

My CEO was trying to act "chairman-like." Subconsciously trying to behave as his predecessors had, as corporate chiefs are "supposed" to look and act. He had no faith that just being *himself*—warm, pleasant, witty—would generate the awe and respect a chairman should get.

I needed to give him permission to relax into himself; to explain what audiences look for and that his innate personal style was not only enough but actually the *best* and most impressive he could be, believable and powerful.

Losing the pressure to "act like" a powerful executive, he emerged as a genuinely delightful, charismatic speaker—accessible, knowledgeable, decisive, and *uniquely* himself.

### *Natural Is Eloquent*

Most people stand before others to make a speech thinking that now they have to become something else. "Just me, just talking, as I usually do" hardly seems the right mode for this occasion. After all, don't you get all dressed up for your performance? Don't you spend lots of hours planning, designing, rehashing, and practicing? How can you just come in with your old-slippers type of homey daily communications skills and think that's enough? Actually the secret is—it is!

*Nothing* works better than being yourself. You are at your most comfortable because you're on your own solid, natural ground. You sound totally genuine—not put on, phony, removed, formal, like you're hiding yourself.

The real you is enough. What you need is to develop more skills to enhance the real you, and to make you more comfortable, available, and understandable to the public.

## **How You Feel Toward Your Audience**

Most people see a great gulf between themselves and their audience when they imagine them, plan for them, and finally stand and present before them. Don't you think "They . . . Them" when you picture your audience? This creates a problem. You're actually *adding* separation between yourself and your audience beyond what the circumstances naturally create.

### *They Are Individual Listeners*

The truth is that when you speak, each person hears you separately. So your style must be attuned to a much more intimate, less bombastic