

## **COMMUNICATION 101**

“Instructions for making a speech: Be sincere; be brief; be seated.”

~ Franklin D. Roosevelt

### **In Communication, Speaking Overtime Is a Crime, so...SAY IT SOONER**

Mark Twain once attended a church service during which the city missionary passionately appealed for donations to aid the community's poor.

“The appeal had so stirred me that I could hardly wait for the [offering] plate to come my way. I had four hundred dollars in my pocket, and I was anxious to drop it in the plate and wanted to borrow more. But the plate was so long in coming my way that the fever-heat of beneficence was going down lower and lower - going down at the rate of a hundred dollars a minute. The plate was passed too late. When it finally came to me, my enthusiasm had gone down so much that I kept my four hundred dollars - and stole a dime from the plate. So, you see, time sometimes leads to crime...”

The long-winded preacher had persuaded Twain, but then proceeded to drone on for so long that he nullified the appeal his message. The moral of the story? Be brief.

### **In Communication, Complexity Is Creepy, so...SAY IT SIMPLER**

When communicators try to say too much they creep away from their main idea. Too many points and principles muddy the message. Communicators need to adjust their volume—not by raising their decibel level, but by cutting back on their amount of content. Our words purchase the most when spent sparingly.

### **In Communication, Audiences Are Forgetful, so...SAY IT STICKIER**

Great speakers communicate memorable messages that stick in the minds of the audience. Don't be lazy and merely share information; put in the energy and effort to say things in an interesting way. Couch your core ideas in catchy slogans that the audience can quickly latch onto and easily recall. Use shocking statements or statistics to lower your predictability and pique the interest of listeners. Finally, and most importantly, craft your speech in a way that connects with the wants of the audience. People perk up and pay attention when they hear something that addresses their deeply felt needs.



Copyright 2011 The John Maxwell Company. Articles accessed via <http://www.johnmaxwell.com> may not be reprinted or reproduced without written permission from The John Maxwell Company, except for brief quotations in critical reviews or articles.