

Record and Replay

What is the most important tool you have to quickly improve your stories? Feedback from others? That's helpful, but limited because you can't see what others see when they give you those evaluations.

As you've previously heard, the best feedback tools you have are video and audio recordings. I know you probably don't like how you look or sound on these recordings. Remember the words of my friend, Darren LaCroix... *"Too bad. WE had to listen!"*

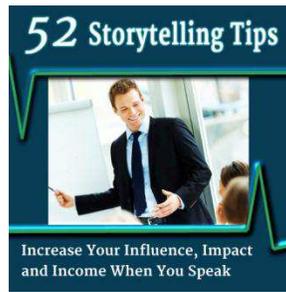
This is a really funny response, but there's some truth to it. There's no way around it. The fastest road to improvement is to watch and listen to yourself. When you get feedback from others, and can then review the recordings, you'll have a much better understanding of the evaluations you receive.

For example, someone might tell me, *"Michael, if you would have drawn out that pause a couple more seconds, and not been smiling when the guy threatened you with the knife, it would've been more believable."*

My reaction might be *"I DID pause a long time!"* or *"I wasn't smiling!"* When I go back and watch the video and see that I did both, then the feedback has more meaning.

There are several areas to watch and listen for when you review your recordings. Two useful ideas to help you are to watch the video with the sound turned off and then watch at two times normal speed. This helps you focus on the visual aspect of your presentation. Distracting mannerisms, or movements that seem unnatural, become more apparent when you review the videos in this manner.

What are specific areas to watch and listen to? Here are five:



1) Pauses – By now, you’ve probably figured out that this is one of my favorite areas of speaking. Silence is where your key points are made, tension is built, and humor takes hold. Use a stopwatch to time your pauses at the most important parts of your story. Whatever your time is, add to it. Stretch yourself. Become one of those rare, handful of speakers who properly use pauses to enhance your stories.

2) Audience reaction – Listen to determine if the audience is reacting the way you anticipated. Are they laughing at humorous lines? Are they participating when you ask? Is there silence at poignant or important moments?

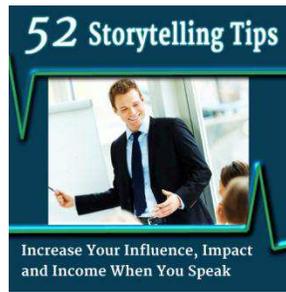
Listen to the recording twice. The second time, focus on sounds from the audience. Do you hear chatter, papers rustling, coughing, or other noises? These noises are an indication that the audience isn’t 100% engaged. They’re communicating with you, telling you that you need to adjust your material or your delivery.

If you hear nothing, then you’re on the right path. This is a case where silence is golden.

3) Clarity – This was discussed in a recent tip. Is your message consistent? Does the story support the message? Are you giving too much information? Are you clear?

4) Voice – Does your voice match the emotion of the characters and the situations? This is a common problem. A speaker may say she’s “*really angry*.” Another may tell you he was “*really happy*.” Clearly their voice doesn’t reflect that. The audience may not be conscious of these contradictions, but they get a sense that something doesn’t feel right when you present this way. Make sure your voice properly represents the mood of the moment and the characters.

5) Body and energy – In addition to voice, many speakers send mixed messages with



their body and energy. If you're sharing an exciting moment, let your body and face represent this. If the situation is sad, or fearful, let them show that, too.

Most people are too self-conscious and think they're expressing much larger than they really are. I recently saw a speaker who was talking about spreading her message all around the world. Her arms should have been fully extended as she said this, but they were less than 12 inches from her body. Again, this is subtle, and you may not consciously think about, but subconsciously something doesn't feel right when you see that inconsistency.

If you're serious about becoming better, faster, the best tools at your disposal are audio and video recordings. Thanks to the proliferation of smart phones, you have no more excuses to not record yourself. Use the tips in this lesson, and you'll realize the quickest possible growth.

ACTION STEP: Record. Record. Record. This is not a broken tape. Ask for written evaluations of the stories you're recording. With those evaluations in hand, watch and listen to your recordings. They will help you make sense of the evaluations.

Your recommended resource this week is... you probably guessed it...your recordings. All of the ideas you've gotten from this course, and other speakers and storytellers, are only valuable if you use them. Focus your efforts this week on your own work. This is also a great measuring stick to see how far you've come in nearly one year.

Until next week, always remember, you have a story that someone needs to hear.



Recommended Resources

- 1) *3D Storytelling Workshop* Click on this link: [3D Storytelling Workshop](#)
- 2) *Inject More Humor into Your Presentations*
Click on this link: [Inject More Humor into Your Presentations](#)
- 3) *Go Ahead and Laugh!* Click on this link: [Go Ahead and Laugh](#)
- 4) *Stand Up, Stand OUT!* Click on this link: [Stand Up, Stand OUT!](#)
- 5) *EDGE of Their Seats Storytelling*
Click on this link: [Edge of Their Seats Storytelling](#)
- 6) *Hollywood Presentation Skills*
Click on this link: [Hollywood Presentation Skills](#)

Michael's Background

For many years, Michael Davis gave presentations and speeches that were, in a word, ineffective. Mistakes, confusing messages and failed attempts to capture the interest and attention of audiences created tremendous frustration.

Then a chance meeting with World Champion speaker David Brooks opened the door to meeting many other World Champion and Hall of Fame speakers. Investment of time, energy and thousands of dollars in training and coaching helped him develop the skills to become a speaker and leader who influences, impacts, and inspires others.

In 2011, he earned the certification of World Class Speech Coach. He also studies the art of comedy and movie making to learn new skills that can take speech creation and delivery to new levels.

Michael's Raving Fans

*"Mike Davis is an **engaging, inspiring speaker**. I believe, however, that **his greatest talent** is his **ability to draw the best out of those** lucky enough to have him as a coach. I had this privilege for a period of four months. During this time, he constantly challenged me to **improve both the content** of my speeches and **my delivery**. I would not have made the finals in Toastmasters World Championship of Public Speaking competition without the help of Mike Davis. **I don't know of a better Public Speaking teacher** in Cincinnati.*

Chris Nachtrab
Vice President & Partner
The Everest Group

"Last summer, when I spoke and promoted to subscribe to [my email newsletter] Hot Marketing Tips, I got a big fat zero sign ups.

***At your wise suggestion**, I passed the signup clipboard around the room this time. When you first mentioned it, it felt very old-fashion and not trendy or technology driven. I set a goal for 50 new sign ups. Probably 2 times more than I have ever had sign up at one time.*

*When I tallied the new subscribers after the lunch yesterday, **we hit a total of 72!** I think that is about **46% of the room**. **THANKS!**"*

Drew Dinkelacker
President, The Marketing Accelerator

*"Evaluate to Elevate is a **powerful program**. Every speaker should hear it... **twice!**"*

Darren LaCroix
2001 World Champion of Public Speaking

*"Mike helped me fine tune a 10-minute presentation from "too much information" into a **clear, to-the-point focus** that has not only **given me more confidence**, but generating **more positive feedback** from the audience **NOW** than I did before meeting with Mike.*

*Mike has a unique ability to help you focus on the main point(s) of your presentation and then how to present them in a way that is **easy for those in the audience to understand**."*

Doug Smith
Sr. Account Executive
Hubbard Interactive

*"The **success** I enjoyed in the Toastmasters World Championship of Public Speaking is the **result of coaching I received from Mike Davis**. He helped me **refine and deliver** a speech that carried me **all the way to the finals**. His tireless dedication is **outstanding!** Mike Davis will help you communicate better and be more successful."*

Phil Barth
Portfolio Manager
International Paper

*"Mike has an easy way of working with you that **isn't intimidating**... Amazing, **insightful feedback**... My presentations are now **far more interesting** and result in **additional sales** of my services. No matter what the level of speaking at which you may be performing, **you're sure to improve with Mike Davis**."*

Joann Westwood
Westwood Virtual Associates, LLC

"Mike Davis breathed life into a topic that many of our group of trial lawyers take for granted, that public speaking is both an art and a science. It is clear that Mike is himself passionate about this topic and his insights are invaluable for those facing the daunting task of public speaking for the first time and for those seasoned veterans behind the podium".

David Williamson
Attorney

*"Michael has completely opened my eyes! I'm **performing at an entirely new level**. I went into my last event with the **utmost confidence** thanks to him. He even called me the night before with a few last-minute reminders! If you speak for a living — if your revenue depends on your ability to communicate, **you NEED Michael Davis!**"*

Brennan Scanlon
Co-Executive Director
Business Network International

*"I recommend the coaching services of Michael Davis. He helped me to put a new, more **meaningful spin** on my existing presentations that enabled me to **connect with my audience**. He provided me with tools and resources that allowed me to **gain confidence, decrease my anxiety, and more effectively get my message across**. Most importantly, he taught me how to **have fun** with public speaking!"*

Dr. Laura Ward
Cincinnati Children's Hospital