

# English - Homework 1 & 2

## Grigore Lucian-Florin

### 324CD

#### Subject 1

#### Julian Treasure - *How to speak so that people want to listen*

I have listened to a number of TedTalks in the past and I always found them refreshing through topic or the means in which the topic is passed on to the audience. This particular one by Julian Treasure laid a powerful impact on me because it is not only interesting, yet simple, but also tackles a subject I have always been interested in and an ability I am continuously looking forward to improve.

Firstly, I want to talk about the speech and all its elements. It is resourceful, yet simplistic, well-rounded, dynamic and fun. The main focus is conveying the idea that communication and understanding should be emphasised more in order to simply 'make the world a better place'. The first main point is sins no public speaker should fall into if he or she wants to bond with the audience. Although seven different mistakes are listed, there are many more, this list not being exhaustive, as the speaker himself states. Naturally, the next one is what should a public speaker do in order to be successful. The four ingredients (honesty, authenticity, integrity and love) form the word hail, almost in a funny coincidence. Next is improving the toolbox that is your own voice. From volume to pitch, every single setting that can be done to your voice has to be meticulously tuned and trained. Next, the whole audience is involved in displaying what exercises Julian does before any public talk. The combination of fun and effectiveness of this moment is the final move that makes Julian be the hero of the audience. Lastly, he emphasises on the importance of both speaking and listening for improving society and ultimately, each of us.

Secondly, I want to briefly talk about the aspects of the Ted talk that I have resonated with. I always liked to believe that I am a good speaker, but that did not stop me from finding ways of improving my skills. On the one hand, mistakes such as complaining, judging and dogmatism, named by Julian, have been in my attention for a long time. I have tried to have them in the back of my mind every time I prepared for a speech or during it. On the other hand, improving my speaking from the technical point of view is a training I have tried doing before. I remember the frustration that I experienced when one of my teachers told me that my voice pitch just to goes up and up and I start sounding funny halfway through my presentation or talk. I like to believe that my 'toolbox' is tuned on a rolling basis. Thus, I may not check all the do's and don't's of Julian's talk, but it is certainly a goal of mine.

Thirdly, I want to isolate the idea of the talk. The voice is, as Julian states, a very powerful instrument. Although I believe everyone understands the importance of the tool itself, I understand why most people fail in achieving strong speaking skills. There can be a plethora of reasons for this. Some people just don't need to posses such skills, or some people may not have the opportunity of speaking in public, thus not knowing what they should or should not do. But most people don't want to. And I can see why. It can be considered an unnecessary struggle or a waste of time. And it is, for most of us. Sincerely speaking, I don't think many people should focus on improving speaking skills. For example, I don't see why a miner should have a voice coach. Not all people regard public speaking the same and this is an utterly normal behaviour. If all the people in the world were successful speakers, would they all also be successful listeners?

In conclusion, this talk for me is very engaging. Some of the topics covered are past and present thinking points for myself, while others are new ideas that indeed seem relevant for anyone wishing to make its voice simply better. I'm really interested in the main idea as well, but I don't agree with Julian's conclusion.

Balance and contrast are two crucial aspects of the world. We can't all become perfect speakers. There would be no comparison to be done, and even worse, speaking's own mysteries would lose their value, as any other thing that is overly done.

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#### Subject 2

#### **Barrack Obama - first speech as president**

This particular speech carries a lot of weight for many reasons. Beside the obvious ones, president Obama was not always a favourite for all the citizens of the USA. But the impression that he had created nationally and globally, which was spectacular, started with this very speech. A speech is not just the idea, conveyed in whatever way to the listeners. The means of conveying are just as important, if not even more important, when it comes to speeches such as this one.

Barrack Obama's body language is simple and powerful. He cannot move, since being positioned in front of a desk, so he must compensate with his gestures. His hand movement is subtle, but precise. His look is not lost, but focused. These elements reflect determination and power. His face expression is serious, as it should be, but he sometimes leaves the impression that he also is kind and caring. He continuously keeps switching from one side to the other, which I believe is intended to inspire the idea that he will care for all of his listeners. His voice tone is not too low or too high, but just in the right range to make sure that he seems confident and not at all uncertain. There are some pauses in his speech in the right places in order to give a chance to the audience to prepare for his next statements or reflect after other ones. He does not interrupt during same-topic ideas. The structure of the speech itself is simple: tackle important and general topics, state the position regarding each topic and reassure the audience that the leaders will not give up in the battle against any type of enemy. In the end, he finishes in a sensitive manner, tackling the differences that existed in the past between races.

In my opinion, the entire speech is a well-organised machine. Accurate, simple and effective, it delivers a clear and strong message to the audience, as the conjuncture supposes.

#### Personal notes:

Although being supposed to talk about the idea of one speech and the means of conveying the message of the other, I decided to also tackle the other aspect for each of them. Analysing them from a singular point of view would have been unfair, as they both prove to be resourceful and inspirational in every way.