The Spirit backs their preparation.

Executives also know this well. Before any boardroom presentation or pitch to investors, they review data, rehearse their talking points, anticipate questions, and sometimes even role-play with team members. They don't "wing it" because they know what's at stake.

The same principle applies whether you're speaking at a school assembly, preaching in church, or pitching a business idea, those who prepare are the ones who prevail.

Preparation is Like Farming

Let's borrow a timeless analogy. Imagine you are a farmer. You want a great harvest. What do you do? Do you sit back and pray that your land magically yields crops? Of course not. You till the soil, you plant seeds, you water consistently, and you protect your field from pests.

Public speaking is no different. Your words are your seeds. The audience is your soil. Your preparation is the process of planting, watering, and nurturing. And just like the farmer, you cannot expect a harvest if you skip the process.

Many people admire great speakers and say, "Wow, they're so gifted." But what they don't see is the hours spent practicing in front of mirrors, recording and re-recording voice notes, researching content, and rehearsing over and over again. That's the part most people want to skip, and yet, it's where the power lies.

Mental Rehearsal: Your Inner Stage

Now, preparation is not just about memorizing lines or slides. It also involves preparing your mind and emotions. This is where mental rehearsal becomes your secret weapon.

Picture this: a professional footballer doesn't just train on the field. They also visualize the match the night before, imagining the crowd, the goals, the passes. Similarly, if you want to perform excellently on stage, begin by seeing yourself doing it.

Close your eyes. Imagine the room. Hear the applause. Feel your heartbeat steady. See yourself walking to the microphone with ease. Hear your voice sounding clear and strong. See people leaning in to listen. Visualize them nodding, laughing at your jokes, writing down your key points. That inner movie prepares your emotions for the real event.

This technique is used by athletes, actors, soldiers, and top executives. Why not you? The stage is first conquered in the mind before it's conquered in reality.

Small Details Make a Big Difference

It's not just the big moments that count. Sometimes, the little things determine whether a presentation is great or just average.

Have you checked if your slide font is readable from the back row?

Do your examples make sense to your specific audience?

Is your attire appropriate and confidence-boosting?

Have you timed your speech to avoid rushing or dragging?

Do you know the first sentence you'll say the moment you get the mic?

Think of preparation like setting the table for a banquet. You could cook the most delicious meal, but if the plates are dirty or the table is wobbly, your guests won't enjoy it. Great speakers sweat the small stuff, and that's what separates them.

The Unexpected is Inevitable Prepare Anyway

Let's be honest. Even with the best preparation, unexpected things can happen. The mic might stop working. Your slides might freeze. Someone may interrupt. But guess what? The better prepared you are, the easier it is to adapt.

Preparation gives you flexibility. It gives you the confidence to say, "No problem, I've got this." The speaker who has practiced well can adjust to anything without losing their cool. They may even gain extra respect for their composure.

Remember David in the Bible? Before he faced Goliath, he had already been practicing in the wilderness, slaying lions and bears. That battle wasn't his first rodeo, it was the result of years of preparation. Goliath just happened to be the stage.

Success is Predictable When You Prepare

Let's break it down.

A student who prepares doesn't fear exams.

A pastor who prepares carries a deeper anointing in their message.

An executive who prepares earns respect and influence in the boardroom.

A public speaker who prepares captivates and connects.

Don't wait for your "big moment" to start getting ready. By then, it might be too late. Instead, prepare like every day is your audition, and every audience is your opportunity.

Final Thoughts: Start Today

Preparation doesn't make you perfect, but it positions you for excellence. You may not control the size of the audience, the lighting in the room, or the type of microphone. But you can control your readiness.

Great speakers are not born. They are built—through discipline, through practice, and through thoughtful, consistent preparation.

So, whether you're standing before a classroom, a congregation, or a conference crowd, never forget:

The more you sweat in preparation, the less you'll bleed in performance.

Now, ask yourself: What am I doing today to prepare for the opportunity I say I want tomorrow?

Because when preparation meets opportunity, that's when greatness shows up.

ACTION STEP

Take a deep breath and close your eyes. Set aside just a few moments for this visualization exercise. Picture yourself standing confidently in front of your audience, delivering a successful presentation. Imagine the room filled with engaged listeners, nodding along and hanging onto your every word. Feel the confidence radiating from within you as you speak with clarity and conviction. Notice the positive energy flowing through you, and envision the audience responding enthusiastically to your message. Focus on your mindset, emotions, and overall demeanor throughout the visualization.

PREPARATION CHECKLIST

Outline Key Points

Review Audience Profile

Practice Delivery Review Audience Profile

Prepare Visual Aids

Confirm Technical Setup

Quick Summary:

The Simplest Guide to Public Speaking

6 Essential Steps

Congratulations on completing this powerful journey through the core principles of public speaking. Each step you've learned is a crucial part of becoming a confident, captivating, and impactful speaker.

1. Eye Contact

We began with the power of eye connection. Maintaining eye contact helps you build trust, read your audience's reactions, and foster genuine engagement. It's the first step in turning a monologue into a meaningful conversation.

2. Content Mastery

Great speakers know their material inside out. We emphasized the need to deeply understand your message, prepare thoroughly, and adapt on the spot, especially when things don't go as planned.

3. Time Management

Respecting your audience's time reflects your professionalism. By sticking to your allotted time and starting promptly, you honor those who have chosen to listen, leaving a lasting impression of credibility.

4. Charisma

Your unique presence is your greatest asset. We explored how to cultivate and project your natural charisma, making your delivery engaging, authentic, and memorable.

5. Dress Code

You speak before saying a word. Your appearance sets the tone. Dressing appropriately not only boosts your confidence but also sends a message about your seriousness, preparation, and personal brand.

6. Preparation

True success starts from within. Mental and emotional readiness are vital. Visualizing success, managing nerves, and staying prepared ensure that you're always ready to shine when it's your moment to speak.

Public speaking is more than delivering words, it's an art. With these six principles as your foundation, you're equipped to command any stage and leave a powerful, lasting impression. The spotlight is yours. Step into it with confidence, grace, and purpose. Your journey has just begun.

Now go speak, and make it unforgettable.

PERSONAL NOTES