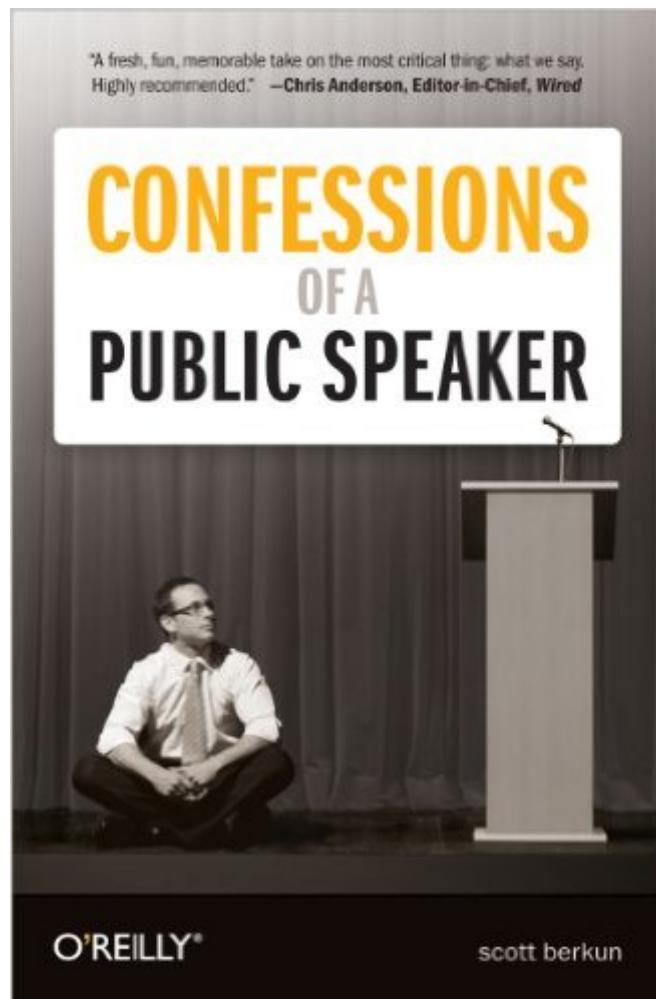


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# Confessions Of A Public Speaker



## Synopsis

In this hilarious and highly practical book, author and professional speaker Scott Berkun reveals the techniques behind what great communicators do, and shows how anyone can learn to use them well. For managers and teachers -- and anyone else who talks and expects someone to listen -- Confessions of a Public Speaker provides an insider's perspective on how to effectively present ideas to anyone. It's a unique, entertaining, and instructional romp through the embarrassments and triumphs Scott has experienced over 15 years of speaking to crowds of all sizes. With lively lessons and surprising confessions, you'll get new insights into the art of persuasion -- as well as teaching, learning, and performance -- directly from a master of the trade. Highlights include: Berkun's hard-won and simple philosophy, culled from years of lectures, teaching courses, and hours of appearances on NPR, MSNBC, and CNBC. Practical advice, including how to work a tough room, the science of not boring people, how to survive the attack of the butterflies, and what to do when things go wrong. The inside scoop on who earns \$30,000 for a one-hour lecture and why. The worst -- and funniest -- disaster stories you've ever heard (plus countermoves you can use). Filled with humorous and illuminating stories of thrilling performances and real-life disasters, Confessions of a Public Speaker is inspirational, devastatingly honest, and a blast to read.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

After grinding through far too many books on "how-to-present-better" books, I've finally found one that exceeds the promise. Scott Berkun, a former Microsoft executive who turned writer and professional speaker, practices what he preaches in his book.\* This book is written for anyone who has to give presentations (public speakers, managers, teachers) - it will benefit novices to veterans - and readers in all for-profit and not-for profit industries.\* This is a quick read - can be read in 1 or 2 sittings\* This is a page turning "how to" book\* It is written in a conversational tone packaged with excellent stories, persuasive tips, good research and "rhythmic" pace\* Author is informed via real world experiences - he is honest, humble and straightforward.\* He shares many usable tips and Do's and Don'ts that will stick (e.g. ask smaller than expected crowd to move up and dense-up; lose your content, ask audience for 10 topics they would like you to address; grab them early with a meaningful title for your presentation)\* Finally, a readable how-to book that delivers as promised...highly recommended.\* Some of my favorite excerpts include:"...when 100 people are listening to you for an hour, that's 100 hours of people's time devoted to what you have to say. If you can't spend 5 or 10 hours preparing for them, thinking about them, and refining your points to best suit their needs, what does that say about your respect for your audience's time? It says that your 5 hours are more important than 100 of theirs, which requires an ego larger than the entire solar system. And there is no doubt this disrespect will be obvious once you are on the stage.

I'll preface this review by saying I read this as part of a book group. I was told that although it was a public speaking aid, it was in itself a piece of entertainment. This review is based on the Kindle version. Scott Berkun launches into Confessions of a Public Speaker at great speed with a hugely entertaining chapter on why public speaking really isn't as scary as we say it is. Using stats and surveys to prove that you really wouldn't "rather die than speak in public". Multiple times I was given strange glances by my significant other due to my laughing out loud. By Chapter 4 I found I was no longer laughing. The entertainment factor had gone. It was no longer the advertised "... unique, entertaining, and instructional romp through the embarrassments and triumphs Scott has experienced over 15 years of speaking...". It was at this point that I felt 'Confessions of a Public

Speaker' may be an incorrect title, it had become a run-of-the-mill public speaking how-to guide. The advice was practical and I did take away many hints I can use, but much of it was common sense, strung out as far as possible to fill out an entire book. One third of the book is made up of appendices. These appendices are generally just repeats of the main segment. Ironically Scott teaches you to not waste your audience's time. Treat them with respect and keep them interested with important information they want to know. So to have one appendix focus on how many m&m's he ate while writing the book made me wonder if he practiced what he preached. The actual section containing real confessions of public speakers is also relegated to an appendix, again making me wonder if this is the correct title.

While there is a plethora of books such as Public Speaking for Dummies, and many similar titles; Confessions of a Public Speaker is unique in that it takes a holistic approach to the art and science of public speaking. The book doesn't just provide helpful hints, it attempts to make the speaker, and their associated presentation, compelling and necessary. Confessions is Scott Berkun's first-hand account of his many years of public speaking, teaching and television appearances. In the book, he shares his successes, failures, and many frustrating experiences, in the hope that the reader will be a better speaker for it. An issue with many books on public speaking is that they focus on the mechanics of public speaking. While there is nothing necessarily wrong with that approach, Confessions takes a much deeper and analytical look at public speaking. The book demonstrates that the best public speakers are not simply people with fancy PowerPoint's; rather they are excellent communicators with a strong message. While other books focus and stress the importance of creating good PowerPoint's, Confessions shows how one can rise above the PowerPoint and be a presenter of ideas to the audience. Such an approach can take a dry presentation and turn it into a compelling one. Berkun notes that while many people perceive public speaking to be a terrifying experience, the reality is that it does not have to be so petrifying. With fundamental preparations, even the most timid person can be a public speaker. While such a person will never be a speaker at the caliber of a Steve Jobs, there is no reason they can't present an enjoyable and educating presentation. The book is loaded with chapter after chapter of practical advice.

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