

James Taylor

Hi, it's James Taylor, founder of [SpeakersU](https://speakersu.com). Today's episode was first aired as part of International Speakers Summit the world's largest online event for professional speakers. And if you'd like to access the full video version, as well as in depth sessions with over 150 top speakers, then I've got a very special offer for you. Just go to InternationalSpeakersSummit.com, where you'll be able to register for a free pass for the summit. Yep, that's right 150 of the world's top speakers sharing their insights, strategies and tactics on how to launch grow and build a successful speaking business. So just go to InternationalSpeakersSummit.com but not before you listen to today's episode.

Hey there, it's James Taylor and I'm delighted today to be joined by Scott McKain. Scott McKain is an acclaimed keynote speaker best selling author and globally recognized authority on how organizations and professionals create distinction to attract and retain customers and stand out in a hyper competitive marketplace. His client list includes some of the world's most distinctive companies, including Apple SAP, Merrill Lynch, BMW, Cisco and John Deere. Scott was inducted along with Zig Ziglar Seth Godin and Dale Carnegie into the sales and marketing Hall of Fame. And after thousands of presentations over 50 states and 23 countries, he was also honored with membership into professional speakers Hall of Fame. And it's my great pleasure to have Scott join us today. So welcome, Scott.

Scott McKain

Yes, what a privilege. Gosh, I, I can hardly wait to hear what I have to say after that. That was extraordinary. I'm grateful. And thank you for allowing me to be a part of this.

James Taylor

So share with everyone what's going on in your world just now.

Scott McKain

Gosh, it's a busy time. I'm working on my next book, which will be we just signed the contract for it, in fact yesterday, and it'll be released at the end of this year. And the title of the book is iconic. How organizations and leaders attain lose and regain the ultimate level of distinction. So I'm really excited about that. I'm we're going back and forth and polishing the manuscript before publication, but really excited Time for that. And then I'm also out there speak it. I just got back from Australia and got the hit Oh, just traveling all the time doing what we do is speakers. So it's a, I'm very blessed. It's a very fortunate, fortunate set of circumstances for me.

James Taylor

So how did a young man from Indiana end up as one of the most top keynote speakers, but tell talk a little bit about what their journey was like? You

Scott McKain

know, it's funny, I was thinking last night, I was anticipating you might ask that question. And I was thinking last night on on, I'm 14 years old. I'm a freshman in high school. I'm part of a trip to a convention at Purdue University. And I'm literally on the back row of the first level of this auditorium. And they introduced an outside speaker. And I was moved not only by the message, I set there at 14 years old, and I still remember thinking that's the coolest thing in the world. It was the first time that I'd ever heard a professional speaker and I remember thinking not Not only was I moved by his message and impacted by what he had to say, but I also remember thinking, that would just be the coolest, coolest job in the world. But I'm a freshman High School, right? So I don't remember, other than other than prom and and then commencement. I don't remember a single night that went by, that I didn't take this little tape recorder and stand in my bedroom for all four years of high school and do two things. One is I would give a prepared speech and record it. And then I would stand and I would try to pick out something in my bedroom. And I would make myself give a two minute speech on something that I saw in the bedroom. In other words, could I give a two minute speech on a coat hanger? Could I give a two minute speech on a doorknob? Could I and it I wanted to practice being able to think of my feet to be able to stand and communicate and keep it going For that, for that period of time. Interestingly enough, the first speech contest I won was based on I looked down and saw a key ring and I made myself give a, a two minute speech on a key ring. And then I got the idea that leadership is not about being the biggest key. It's about being the ring that ties all of those unique keys together in a meaningful poll. And that was the first that was the topic of the of the first speech contest that I wanted when I was in high school. I got an opportunity to in high school when I was 14, the little local radio station offered me a job and people say, Oh, you've got a radio voice. That's why they did it. Well, no, I was 14. My you know, is you know what, when you're a guy and you're 14, your voice is all over the play, you know that but my dad owned the local grocery store and they thought if they hired his son, then dad would buy more commercials on the radio station rather than ads in the newspaper but, but I think it helped me train my voice because I was always trying to sound Unlike an adult, I was always as my voice was changed was always trying to drive my voice lower. And then with radio people say, Well Did that really helps you for speaking. The only thing that helps you speaking is when you click the mic on, you'd better have something to say. And so it helped me on my, but there's there was little in that that helped them in terms of speaking. I got involved in a student organization. In the United States, it's called FFA. At that time it stood for Future Farmers of America. It was an agriculturally related organization, not just for farmers, but for anyone involved in the industry of agribusiness. Today's just known as FFA, because it's not it's moved from production agriculture to the entire the entire field. But the crazy thing was, it's really a leadership development organization. And it It got me, you know, inspired by speaking contests and it got me speaking and I was elected State President, Indiana and then later a national Officer of FFA. So I took two years out of college to fulfill those responsibilities, which basically was traveling

and speaking By the time I was 21, I had given a speech to the board of directors in general motors in the boardroom at the GM headquarters. I had met with the President of the United States in the Oval Office, I had spoken in front of 25,000 people, I had had those opportunities, but the time I was 21 but the other thing that happened was, is I would speak at these rural meetings in the United States. You know, somebody mom might be the local bank president or somebody dad might be involved with another civic organization. I'm speaking to the students, but the parents happen to be in the in the room and so somebody would come up and say, Hey, you know, our bank tellers need to hear that speech. Could you come into the bank and, and give that speech? And that's how I pay boy through college, was traveling all over the Midwest, you know, given given those speeches, and it was it the other thing was, it was it was the greatest learning laboratory you can imagine. Because when people say, Well, what does somebody 2223 years old have to say to business people, older adults. Well, what I did was kind of make a report of what I've learned from other business people. You know, here's, here's what I learned when we visited General Motors. And here's what if you're sincere people love to help. So what would happen is I'd give a speech at some small community and one of the entrepreneurs and say, hey, I've got an idea for you first, you know, so I'd write that down. Next speech, I'd relate their idea. Well, one of two things would happen James, either they'd write down the idea, the audience would write it down, oh, that's a good idea and write it up, or somebody would come up and say, I've got a better idea. Well, that so for the next decade, I'm I'm doing that, and it was the greatest learning laboratory you can imagine it didn't pay much

James Taylor

that what that what you just described is you and I were talking earlier about we're both drummers and that sounds very similar to I think a lot of my musician, friends and family members who paid their Jews. You know, you go and play all those club gigs. You know, there's like, three men and dug in there, and you're you're working on your craft and you're continually but you have, you have such a love, you know, passion for what you do that's taking you through all the time, you're continually working with people that are better than you, you're kind of learning from those and adding those new distinctions.

Scott McKain

So true. I gave 1003 speeches through through the student organization. But I mean, literally standing up at a banquet or standing up at a luncheon or doing a high school assembly you're doing, I gave 1000 free speeches before ever got paid. Now, I'm not encouraging anybody to go and do 1000 free speeches, but to support what you're saying, James enthusiastically. It is about paying your dues. And I think unfortunately, I have seen really good people try to move that process too quickly. And so they get booked for speeches before they're really ready. And this is a referral business to a great degree. It's certainly a reputation business and so they they intentionally damage the future of their career. Because they put themselves through great marketing. And through all of these other things we learned how to do as speakers. They put themselves in a position for which they're not ready. It's like, you know, if you're just learning the game of basketball, you don't want to be on an NBA court yet. Yeah, right. If I'm just learning the

game of football, I shouldn't be on a premier league field yet. Because my skills not only are my skills not that proficient, it'll also really make me look bad. And with such a reputation business, you can't afford that.

James Taylor

And you want that kind of sustainability. I suppose. It's a little bit like a TV show like American Idol, for example, where you see young, really talented people, you know, they've got they've got that that core part of town and they get pushed onto these big stages. And very early on maybe before they've, they haven't Nestle, paid the dues, they haven't done all those little kind of club gigs to work up things. And the first time they're actually getting in front of people, it's in front of, like 20,000 people. And they're doing five nights in a row. And then there's something their voice goes because they haven't learned to look after the tone of their voice and things like that. Yeah. So so in this time you were kind of going through those those early stages and doing those first thousand talks. Were there any mentors that you had as a speaker, people that took you up under their wing, even maybe people you knew or maybe people you looked at from afar and you said, I want to be like that I can see that's who I I look to train to attain that level of mastery.

Scott McKain

I want to share a couple quick stories. If I could. James, I was speaking at for the student organization FFA. I'll never forget in Illinois at the Fieldhouse for the University of Illinois, about 3000 students in the audience. And on the afternoon keynote, the keynote that night was a man named Grady Nutt and he was a humorous but yet a very serious in terms of he had a he had a great message you He his tumor as a vehicle for him. So he wasn't just a comedian. And I'd read about him and I wanted to see him. And he was speaking that night. So I speak that afternoon goes great. I hear him that night. And it was just the most amazing speech. In terms of audience, he blew the roof off the place. It was so incredible. And I walked up afterwards just to shake his hand and he sees me and he says, you need to be doing this for a living. And I, I was so enthralled with him. I do want familiar with it. He said, No, he said, I walked in this afternoon just to get a feel for the arena and the field for the crowd. And and I just walked in, nobody knew who I was, and they just introduced you. So I sat down in the back row, and I listened to your speech and he said, You ought to be doing this for a living. And then he said, and I will help. And as as Grady's career continued to grow, and audiences certain of his older audiences couldn't afford to have him back. Great. He would say, I've got this young guy, he's just getting started in speaking. But But He's really good. You ought to, you ought to book him. And so that's how part of my career got started was just the little audiences that couldn't afford radio more because he paid his dues, and he's working his way up and I'm, you know, I'm here. Tragically, Grady was killed in a plane crash coming home from a speech in 1982. But he was a great influence on my life. The other one that really inspired me. They brought me back to speak at this FFA convention 10 years after I had been a national officer, and my wife and I are checking in the hotel and the other speaker and there's 25,000 students in the audience for this event. And they just bring me back because I'm an alumnus, right. I'm a I've been at the been a

part part of the program. So I'm checking it out and the other speaker is gonna be Zig Ziglar. And I can't wait to hear because I'd never heard Zig Ziglar person had every book at every everything and at the front desk, There was a note and it said, please call Mr. Ziegler's room had his room number, when you arrive he wants to see if you would like to go to dinner. And I joke I feel like a shortstop playing Little League that Derek Jeter wants to know if I want to go get a coke or something. I, I remember trembling when I when I called and he answered the phone and I said, you know, we'd love to my wife sweet, so, so just the three of us went to dinner zig and my late wife and I, and Zig sat there and he said, Scott, you know, I looked before the convention and he said, I didn't see your book. Where's your book? And I said, was a guy I've never written a book. And he said, Yeah, I haven't either. My wife and I kind of like look at each other because we've got, we got like, 10 on the shelf, right? We've got every Zig Ziglar book. He said, But you know what? Every morning I get up and and I write three pages. And after about six months, they tell me I've got a book. And then he just sat back and smiled and it was like the lightning Whatever top my head. And he said, I think that he said, I've looked and learned and I know your message. And he said, it's a really a good one. And he said, it needs to be in a book. He says, I bet your problem is is the problem I had, which is to write a book seems so challenging. It seems so overwhelming. Don't write a book, but write three pages and do that every day. And the next morning, I got up, I wrote three pages. And it's the first three pages of my first book all businesses show business and he

James Taylor

had so many great little I remember early and probably about 14 married about that time, going and driving to though heading to different places. And listening to his audio tapes. I'm going to give me a bunch of audio tapes. And he had that real he had that he had a certain kind of voice. And I'm guessing being from the UK, I'm guessing was very informed by the, the, you know, the church, that kind of pastors speaking there was a sudden lilt in a certain way that it can when you hear great, great preachers for example, it has That kind of feel to it. I just remember all these little things. I remember one of the ones he said, you know, get them laughing every seven minutes. You know, there was there's things like that. And there was there's lots of ways I think, Rory vaden, who we had as a guest on this as well, I know, was kind of in the same way that Grady took you under his his wing. I think that Rory was one of those people who went on to Zig under many I know there's many of people like that. And I was recently speaking with Dr. Shirley Davis and Les Brown was that person that took her under his wing. So that's that's it just we hear the story time and time again, you're the mentor and mentee and just kind of passing on to the onto the next generation. As you were going into this world was any advice you got? I mean, you speak about this idea of having distinction and we are in a super crowded world now it feels like with with speakers and speakers coming in all the time from different areas. How did you learn to To stand out what was your How did you in this kind of hyper competitive marketplace of speaking? How did you find a way to be distinct?

Scott McKain

It's a great question. It's, it's a, for the, for the first major part of my career. When someone said, What do you speak about? I'd usually say well, about an hour. What do you want me to speak about time management? All right, I'll be so stressed to get that speech done. I'll have to learn it, you know, to give it I would go anywhere to talk about whatever you wanted. And what you got was based on my experience of giving a lot of speeches, you know, I, I was, I was a serviceable speaker with a very, very generic presentation. Which was good enough to get me booked and good enough to book a lot of speeches at an OK fee. And then I had to really pull back. Saturday, my first wife, Sherry, developed ovarian cancer. And we didn't have any kids and I'm a sole caregiver. And it was a very trying time. And after Sherry passed, I had to reboot my business. And this is a hard business to get into. It's a really hard business to get back into. It's it's difficult to position it's even more difficult to reposition, right? If I'm new in the market, then all I have to do is to get you to understand the best about me, and I'm positioned to reposition I've got to get you to forget what you knew and get you to start thinking something different so it's always more difficult to reposition. So I started calling the speakers bureaus that had booked me and I asked them, okay, when you recommend me to a client, what do you say? Which I think is what I look back now. stumbled onto that question, but I think it's one of the most critical questions that we can ask when you refer me. What do you say about me? And the number one overwhelming answer was a really good speaker and a really nice guy. Well, don't get me wrong, I want to be, I want to be a really good speaker. I work really hard at being a really good speaker. I choose to be I want to be a nice guy. But there I can't picture the Vice President of Ford. When they're talking about the sales meeting coming up. I can't imagine that person saying, you know what we need this year. We need a really nice guy, though they say we want someone who will teach us about. So as silly as it sounds, James, I started saying I gotta figure out how to stand out and I started researching how did companies that were distinctive in the marketplace, what did they do, and executives that that had risen to the top as leaders as managers. What did they do? And were there any common threads that and all I was trying to do was to take my business to that level. And and as silly as this sounds I look back now. But I'm midway into my research and it was the blinding flash of the obvious that wait a minute if I really need this, how many other companies and managers and leaders and salespeople are out there that need the same thing? And so that was the genesis of the whole thing that created with distinction was and I realized along the way, too, it's not differentiation. I don't think different is better. Different is just different. If I slap every client in the face, I'm different. It doesn't mean they'll ever book me again. But they'll go and he's really different. Right? So it seemed to me that there was a level of sameness, which many speakers are what I was right in other words, I'm I'm just out there doing a good job. There's a lot of folks will do a good job. I hope you pick me. It also those are the ones that they're always saying, well, could you do it for a little bit less? Could you do it for, you know, we're having to negotiate fee, then you go to the next level, which is differentiation, there's something about them that's a little bit different, a little bit unique makes them stand out. But the higher level then becomes distinction. And distinction is where you are known for something to such a degree, that you are attracting business. Even as you pursue bookings, you're also attracting it. Because people are saying, oh, if we want to know about how to create distinction, this is the guy yeah, this is the person that owns that. And and that's the highest level. So that's where that all came from James, I was

just trying to save my speaking business, and then realized if I needed this in my business, what were the what was the likelihood that other business professionals were looking for the same answer

James Taylor

that's almost like you think of you two iconic, iconic brands. Think of like Volvo safety owns a word and it is not it doesn't own four by four it doesn't own SUV owns he owns a feeling or or an emotion I think it's like Sally hogshead and fascinate sure she comedians that that word. So you were actually building up the ownership almost ownership or distinction. So as that word got talked about more and more and more because of you, and maybe not because of you, it was you were you were there. You thought you were kind of able to kind of go on that tide the whole time. ride the wave. Yeah,

Scott McKain

exactly. Exactly. And and so then what happens? And it's kind of interesting, because it's part of what I wrote about in the first book on distinction when there wasn't anything out there on it really is that then the next wave becomes copycat competition. And now you go online and you see everybody talking about how to stand out and it's hard to stand out. What you're talking about is how to stand Right. But the other thing and that and that's where the new book is leading, is that people would come up and they go, Okay, so people really done once you talk about so now, Samsung than in the original book was part of that sameness now has risen up to the point of differentiation, maybe distinction. So if if Samsung is distinctive, whereas apple. So there had to be something beyond distinction. And that's where the new book is going with iconic, is that distinctive means you're at the top in your particular market segment. But iconic brands are ones that are talked about, you know, if we're talking about how you run a retail store, we're going to be talking about Apple regardless of the way it goes beyond their specific industry. You know what I mean, if they become cultural icons, not just the predominant provider, in their respective industry? Yeah.

James Taylor

And I'm thinking that, I guess also that helps on the referral party. You mentioned earlier because it makes the referral bit so much easier. Because you're not you're not in a world of just like lots of other things if if someone mentions that I need a someone talk about come and talk about distinction, or I need I'm thinking about someone like how to be a remarkable brand I think like Seth Godin like remarkable you know, the certain kind of words that that you can you can think of other other things that we can be doing as speakers to realize that, you know, this is this is an industry of referrals from other speakers from bureaus from people that hear you and see you on stage is anything that we can be doing to to kind of help that process that we are being that person is preferred.

Scott McKain

One thing that we've learned and we've used fortunately very successfully, James is really, really important question. And it's, it's drilling deeper with the clients that you already have. And in the fundamental question that you ask yourself is this who is my clients customer How can I help my clients serve their customers? I'll give you an example. I'm speaking for Bridgestone tires, big meeting for Bridgestone tires. And it went great, great crowd, great group. And so I basically asked myself, our office and our team asked the question, so who's their customer? Well, our first response obviously would be Oh, it's anybody that buys tires, but that's not really it, because it's the dealers that sell the Bridgestone tires to their customers and the dealers that have bridgestones and michelins and good years and Yokohama has and all of those Okay, so how does Bridgestone gain greater mindshare with those dealers that are their customers. So we went to them and made a proposal and we said, just as you had this meeting, every one of the dealers that are selling your tires have a meeting. What if You've sponsored me to be the keynote speaker for that meeting, you could get up and introduce me get your time in front of all the sales people. Look, they're going to ask you to sponsor a cocktail reception or something anyway, so it's in your budget, but sponsor me as the keynote speaker for all of those events. And we booked 15 more full fee dates with them as a result of just that question, and then I did all of those, well, then all of those dealers then have a need for training programs, they have a need for some kind of follow up. So with with several of them, I've done additional work then for those dealers that they paid for, because they didn't want to be beholden to just one company. So it probably ended up being 23 to 25 programs at a significant fee. Just from that, and I can give you several other examples. We did that with Cisco. We did that with Juniper Networks. We've done that with SAP You know, with with other companies with Apple,

James Taylor

so that's almost like going going, you know, we often are taught to think of what is the transformation that you want to have in the organization you're going to speak for. But this is actually going one step further. This is saying what is the transformation that you want to have in the lives and the organization's of the other customers of your of the people that you're going to speak? So going that level? And I guess, because then you speak your topics around is brand marketing as well. That's the kind of thing that is to em problem for every Vice President of Marketing Director, man, they're continually thinking that question is that continually thinking of the customers challenges that is, that is their life. And so if you're coming along, saying, actually, I have something that's not only going to help elevate your brand amongst those those customers, but it's going to help them solve some of the deeper challenges in their organizations and you know that that's a total Win, win win

Scott McKain

in See, I think many times and we'd Seek referrals, right? That's just part of the process. Regardless of where you are in your career, you still want people to refer you so we try to be easily referral. I'll talk more about that in a second. But, but what I realized was if I asked the

CEO of Bridgestone to refer me, first of all, who's going to refer me to that, that might be limited, he's sure not gonna refer me to his competitors. He's certainly not going to refer me to so he might have referred me to some of these other tire dealers, but to formalize the process means now instead of maybe booking one or two or three that he had referred me to, now, all of a sudden, I've got 20 you know, programs. Yeah. And, and I'm, and I've also now I'm a resource for them, because when they get great feedback from their customers, what do they want to do? So they booked me two or three more times. I didn't include that number, right. Hey, Scott's done such a good job in it. You know, A lot of times to the referrals that we can get our internal within the organization, we tend to think of external, but but with a with an insurance company, for example, if I do all the agents, why don't they refer me to the internal meetings that they have of their wholesalers? Yeah. So we referrals can be. The best referrals to me are drilling deeper within the clients that we already have, and finding additional ways to serve them, rather than thinking and that's, that's part of what you know, I preached in the speeches as well, is that we've got to find ways to transcend transaction. And many times as speakers were looking for a booking of that speech, and I've noticed the more that I try to help clients the more speeches I end up booking the more that for example, Bridgestone It was about how do you leverage your budget. You're already being asked to buy the cocktail hour or sponsor one of the meals. You're going to spend the money anyway. This is a more memorable way for you to take that investment of your budget and really make an impact. So those are the things that when we start looking for how to be of help. One of the things in my early early days of speaking a guy named Joe Charbonneau, the late Joe Charbonneau at Dallas, Texas, had so many things he did the two things that Joe said, he said, Get a legal pad, put it on the phone, draw a line, divide it in half. Every time somebody calls about a speech, put a checkmark every time somebody calls about help put a checkmark in the other column. When you have more checkmarks of people calling you for help than calling to book a speech. That's when you know you have viability in this business. Because they look at you as a resource, rather than as a vendor. Yeah. And I love that

James Taylor

I guess I guess that's that's that's obviously we're busy, you know, corporates going in general as it used to supplier relationships is not transactional systems it's building those relationships and you almost I mean I think some of the best products and almost kind of don't know where one company starts and the other one and it's these close relationship and as we're going to start to move I want to get to some real quick fire questions here we Scott is there a what's in your speaker bag? well isn't that a bag that you carry with you to all of your your speaking gigs you never leave the home in your office without

Scott McKain

I was with my wife Tammy was here to hear that because she's like he has more junk it is bad. I am a muck what I call this the I love technology. I carry my laptop. I carry an iPad, I carry a Kindle. I carry all of the dongles the attachments. I bought a let me about a roll over here and get it I bought the this is the slide clicker. I carry with me everywhere. With me This is the best

slide advancer that you can that you can possibly get it a lot of speakers they'll handle this at the event of perfect cue when you carry your own and and the AV crew sees that you carry your own even if you don't use it they know they're dealing with a pro yeah and and it no matter the circumstance no matter the situation that is in and you can find that online at and I'm I'm not a compensated endorser, I just think it's the best thing going just all of that I carry all the you know the I carry I carry a multiple outlet you know plug so because so many times hotel rooms don't have enough outlets for everything. And so that's everything is on my Kindle. I carry a cannon on that one on the

James Taylor

on the power of having the extension. If you want to like make friends very quickly airports be that person that has

Scott McKain

Idea point. Oh yeah, cuz now we're by plugin that I carry this camera. It's a Canon g7 x. And I carry this with me everywhere because it's just absolutely fantastic to do a video blog or, or whatever. So I will get a little selfie stick and this camera. And after the event I'll just shoot a little video saying, Hi, Scott, it was great to be with you at the XYZ Corporation event, I'm just leaving the hotel or I might be in the cab, I'm in the cab. But man, I'm still on a high from what a great experience that we had. So let me remind you, of these three points. We talked about your event, ABC. So then we send that to the client afterwards and say how would you you know if you'd like would you like to distribute this. So then they send that as a post event follow up to remind everybody which then keeps me front of mine. One of the things I've written about in every book is my belief that mind share proceeds market share. Every business that I work with wants to grow their market share, it's the wrong place to start as a speaker, it's the wrong place to start. People aren't booking you if they're not thinking about you. So your key is how do you create innovative ways to stay front of mind for them and, and so anything that you can do to shoot a video that says thanks that they distribute is is critical and and, and we'll do that. So I carry a bunch of stuff. I carry a digital recorder with me as well just to make certain the sound is perfect. The other thing is, and this is a great one, it's a zoom f1 field recorder. And so I can pin the lapel mic on one on one lapel as they pin the other one for the speech. And now I have a perfect digital copy of my speech. I do that for two reasons. One is to edit to us on things that we might be, you know doing in the future. But the other thing is to get it transcribed. Because if you want to scare yourself to death, get a transcription of your speech and the imprecision of the language that we use on the platform. And so part of what I'm trying to do is to get better with my language, get better with my descriptions and be more precise, because every word matters when we're on the platform. So

James Taylor

long answer that question, but I was I was talking to guests recently that on that precision point, I was thinking I was talking to one of our other guests who works with helpings because with this

speech, especially non native speakers, and should we have to remember now is 95% of business conversations are happening in English, are between at least one of those people is not a native English speaker. So most business conversations are going on and not with native English speakers. So you have to be clear, there has to be a real sense of clarity in what you're seeing that makes total sense to be able to kind of go through those as well.

Scott McKain

Oh, and you bring up some important point, James. Because as your career grows, and you start doing more international programs, you know, the easiest, the quickest example is I tell a story about a taxi driver. And when I'm telling the story in the States, he, he gets my luggage and puts it in the trunk of the car. Well, if I'm speaking where you are, it's, it's the boot. And so you don't get in line you get in the queue. Part of what we have to do as speakers is to make certain that we're using the terminology. Even the slang I know, many times those of us in the States, you know, we'll talk about knocking it out of the park. Well, there's a lot of parts of the world that have no idea that that's a baseball term, you know, hitting a home run, well, that speech was a home run. Well, that may not be the most appropriate expression in other places. So there's so many if you can put a fine point on that the the audience, almost subconscious picks up yeah, that you're using their terminology not your own.

James Taylor

And what about book is the one book that you would recommend that people check out could be on the crafter speaking it could be on the on the business side of speaking or something that just more generally is going to help them understand this this this, this took us home in terms of distinction.

Scott McKain

So many of my friends have written so many great books, it's it's it's hard to know, you know which which ones to recommend, but let me share two with you real quickly. One is my buddy Joe Callaway. And his book is be the best at what matters most. And I think many times as speakers there are so many things that we can be doing that we end up chasing a lot of different opportunities. What really the client is looking for is us to be the best to what really matters most. And it's just brilliantly done. And then Phil Jones has a book called exactly what to say. And we've been working on this and applying this and it is absolute Li fascinating how just changing a few words could dramatically improve your ability to, to communicate. For example, one of the things that a quick one he says is, you should say, Now I want you to be open minded. And the reason that you say that is because no one wants to be perceived as closed minded. Right? So you have by saying that you've predisposed the listener to agree with what you're saying, because the subliminal message almost is, if you object to it, it's not because it's wrong. It's because you are close minded. Right?

James Taylor

I think Phil did a good job with that distinction there. Because actually, the shape and the size of that book and the way that book is branded is I think it's a very good example of distinction standing out I can, I can see that book. I've had that book, and I can have it sitting in the cross in the room and I know it's his book because it also released his website and it's got visiting Tegrity Dan is going on?

Scott McKain

Absolutely, absolutely. And that's you mentioned a hugely important word, James, that the integrity with all of your materials, and the congruency so that the website looks like the book looks like the visuals looks like. So there's that. And that's, that's branding 101. But yet again, we as speakers, that's part of what's so hard about this business is that, you know, we want to get to a high level, you're dealing with high level companies, but yet you you don't have the resources that they have in terms of design and branding, and, and just number of people. I've got to go give a speech on Sunday, plus, I got to finish the book, plus, I got to look at website proposals plus i got, you know, and we're always juggling. And many times when that happens, it removes the consistency and the congruency. And it's unintentional, we don't even realize it. It's happening.

James Taylor

And is there an online tool that you find really useful for yourself as a speaker or an app that you find you using all the time as a speaker?

Scott McKain

Well, I need to find some more I keep I keep looking for, you know, for something better. But one of the ones that we use all the time is called close clo z. And it's an app on the iPhone and an app online. It's a relationship management app. But part of what I like about it, is it how you can also do email through it. It's calendar, it's scheduling, but it also does email and it will notify you when someone has read the email that you sent. So part of what I love about that is if I send an email to somebody, and I know that they've read it, from a timing standpoint, I might wait 15 or 20 minutes, and then I call them yeah, and typically the response is, oh my gosh, I was just thinking about you. No kidding. Wow, great. Well, that's it. So it's clo z great. I want to use it our office in like the whole lot

James Taylor

and kind of final question for I want you to Imagine you woke up tomorrow morning and you had to start from scratch. So I'm gonna let you position yourself any way you want in the world of Las Vegas, any city you'd like. But you have all the skills you've acquired over the years, but you know, no one, no one knows you. What would you do? How would you restart your speaking,

Scott McKain

I'd write the book. The biggest mistake I've made in my speaking career was I was a speaker for 1012 years and didn't write a book. And so when books came into the market, matter of fact, there was one book that came into the market. It was somebody I know was in one of my speeches, and we'll talk about how and then he wrote a book about what I haven't been talking about that particular time. And I know that they were on a similar track, so I'm not saying it, but, but had I written the book and got it out. When I first started talking about this, it would have predated that book by by yours, but I gave the speech I didn't write the book and to several things that when you write the book, the book is key to success. publishing your authority in the marketplace on that subject matter. Secondly is the book is the best business card you could ever possibly have. With third and the unintended consequences, it improves the precision of your thinking. If I'm standing in front of a group, I can read their eyes if I'm coming, if they're getting what I'm talking about or not. If I since they're not getting it, I can do another story. I can use another example or I can pull questions from the audience. The book, I don't get a second chance. And so the language in your thinking, has to be more precise, has to be sharper. And writing the book was such a great mental exercise to get my content better. That for all of those reasons, the first thing I would do, because part of your your, your question evolved, I still have the knowledge of the subject matter. The first thing I would do is write the book.

James Taylor

Well, Scott, it's been an absolute pleasure speaking to you today. Thank you so much for coming on. We could have talked to talk because you just so wealth of knowledge in this you and you have certainly paid your dues in this business. So Scott, thank you so much for coming on. I look forward to hearing you speak on stage soon.

Scott McKain

James I look forward to it. It's been a real privilege and pleasure See you again soon. Thanks. Today's episode

James Taylor

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