



**Professional Speakers:**

**Take a Page From The  
Broadway Playbook!**

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**How to watch your videos**

***"It's Just Information."***

**Important Related Fundamentals**

**1. Habit Fundamentals**

- a. Over 90+% of our behaviors are automatic and unthinking
- b. We are wired to keep repeating behaviors
- c. Changing ANY habitual behavior requires work

**What are you striving for...**

**"Not that bad"**

**Or**

**MASTERY**

## 2. Brain Fundamentals

- a. We are being bombarded by billions of bits of information
- b. We can only consciously register (store in short term memory) 7 bits of info (+/-2)
- c. Assessment of a stimulus as “good or bad” happens within 200 milliseconds.

## 3. Communication Fundamentals

- a. *Everything* communicates something
- b. The meaning of any piece of communication lies only in what the receiver takes it to mean, regardless of the sender’s intention

While there are many important elements of a successful Broadway show, we will be focusing specifically on...

**Sets   Sound   Lighting   Costumes   Props  
Blocking   Script   Memorization   Acting   Direction**

## **SETS**

1. Upon hotel arrival (more than likely the day before you speak) go to your venue room and confirm things are as you requested.
2. If they are not, determine if a change is even possible. And of course, you know, don’t make ANY changes without your meeting professional’s permission.

## **SOUND**

1. You may not have a lot of control over this, but if you do, work kindly with the AV team to keep testing sound until it sounds good. Listen for over-modulation.
2. Consider bringing your own headset microphone (I used a Countryman E6). Be aware that you might need special connections (wire from your headset to the mic pack). Most big AV teams use Shure or Sennheiser. I carry both brands.

## **LIGHTING**

1. Again you might have little or NO control over this.
2. To find the hottest spot on the stage during AV check...Stand in the middle section of the audience. Ask someone to please go up on stage and walk slowly from left to right. Note where their location when they are in the brightest spot and try to spend most of your time in that spot.



## **PROPS**

Props can enhance your message and can make your presentation more interesting and/or funny. They can also be used as an analogy to make a point. "It's as if..."



## **COSTUMES**

Same points as with props. Using PHOTOS of you, or others, with props or in costumes can have the same effect.

## **Blocking (movement on stage)**

Pacing back and forth or moving for no apparent reason can give the impression of nervousness, insecurity or lack of preparation. That may not be the actual reason for your pacing, but remember:

**Everything communicates SOMETHING  
AND...**

**The meaning of any piece of communication  
lies only in what the receiving takes it to  
mean, regardless of the sender's intention.**

**A general rule is to move when you have an organic reason to move.**

- 1. To make sure you connect with another section of your audience.**
- 2. Someone in the audience does or says something that gets your attention and you move toward them to acknowledge them, verbally or nonverbally.**
- 3. "Let's take a look at the other side of this argument."**
- 4. "Let's go back to when this actually started."**
- 5. "Now let's discuss how this will impact your business."**
- 6. "We've talked about the creative side of things, now let's move to the technical aspects."**

## **The Script**

**A Broadway show will not succeed without a brilliantly written script. Likewise, for you, the better your script, the better your audience response.**

**One of the biggest dangers in our business is the false belief that we can effectively “wing it” on stage and don’t need an actual script. Masterful speakers don’t ascribe to this belief. An excellent tip is to follow the advice of one our own Speaking Masters, Patricia Fripp:**

**Send the video file of a speech that you give regularly to someone and have it transcribed into a written document. You will quickly see what needs work and what doesn’t.**

## **QUERY: TO MEMORIZE, OR NOT TO MEMORIZE**

**Many people memorize blocks of text, e.g., the opening or closing, stories, transitions, etc. Then they allow themselves to add or delete things as they give their presentation. (See your transcribed video to see if this is working for you or not.)**

**A large percentage of speakers believe that memorizing a speech is a death knell. They believe that it will make them sound stiff, robotic and inauthentic. (Again, see your transcribed video to determine if what you are doing now is effective.)**

**The question then becomes, since professional actors have no choice but to memorize all their lines, how do they do it? And, how do they make it sound so natural, authentic and believable?**

## **ONCE YOU HAVE YOUR FINAL SCRIPT:**

- Handwrite your script, in short chunks, when you are first starting to memorize it.
- I personally like to also type my script in large type, in short chunks (a couple of sentences or very short paragraphs)
- Put a double space between each chunk
- If you have slides – put the photo of the slide IN the script in the right places.
- *Some* actors get value from reading their written script up to 30 times – without allowing their eyes to leave the page.
- Record your speech TWO different ways on your phone (when you do this, actually READ the text vs trying to do it from memory at this time.)
- In the first recording speak at normal speed.
- The second recording speak very fast. It's called a SPEED-THROUGH.
- Listen to the recordings as many times as you can.
- Play back your normal speed speech using headphones while:
  - Walking
  - Vacuuming
  - Mowing the lawn
  - On the treadmill or lifting weights
  - While bouncing a ball or playing catch with some
- Listen to the Speed Through version at least two times before you go to sleep each night. As well as throughout the day.
- Once memorized, practice your speech, up on your feet at least 5 times per day for several days.
- Ask a friend, or several friends to be an audience for you. Do your presentation, up on your feet. Use all the acting techniques you learn in this workshop.

- Rehearse by having a “Kitchen Table Conversation” with someone. Tell them you are going to do your speech for them, give them a cup of coffee and sit down at the table with some scones. Then just *tell* them your speech. Like it was just some really cool thing that you are excited to tell them. Don’t “give” your speech, just talk to them like you would normally talk to them. Keep looking right in their eyes to make sure they are getting what you are saying, and realize how important it is. If they forget you are doing your speech and interrupt you with something like, “Oh really? That happened to me!” Or, “Why did he do THAT?” When that happens, you are on the right track.

**CAVEAT:** When you say the lines repeatedly you can develop a certain rhythm. You don’t want to lock in that rhythm. Keep changing it up.

## **ACTING - SANFORD MEISNER**

Behaving truthfully under imaginary circumstances.

Acting is about genuine emotional response  
rather than pretending

**New Definition of a Speech**

**An elevated conversation  
with a strong point of view**



**One of your  
most effective  
presentational  
tools**

## **Engage a Skilled Director**

No one works in the theater (or film or television) without a skilled DIRECTOR. Find someone who is experienced, well-trained who can see things that you can't see and can give you precise actionable ways to improve.

## **Resources:**

To transcribe video: otter.ai

Memorization for Actors, Alexa Ispas

Sanford Meisner on Acting, Sanford Meisner

Free Meisner Training Video Library with Jim Jarrett:

<https://themeisnertechniquestudio.com/video-teachings>

<https://www.brodow.com/acting-technique-for-speakers>

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