

## MAKING USABLE NOTES AND OUTLINES

For you to stay free, to be able to think *and* talk, your notes must:

- Be immediately understandable.
- Be written in such a way that the order of where you're going is made visually simple and clear to you, instantly.
- Feed you information in short, catalytic bursts that make their translation into speech self-evident.
- Signal their various levels of importance in advance.
- Tell you in what quality, form, and style they should be delivered as you see them.

Now, here's the problem: The notes and outlines we're accustomed to writing were for studying *later*. But when you're speaking, you don't have the time to read and decipher what you meant and decide on their relative importance and values in order to deliver them well, at that moment.

Notes must speak to you so succinctly that you can see and process them *on the spot* and use them as a springboard to launch the next idea toward your audience. Here's how.

### The Basic Process

The biggest mistake people make when writing notes from which to speak is that they write out too much. The secret is to write your notes as catalysts—one or two word "bullets" or phrases—action words designed just to remind you about the next point and push you into it with momentum. They should give you a clue about where this fits in the whole picture and an indication of what delivery style to use.

Just seeing key words like "basic plan," "budget," "stumbling blocks" can trigger a response in you. You know what they stand for and why you want to talk about that point. The rest of the words will come through as you begin to speak.

### *Use Whole Pages*

I do not recommend using little index cards. You can only write a few lines on an index card and everybody watches you shuffling the cards. It doesn't make any sense since you can't hide them in your hand and that