

James Taylor

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Hi, it's James Taylor here. I'm delighted today to be joined by Tami Evans. Tami Evans is a motivational business speaker who believes that laughter is an essential element in the learning process. She is the past president of the New York chapter of the National Speakers Association and a genuine, funny and motivational style gets a book to keep keynotes all over the world. Now, in addition to speaking, she has also worked as a professional actor, and you've probably seen her in TV shows like Sex in the City. But that's another story. So it's my great pleasure to welcome Tami today. So welcome, Tami.

Tami Evans

Oh, James, I'm delighted to be here.

James Taylor

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

Tami Evans

Oh, my goodness. Um, so it's spring currently. And it's just a it's just a beautiful time of year to begin, you know, the whole cycle of the speaking industry, right? I mean, we're we're ramping up into a really busy time for conventions. And I'm just always so excited this time of year to just get back on the stage and always be trying new ways to connect with my audience and get my message out

James Taylor

there. Now, I mentioned you come from the world of the stage, you come from acting? When did the move into speaking begin? And in terms of keynote speaking, how did that transition happen?

Tami Evans

Yes, I'm a classically trained actress, I have a Master of Fine Arts and performance, and also a broadcasting and communications degree. So basically, I was the news person and on the National Public Radio, and then moved into theater where I worked with Jeff Daniels, the actor to start the purple Rose Theatre Company. And with Jeff's help, I moved to New York City where I got a job on a daytime soap opera, one life to live and a nighttime soap opera, Sex in the City, as you mentioned, and several films out in New York, but it's a it's an interesting world, in theater where you can work as hard as you want, but you're not in control of any of your own career. And more times than not, you end up on the cutting room floor. So at the same time, I was teaching at university I was teaching presentation skills and communication and it all came together. When a mutual friend of mine from undergrad Christine Kashin, who is also a she's a world Hall of Fame speaker in the in the industry and amazing human being really just said, you need to be in this industry. And from that day on, kind of guided me through the industry. And I took the teaching that I was doing at university and the performance that I was doing as an actress and combine them for the perfect combination for me of education and entertainment. And I think everything that for most speakers, everything that we do in our lives, it's like that funnel, you put everything in there. And it all adds to this, this business that that we have that we get to share with the world. It's It's incredible. So Christine was the start of my journey, which led me to the National Speakers Association, and so many people, too many people to even name I mean, if there's anything you need as a speaker, you can reach out and there will be someone there who's willing to share their their story and their ideas and it is the most giving generous organization I've ever belonged to. And that has in turn led me to many speakers who are not even in the National Speakers Association. And it's just this this culture of goodness just keeps growing in this industry. And I'm, I'm so proud to be a professional speaker and to know so many people out there who are good and giving and really take their power of the platform and use it for good.

James Taylor

So one of the things I noticed when when I see actors that make that transition to speaking on stages as speakers, usually they're much better a number of things in the other speakers are coming from other profession. One is that they can use their body much better they understand the how to use presence on stage because they've had that training. They they usually be good I think blocking and unsigned and things like that as well. Voice is usually much better in terms of just having having a presence there as well. So there's a lot of skills I can see that get moved quite nicely on to the speaking on stage. The one I always wanted though, was as an actor, you You're, you're often you're paid to go and speak other other people's lines. So someone else has written those lines for you, and then you go and deliver, interpret those and deliver those on stage. But as a speaker, you have to create your own lines you're making up, you're both the script writer and you and you're the person's up on stage. So how was that process for you, because that requires a slightly different type of creativity.

Tami Evans

Absolutely. And you bring up a good point that when you're classically trained, it's this whole idea that, you know, there's a fourth wall and the audience is there. And there's the willing suspension of disbelief, and you make your entrance, and you do your, you know, performance of whatever that is, but you don't interact necessarily. And so what I found very quickly, transitioning from the world of performance into the world of speaking, is that you really have to, you really have to engage with the audience and break that wall immediately and connect with people. And it isn't about so much writing a script of, you know, how you're going to preach to these people. It's more about telling the stories from your life. So, you know, in addition to acting and teaching, I was also, you know, is hired to be a pitch coach for major consultancies for their sales pitches around the world. And I was also on the design team for Banana Republic, the major fashion brand. And I found that when I just took my stories from those experiences, and started to tell those stories, and how they were applicable to, you know, all of the organizations and corporations that I speak to, that's when the light went off, because people said, Oh, she, she isn't a performer, she's an actress. She's a business person that happens to have classical training and how to deliver her message, which was like, Oh, the light bulb went off. And I have to tell you, when you do interact with your audiences, at first, I was frightened, because I thought, Oh, I don't, this isn't scripted, I don't know what's going to happen. And I'll tell you what, the funniest, most memorable, most brilliant things happen when you engage with the audience and let them be the star. So now I have several moments in my keynotes where I actually have it, you know, set up where I engage the audience so that they can actually kind of be the star of the show, and it's brilliant, it's the best material that you could ever asked for.

James Taylor

So that almost sounds a bit more. Rather than being like the when we think of the act of person up on the stage theatre show was all pre written and you deliver in this audience there, that almost sounds more like a like a rock concert in that way that I think about a friend, a friend of mine was managed, managed to Taylor Swift, the music artists, and Taylor Taylor has a voice coach to look after her voice. But she also has a performance coach as well, that it was able to see, okay, this point in the set your song is it this this level here. So we I need you to be at that part of the stage, I need you to be doing this with your body, I need you to be at this stage, I need that high level of interaction with the audience. Because you can do that you can feel the energy in that way when you're doing a rock music concert or rock concerts. And so speaking you you're you're sensing that energy, but you're also giving yourself time and finding ways to have those interactions with the audience whether that's just that one on one thing, they're on a different ways,

Tami Evans

especially if you can bring levity into

James Taylor

Well, that's the part so the levity bit that the humor part as well. Now, I am one of those speakers. I do not cast myself as a particularly funny person. My wife on the other hand, she is she's a she comes as a trained actor, and she's very comfortable. She has that very natural. No jokes come very easy to lines companies. For me, it's not it's not so easy. And I speak to a lot of speaking friends of mine, who have made big transitions in the speaking because they went to things like improv comedy sessions to learn some of some of those skills, it made them much better speaker. So for someone like myself, who is let's say, I'm, I'm hesitant about using using humor in my speech, either because I feel that it doesn't come from my natural style. Or I feel I'm talking on a topic like artificial intelligence, like how to voice creativity. How do you get that's so funny? And so what what would you say to anyone that's watching or listening to this? Now who feels a little bit like me that? Yes, they're going to use humor, but it's just not quite sure how to do it.

Tami Evans

Yeah. So I think, um, you know, one of the things I think to remember is that people like people with a personality, I mean, you're, you're attracted to people because of their personality. And so when you're engaging with your audience, they want to know you they want to know a little bit about you. So I always say when you're going to start with humor or levity, start with yourself start with things about you quirks ideas around you. And I did have the wonderful opportunity to see speak at the National Speakers Association, the winter conference about, you know, kind of setting up summits and things like that. So and I saw you do an AI speech as well. So I actually have a couple ideas for you, based on some things. So we're doing

James Taylor

all this live, I have no idea what time is gonna say. So she may give me a really hard time here. But like, you're far too serious, you need to be much, much more liberty. So not to be as strict with what what, what we're doing. Where is that? Where's the room for improvement? For example, I'll make sure we put a link here as well, so that they can get some context.

Tami Evans

Yeah, yeah. So talking about using yourself. So right at the top, you acknowledge that, because you were speaking to a primarily an audience primarily from the United States, you made, you know, already, you called out the fact that you are not from the United States. And that's great. I think anytime that we can stand in front of and just acknowledge what's different or noticeable about us, and find something humorous to say, for instance, you might say, you know, I really enjoy joining you here in the United States, um, you know, you may not realize this, I'm not from this country, and you might find this hard to believe, but I used to have an accent. And the fact that and you, as much of your broke as you could, yeah, because the fact is, that you're saying I used to have an accent. And of course, you know, it's so obvious that you have and the more you can play it up, the better that will get the laughed, it will disarm the audience because they're like, okay, clearly, there's gonna, you know, we understand that that's happening. So

that's great that you use that, you know, talking about yourself or the situation. So, so that's something they're not expecting, but you deliver it very straight, because you have a very authoritative persona. And you look very, you know, you look very official and, and like a leader, you know, a very strong leader. So, the more you can deliver the humor straight, the bigger the laugh will be, the bigger the payoff. Um, so you you talked about, in one of your speeches, you tell the story about when you were a young boy, and your parents sent you up into the, into the mountains of Scotland, and, you know, you, you show a facet, fabulous picture of you, and you talk about how they sent you up into the mountains in a kilt. So what you can do in this situation, which is already humorous, so you're already doing humorous things. Now, I'd love to employ an act out, it's called an act out or a go to, and that's where you actually become in the situation. So again, you would employ the the tool of using your, your Scottish accent very well, and I am not good to Scottish accent, but you would be like, you know, alright, so you're gonna go up into the hills now. And and then you become you and say, oh, for how long then? And they'd say, oh, till you get to that top, or whatever, you know what I mean? So you have this little conversation, and then you you show us, you know, so imagine you're walking up this hill, and a kilt. Yeah. You know. And then it's like, oh, that's a bit of wind. And so you actually are in the moment. And and what you can do is just explore all the different funny things that could happen to a young boy hiking up the hills in a kilt. Yeah. And so you take that one moment, and just act it out for us. And let us just, it's delicious for the audience to imagine with you what it was like to be hiking in the hills in a kilt, right? So that's called a full backyard, folks.

James Taylor

So that's that. So that's when you start you start to use also your your physicality a lot more, you're kind of getting out of just being under here, I'm delivering to this thing. And then the, you're using that stage more you're using your body, you're, you're you're helping people really get into what the story that you're telling.

Tami Evans

Yeah, like, and if there's a wind that comes it could be, oh, there's a wind, and then you put your hands down, like you're holding your your kilt down. Yeah. Because you don't want it to blow up. And so that, so that's an act out or a go to, and then we move into Oh, so you were just talking about the rock star and I know your background was in music and, and you know, booking speakers and stuff. And so this is a brilliant opportunity to use. And it's self deprecation really, because you like we said, You are very, you're, you know, you're very put together. You're very polished human being. And then you talk about how you were in the music industry. And so to kind of like cut that down, you can say something like, I know you're sitting there thinking, yes, I can totally see him working with rock stars. Right. So then you're going to get a laugh and you wait and you say, as their accountant. Okay. Yeah, because you're playing against tight. Yeah, because, you know, we just we always make these assumptions, right. If someone saw you, they'd be like, they wouldn't. They wouldn't realize that you're like, you can hang with the band right? But if you Put it up in that way. And then you wait and say, you know, give that kind of self

deprecating, and then you can all laugh together. And then you can say no, really seriously, here's my experience with rock stars, etc, etc.

James Taylor

So with that basic, also, what you're doing is you're playing into the audience's preconceived notions of who that person is, or what you look like, who you're about. So if you look like this, then you're automatically going to be this type of thing. So you can, you're kind of having, you're kind of having fun with them. And now you're kind of toying with it with that, and being much more flexible with with what that thing is.

Tami Evans

And they're like, if he can laugh at himself, then we can laugh with him in my programs. I there's one point where I said, All right, I know some of you Well, I'd say, you know, I know life isn't all you know, it, there's hard times or whatever I say, No, some of you are sitting there saying, All right, chirpy, you have no idea I get huge laughs because there's always a small people, you know, percentage of the people who are like, oh, for real, really Pinky, we got to go with this, you know. So if you can kind of self deprecate and, and, and kind of cut their expectations of what. And then the final, the final tool that I thought for you is that you say, so we've, we've done all those, you say, I'm going to give you the five tools and strategies that will allow you to set this up, right. And the great thing is, you can say, um, you'll be happy to know that one of them does not involve wearing a kilt. And so that's a call back, it's called a call back, where you go and take something that you mentioned earlier in the keynote, and you call back to it. And if you can do that three times, if you could call back three times in your keynote, the power of three, humor is always in the power of three. So anytime you can do something three times it really, it really impacts the power of it,

James Taylor

that's a little bottle you haven't like on TV shows, I mean, I think about the see, like Monty Python, for example. And I think the first time that they would send me maybe few of watching that initially, when it came out, they would have said something and the first thing they say like a line is like, don't get it. Second time is like, and then the third time, it's like, actually, that's quite funny now, and so and, and they didn't even know all they have to do is just like see that one phrase now is like, it's that bizarre thing of if you've ever spent like, I know you as an actor, you are being on tour with other actors, or as a musician being on tour with other musicians. By the end of the second week, if you try and go into that world from being an outsider, being a civilian is the strangest thing, because they just have to say, they say one word to each other, and the whole boss erupts, they'll coach erupts, because then they've got all these little in jokes. So you don't even have to see the whole thing, you just have to see that one little thing. So So you basically can keep kind of pulling back to that the whole time, you can kind of use that, you know, there's all kind of mini theme kind of resonance themes, right? Well, you're saying

Tami Evans

Absolutely, it's creating a common language. And that goes to connecting. And, you know, that's my work is all about connection equals culture. So I use humor to connect people and I encourage people to, to use levity and lightness in in all of their their work. Because oftentimes, leaders think that levity and leadership and positivity and professionalism are mutually exclusive, they don't work together. And I think it's the exact opposite, the more you can bring that in. As a speaker, as speakers, we we have these really serious and important messages. But if we don't sprinkle in the the ability to let people breathe, or lighten up, then sometimes our messages, it's just too much that it goes over their head. So I like to say your audiences if if your audiences are laughing, they're listening. And if they're listening, they're learning. So that's kind of the the core that I take back into corporations and organizations, but on the level that works for them.

James Taylor

You mentioned that with the word culture there when you're, you know, like ourselves, we're going and speaking in different countries, different cultures, they, you know, different norms in those places as well. I'm wondering how what you have to think about when it comes to using humor, because you can go to I've even noticed even just countries like the UK or the UK and the US which on the outside you can see they're very similar speak the language pretty much the same slight different conveyors, but pretty much same. But in terms of what you have to do with human to feel slightly, it feels slightly different. You can American audiences feel much more open to being able to have fun in that way. British audiences or the changing it's a bit of a generalization, tend to be a little bit more buttoned down. You have to kind of use humaneness in a slightly different way.

Tami Evans

Yes, definitely. And I'll tell you, James, I spent a lot of time in Liverpool and I'm not sure they are speaking the same language. But

James Taylor

if anyone Liverpudlians from the UK North of England or the Beatles or from the unknown, they think of themselves as the funniest people in England as well. They use humor and your badge of honor Liverpudlians.

Tami Evans

Absolutely. And you've got the the mosey and the Ozzy and the blue Canada Ebro in the hall. Yeah, it's definitely. And that's true for anywhere. It's honestly true in different regions of the UK, it's different in different provinces in Canada, it's different in the different states in the United States. And so the the most important part of the work that I do before the conference is to get to know my audience and and what their humor touch points are. And for that, I use what many

speakers use, and that is a tailoring, I have a tailoring form that leads to a tailoring conversation, that leads to at least three private conversations with three people in the industry who are going to be attending the event. And what those all lead me to, is to learn their language, it's learning the language of the the culture of the organization, it's learning the language of that industry, the more you can get to know the industry, the more you can learn what it is that makes them you know, what, what makes them you know, kind of anxious, what makes them laugh, what makes them feel proud. Those are the things that will allow you to connect, and humor comes from the personal things that universally affect all of them. So, I, I am addicted to laughter I love to create Laughter But even better than laughter is when people nod, you know, head nodding when they think Oh, yes, absolutely, that. That's, that's absolutely true. And when someone comes up to me afterwards and says, it's like you work with us, how did you know us so well, that is the highest compliment even better than the standing ovation. That is such a high compliment to me,

James Taylor

because you're speaking their lingo. You're speaking as my friend, as my friend Jeffrey sure would say, you understand their lingo, you're speaking their language, if you feel like, okay, is this such a strong, strong connection with you, you'll feel that you're speaking from the inside inside about, you really understand their problems and their challenges. Absolutely. And it does

Tami Evans

take you know, a few, several phone calls ahead of time. And here's the other thing that I just think it's really valuable is to come in the day before, honestly, that as early the day before as you can, because I mean, if you're so I usually do opening or closing keynote of the convention. So if I'm opening keynote coming in the day before, I get to be there, when everyone is coming in the energy is high, usually there's a, you know, pre, pre night, cocktail hour, you start talking to people, you get the best material, just by interacting with the attendees. And then if you're the closer coming in early allows you to get, you know, material throughout the convention, yeah, that you can actually pull back on stage. So it's a kind of a convention callback, right? You're using that humor in the closing keynote. So there is so much value in connecting deeply with the organizers and the attendees before the event. And the you know, if you, if you can spend a little extra time on site at the event, before you actually go onto stage, it will pay dividends that are you know, enormous.

James Taylor

But as you were going through building your own speaking career, can you maybe talk about one particular aha moment, you mentioned arm and resilience, aha moment or insight or where you made a key distinction in maybe the kind of speaking that you wanted to do the kind of stages that you wanted to be on the kind of message that you wanted to put out into the world?

Tami Evans

Oh, yes. In fact, and so you know, I mentioned my, my dear, dear friend, Christine Cashin, she laughed so hard. It happened when I was in a huge auditorium full of the teachers of the state of Oklahoma. I was brought in to kick off their school year, right? So it was before the students came. It was in August, when the teachers were all preparing to start their year, and it was thousands of teachers and I had my prepared speech and, you know, had been doing it for a couple of years. And, you know, started speaking and I had a worksheet for them to kind of follow along and take a few notes, like, you know, fill in the blank when you hear the word, you know, all the different tools and techniques that speakers can use. And then just a short time in, I had an interaction with an audience member, where they called something out and I thought, Oh, you know, heckler, or somebody calling something out. And I walked over with the microphone and the teacher and I had a conversation back and forth, where the teacher I asked them a few questions and gave them and they answered very concise and you know, turned out to be funny way. So they became the star of the show for that moment. And I thought that is the power of audience interaction. And I took that sheet of paper that I had. And I said, You know what, put your paper under your chairs, we're just going to have a conversation. And I just I started telling them the stories that I had prepared, but weaving it in with the interaction with them. So that was the aha moment where I thought you don't need to be you don't need to have you know, a worksheet for myself. It's about, it's about crafting, it's about crafting the talk in a way that leaves room that leaves room for the audience to be part of the talk as well

James Taylor

is, I mean, that is also touching a huge trend. Every time I speak with Speaker bureaus or event professionals meeting meeting planners, this thing coming constantly through now about the levels interactivity, they might call it experience, they might use that word experience a lot. You know, I infamous because I think about in terms of that level of interactivity. And I think it's, it does a number of things. One also, it, it shows that you're comfortable enough in yourself and your topic, nothing that you speak about to know that frankly, if there's 1000 people in the room, there will be people in there that have had maybe better stories on that thing they have, you know, experiences that relate to that thing as well. And just having that confidence to be able to go there, because you kind of have some of the speaking chops, improvisational chops to be able to flow with that. And that's, I wouldn't say I don't say that lightly, because that's something that is not often a natural thing, when you just get started speaking, having that ability to kind of flow with an audience like that. And the other thing it does, is it immediately moves you just to a different type of conversation, you and I've used this before, you know, moving from the sage on the stage to the guide on the side. And first, you know, if we think of the the traditional keynote speaker that gets up there, and, you know, there's this thing to the audience in front of the audience, frankly, anyone that's gone to school in college in the past 10 years, that model is gone, that is gone. If you're speaking to any millennials, Gen x's, the most of them now, they will have some one way lessons are going like that. But they have the flipped classroom now, where they're they're learning a little bit of that, but but most of the stuff that they're doing in the

classroom now is much more interactive. So if that's the audience, that's where the things are going, then I see the kind of stuff you're talking about much can have high levels of interaction. I spoke to no speaker. Yes. They said that he always wants to ensure it somehow works. And he wants to get in there with the audience. And he said, if you're very uncomfortable doing that the first few times, he said, but it's been transformational. And it makes it really enjoyable for him. Because if he's speaking on that same maybe that same speech multiple times, it adds that level of a little bit of danger into I guess,

Tami Evans

yeah. Oh, yeah. Um, so I do a thing, if I'm ever the after lunch speaker, you know, the dreaded after lunch spot? Yeah. where everybody's kind of like a food coma. And you know, they're the days half over. One of the humor things that I've worked in is it worked so well, if they place the dessert first, right. So when people come into the room, the desserts are already on the table, right? So I watch people and I work the room. And again, Christine kashin, I just can't say enough about how much she guided me. She said, Get in there. And she said, Go Go to the north part of the room and, you know, speak to some people make some friends go to the south part of the room go to the east of the West. And so now together, we've we've kind of called it compassing the room, right? And so we combust the room and get to get to meet people. And I watched the way people interact with the desserts. And so then I'll open my keynote talking about personality types, you know, are you are you the kind of person that that sat down and said, Oh, that's not the dessert that I wanted. And you like shifted your seat? Or are you the kind of person that said, I'm not going to sit down until I see the dessert that I want? Or are you the kind of person that sat down and said, Oh, that's not what I want. And you reached over and started, you know, so I talked about, and everyone laughs because that's exactly what people some people take to desserts, and something you know, so it's kind of using what's happening in the room in the moment, putting it back on them and, and it engages in engages the audience. And one very quick story about you know, when I worked in the consultancies and helping these major pitch presentation teams, one of their problems is they give too much information, without any levity. And so, one of the characters I was lucky enough to play was Maggie, the cat and cat On a Hot Tin Roof, and the whole first act of that play is a monologue by Maggie. I mean, it's just blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. Right? So a lot of directors, most directors who staged that play will have Maggie, you know, putting on a pair of stockings in the middle of the stage, right? And so she pulls her skirt up. And, you know, it's the old stockings where they had the little clips, right. And so, I show a lot of famous pictures of, you know, Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton, and all these famous people who have played Maggie the cat, and it's always the the shot with her putting her leg up and putting the stocking on right. So my tagline is, you know, if you have a lot of information to give, give them a little leg. Right? So it keeps their interest. Yeah, well, I that I told that story at speaker group of speakers that I was sharing this with in North Texas chapter on the National Speakers Association. When I said when you have a lot of information to give, give them a little leg. From the back of the room. I saw an NSA member called Philip Hatfield, hilarious man who has a prosthetic leg, the back of the just slowly lifted up his prosthetic leg. And all I could do was go, Oh, and I pointed

and laughed, and the whole room turned. And it was one of the best audience interaction moments I've ever had. We all died laughing. He was the star. He was so amazing, and generous and funny. And it's one of my favorite audience moments ever.

James Taylor

But it was a thing of, you know, stories, make people listen to visuals make people remember.

Tami Evans

I love that. I wrote that. Like,

James Taylor

I think I would have to give credit. I think it was one of our other guests me that would go on this. I think I'd heard I heard someone say this line. I remember hearing it the first time and going. That's so true. I mean, I think about the number of times I've attended talks by other speakers, and I've frankly forgotten everything they've said. But I do remember that visual graphic named James talks about this contextual models. And there's something that you remember visually, that just not part of the brain doesn't go away. So I'm interested as we start going to finish up here. What What is there an online tool or an app? or some kind of resource that you use find very useful for yourself? as a speaker?

Tami Evans

Yeah. Oh, he's, uh, you know, I belong to each speaker. And I have the the professional membership on each speaker. So I run my entire business through that tool. And I know they have just aligned with a CRM, and I can't remember off the top of my

James Taylor

head, but I think it's coma speaker that we're working with our speaker. Yeah, this Yeah, this summer. Yeah,

Tami Evans

yeah. So I, I'm gonna have to make that switch, because I thought they were gonna link with Insightly. Ah, but, uh, the thing that I think helps everyone to remember is that, when you find that, that tool or that, use it, definitely use it. But always be remembering that things are going to change and things are going to develop and just be be willing to go there. Because when we get stuck down in, in places that, you know, I do it this way, I do it this way. And this goes for for our talks and our tools and our business, then we're gonna get stuck. And I think you talk all the time about where you live in a time of disruption. And so just expect to be disrupted. And then you know, if we do that, and if we can find ways to laugh about that, if we can find ways to say, you know, I was really so comfortable, and then whoops, now we're, you know, doing things

differently again, then that's going to allow people to know that you can laugh at yourself and go with the flow as well. And if you can help your audiences to laugh at that, that really helps them and you speak as I know, on that I used PR as well. And it has a syndrome, there's a part in it, which says you could actually write down every time you speak, what the jokes were that you use, yeah, that particular thing, because so you were using, like,

James Taylor

did I say that to that group or that audience? And so I, I must have been using that. So

Tami Evans

what about, you know what color pocket square you wore? right? Exactly.

James Taylor

I also use it for that exactly, little thing, little things like that. It doesn't mean unless they're lucky at the time, but when people can come by see he said that drunk last night? And what about when it comes to books? Is there a particular book that you find really useful for yourself? You know, as you were kind of, maybe as you were getting into speaking professionally, or now as you're building your speaking business?

Tami Evans

Yes. So I, I try to read whenever someone that I know or respect and my friends come out with a book, I try to I try to read it and what I do is I read it, I read it knowing that something's going to stick and pop out. And so currently on my bedside table, I'm currently sleeping with Andrew tarvin on my bedside table, and so I'm reading his incredible Story of speaking around the United States and he visited every state and he, he just tells a story in each state, and some of them are poignant. And some of them are funny. And some of them are callbacks to something that happened earlier. And I thought, as a speaker, we travel so much, there is so much time in transport in airports and in getting to where we need to go or getting from there. And to remember to use that as material for your life for your book for your speeches, for your conversations with your clients. His book has really like that really set a spark off for me about that. So I highly recommend it. It's called the United States of humor, and it's by Andrew tarvin.

James Taylor

Oh, put that link there as well. Well, but you mentioned travel, what is in your speaker bag? What is in that bag that you never leave the home or the office for that? It's got all your things? What's in that bag?

Tami Evans

Oh, my gosh. Well, I travel with my, my Madonna. Mike, you'll, you'll remember from the music industry. So I happen to have a Samson sc 50. And the reason I have that is because before countrymen came out with all the adapters, the Samson had all the adapters. So I'm an AV wannabe. So I travel with my microphone, my slide advancer extra batteries. I travel with all my adapters and cables. And I go early, and I get to know the AV team because I love them. They are usually the most grounded, funny, warm people in the whole room. And I always tell them, you realize you're the most important people in this room because without you we're not seen or heard. And I start that relationship very early. And they always get a kick out of the fact that I travel with my you know, all my gear and all my you know, little tools and stuff like that. So I love that microphone. And you know what I just just while we're on the AV team. The next time you are getting miked up or you're on the podium and you're testing doing your soundcheck, ask the person that you're working with. Ask them, what's their favorite gig they've worked on? It is remarkable, the stories that you hear Yeah. And it's about that connection, you're connecting with them. You end up laughing, of course, because a lot of the stories are really funny. And it's that that connection that creates the culture of the event so that when you are on stage, should something happen? You know, you've got a teammate that you've already connected with. So sorry, you're talking about gig bags? Yeah.

James Taylor

Nobody, I think that's a great point. Because I mean, having come from the music industry, I've spent a lot of time I've spent a lot of time with those people as well. hearing a lot of stories, you hear some great, very, very funny stories, unfortunately, most of them are completely unprintable. You could never tell us a bit about that. Because some of them relate to maybe other speakers or other people in the business that you can either really want to say, but, but it's great, because it's a nice thing. Also, from from a self serving standpoint, you know, at the end of any conference, they have a, they'll have a post mortem on it. And everyone's feeding in everything's, and I know that speakers event professionals have actually said to me, that all the the AV team, or the people that were running the sand that they said, Hey, you agreed to work with because you've gotten this thing, and you did this, wherever the thing was, as well. So definitely kind of pay 40 we don't get anything in return from it. It's just it's a nice thing to do. It makes everyone's job. I mean, they're doing like cars, they're going into different venues every day and speaking and working in different places every day. It's it's just a nice, a nice human thing to do as well. What about a final question for you, Tammy, I want you to imagine you've woken up tomorrow morning. And you have to start from scratch. So you know, everything you know now, but you have no contacts, no one knows you, you have to completely restart your speaking career. What would you do? How would you restart your speaking career?

Tami Evans

Ah, you know, here's my glass of Kool Aid. I, the first thing to do is to join the National Speakers Association, or find a local meeting to go to. There are some you know, starting now is it's easier to find community speaking community online and LinkedIn groups, Facebook groups are places. So that's how to connect with the speaking industry community, in order to get myself

out there and I tell this to any buddy who would desire to have speaking as a business is to speak, speak, speak, speak, speak, even if it's for free, because you can't shortcut feed on the stage. You have to put in the time in order to get that that confidence and the credibility and the cohesion of your message and the creativity to bring it all together. Those those aspects are just so critical and the only way to do that is to get out and then people are going to see you. And they're going to tell someone and then those people are going to ask you to come and speak. And so that's the actual speaking bit and then the content bit, right. start a blog, write articles do guest spots on, you know, people's LinkedIn pages or Right, right, right. I Someone once told me that writing is the the true path to wealth. And I think it's true in any industry because if you're writing, you're thinking you're you're creating things you're researching, you're, you know, allowing your thoughts to come out. So yeah, right, right. Right, right, right. And then get it up on its feet and just start doing it.

James Taylor

Well, Tami, thank you so much for coming on today. You've definitely got go I've written so many notes here about how I'm going to hopefully improve my the human liberty of my speaking as well hopefully everyone else they've got some ideas here about you know, actor about the different areas, callbacks, loads of really, really useful stuff. He is also Tami, thank you so much. I'm looking forward to hearing you speak on stage at some point soon as well. And I wish you all the best of your speaking career.

Tami Evans

Yes, thank you so much, James. It's been my pleasure and anyone can feel free to reach out I'm more than happy to share as we do in the speaker community. So thank you for the opportunity. Best of luck and I can't wait to see you on stage as well again, thank you.

James Taylor

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