

Preface

I have spent a lifetime learning and learning how to communicate. And I'd like to share some of that learning with you. I do this not because I know so much but because what you know is so important, and because it's important that what you know be listened to and heard.

Inevitably in the life of an educator you will be called on to give a speech. You may be called on to exult, exalt, or mourn. You may be called on to be persuasive, passionate, or politic. You may be called upon to address students, parents, a panel, or even a mob. Your time may be limited, expansive, or interrupted, and sometimes all three. However and whenever you are called upon, the format and audience are going to vary.

What this book will provide are ideas, and stories, and one-liners, and point makers, and points of reflection designed to spur and serve your thinking, lend you inspiration, offer you perhaps a compass on a path of thinking less commonly traveled. This book is indexed for easy access and cross-referencing to ideas, and, with this book as with so many things in life, where you begin is not important, but simply beginning is.

In the film industry, an outside writer is often called in just before filming to "punch up" a script. This is a book geared to give your presentation more punch. This is a book of speech starters, and finishers, and ways of looking at things that will have others listening to you and nodding their heads.

Too often educators feel that they are shouting in the wind. Here are ways to whisper with the wind and be heard across

generations. You are the leader, the educator, the star that others look to. Following are thoughts, reflections, and ideas that need your words to surround them, to frame them, and to support them so they can best support you when circumstances require you to speak to an audience, or when you are simply introduced and asked to say a few words. So whether you're asked to congratulate, motivate, persuade, justify, or even express concern, here is an ally in your effort.

Kind critics have long said that because I write epigrammatically, my work serves the spoken word. Hopefully this approach will serve your presentations. Hopefully it will open a world, or a world of reflection, in a single line. The Gettysburg Address was written on the back of an envelope. Impromptu speeches always take the most time to write. Mark Twain said that what he liked about children is that they tell you what they have to say and then stop. And the famed educator John Dewey reminded all speakers that there is a world of difference between saying something and having something to say. This is not a book for the long-winded, but for those who would like their remarks long remembered.

This book is written not only to enrich your speeches, as the title suggests, but also to enrich you, the reader. Life is a lesson in process, and about process. It is an adventure in learning as heartwarming as it is heart wrenching. Herein are my field notes. What binds us one to another is not what we look at, but how we look at it. Enjoy the view!

Lastly, as my work is offered in support of any presentation, please be sure to cite the author. The author thanks you.

—Noah benShea
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