



Speech Transcript:

I want **you** to listen to **me** and I want **you** to listen to **me** right now! [VV]

Alright, probably not the best way to get **you** to be receptive to **my** message, right? [Q]

Probably like, "I'm not listenin' to this guy." I know I'd respond that same way if someone were yelling at **me** telling **me** what to do. [VV]

So why is it then, when I go to a restaurant or a Starbucks or a grocery store, why do I always seem to find a customer who is yelling or arguing with an employee? Ya know, **waiter or waitress, barista.** [Q] [PD]

Have **you** ever witnessed that? [Q]

Look, I'm not saying that the customer is right or wrong for being frustrated, **we've** all been there. But **my** question is this, is that the best way to deal with those types of situations? Being angry or argumentative. [Q] [VV]

I'm not so sure and I wanna share with **you** an experience that I had and let **you** be the judge.

Madam Contest Chair, **Ladies and Gentlemen**, and anyone who's ever wanted to grab someone by their collar and **resolve a conflict...**

Surely, **you've** never done that, I **hope...**

Now the experience that I had, it was with **me** and **my** bank. Now I'm not gonna tell **you** the name

of the bank **but it rhymes with Ells Argo**.

And **I was 16-years old at the time, so 12 years ago**, and **I** had just opened **my** first checking account.

Now being new to this whole banking thing, **I** didn't know about all the fees that are associated with having an account.

Apparently, they charge a fee just to **hold your money**. If **you** have a checking account, **you** know what **I'm** talking about.

So, the bank charges their fee to **my** account, which was an 8-dollar fee. Not the end of the world, but there was a problem. **I only had 5 dollars**. [VV]

Now **I'm no math genius, but I was in the negative**.

I see this, **I** go down and ask **my** dad for a few bucks so **I** can run to the bank, deposit it, just to make sure nothing else happens.

Of course, something else happens.

The bank charges an overdraft fee on top of the service charge fee which caused **my** account to be overdrawn in the first place. [VV]

I'm frustrated.

Grab the phone, dial up the bank, finally get on the phone with a human being, **I** skip the formalities and **I** just start barkin' orders. [PD] [SM] [VV]

Like "look, you guys charged this service fee to my account, well it overdrew my account, and then you charged an overdraft fee on top of that. You need to get my money put back into my account and you need to do it right now." [VV]

Of course, she's arguing back and forth with **me** and finally she has the nerve to tell **me**, she says, "Well maybe **you need to be more financially responsible!**"

So, not only is she not helping **me** resolve **my** issue, but she feels compelled to give **me** financial advice. And you know what the worst part about that was? [Q]

She had a point. But that's not the point! [VV]

Finally, I hang up the phone.

Now, run down to my living room, and I'm just thinking about this whole situation. And mainly, trying to calm down just a bit. [SM]

Well as I'm doing that, I start to think about my job at the time, which was at Domino's Pizza. And I'm thinking about what I would do when customers would come yelling and screaming at me right off the bat.

And believe me, it happened a lot. But what I would do in those situations is immediately form this wall of resistance. In other words, I did everything that I could **to not help the customer.** [VV]

Think to myself, "Hmmm, you think maybe you're going about this the wrong way, just maybe?"

And with that I decided to give it another shot. Grab the phone, dial up the bank, and as the phone was ringing, I am just hoping I get a different representative. Otherwise it's gonna be a long day. [SM]

Luckily, I get a different representative, but before I start in with my story this time, I decide to make a change.

I decide to go with, **the sad puppy dog**, instead of the madman that failed me just moments before. [VV]

So, I start in, "Hi, how are you doing? Yeah, I just got this service fee charged to my account, yeah, well, I didn't have the money at the time and so it overdrew my account. Yeah, well, then I got charged an overdraft fee on top of that. Yeah, I really don't have the money for this so if there is anything you can do to help me out, anything at all, I would be extremely grateful." [VV]

BAM! She gets everything reversed, everything put back into my account, and she even refunded the service charge fee which caused this whole fiasco to begin with. [R3] [SM] [VV]

It was like "**Laaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!**" [VV]

I learned a very powerful lesson that day, **never bank with Wells Far...** **That's not the one.** [CB] [VV]

How being nice and friendly at a time when **you** may be frustrated or not thinking with a level head

can actually be in **your** best interest.

You know, Dale Carnegie in his book, *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, he said, “if you want to gather honey, **don’t kick over the beehive.**” And **I** thought that quote really rang true to **me** and the experience that **I** shared with **you** today. [VV]

Now look, **we’re** all human. **We’re** all gonna get mad, **we’re** all gonna get frustrated at times, it’s, it’s called life. [R3] [VV]

But imagine if in those situations, **we** had a little bit of awareness. **You** said, “You know what, If I yell or argue here, there’s a good chance that I am not going to get my problem solved.” [VV]

You know, maybe occasionally **we** get that final outcome, but maybe **we** feel guilty for saying something that **we** didn’t want to say.

What if on the other hand, **we** just talked to the other person like, a human being. You know, how **we** would want them to talk to **us**, the Golden Rule.

We’re going to increase **our** chances of getting that positive outcome, and **we’ll** both be able to save face. [VV]

So, remember, **Ladies and Gentlemen**, if **you** want that honey, **don’t kick the beehive.** [VV]

SPEECH STATS:

Word Count: 1078

Speech Length: 6:59

Title: Don't Kick The Beehive

Click [here](#) to listen to the speech

COLOR KEY

- **Humor [H] - x 14**

This includes only parts that received genuine laughter from the audience. Laughter varies in intensity.

This speech averaged **2.00 LPMs** (Laughs Per Minute) and **77 WPL** (Words Per Laugh).

- **Foundational Phrase [FP] - x 2**

Foundational Phrase for this speech: **“Don’t Kick The Beehive”**

It didn’t come until later in the speech (after the story), and it first came in the form of the Dale Carnegie quote. The title was also the same as the Foundational Phrase which allowed the Contest Chair to say it 2 additional times before the speech began.

This speech had a relatively high word count, so with only 2 uses, it was not as effective as it should have been.

- **“You”; “Your”; “We”; “Us”; “Our” - x 32**

I included these words that were directly aimed at the audience, dialogue excluded (character and internal). Talking *to* the audience will be more “you/your” focused. This could mean abstract ideas, “imagine this...” hypotheticals, concepts that describe how something works, etc. Those will naturally use more “you/your” words.

This speech uses a higher than normal volume of “We” type words as opposed to “You”. This was unusual in comparison to my previous breakdowns. A potential problem is that it may come off as if the speaker is pandering to the audience or trying too hard to create rapport.

Another note is that early in the speech it was more “You” focused and then at the end it became more “We” focused. This is odd, potentially confusing, and it would be better to stay consistent.

- **“I” or “Me” or “My” or “Myself” - x 71**

The original reason for tracking this stat was the thought that it might be useful to compare with the amount of “You” focused words. Turns out, it is. Just not in the way I originally thought.

The theory was, if this number was much greater than “You” focused words, it would show that the speaker was more “*me, me, me*” focused and not tailoring the message to the audience.

While that is a possibility, what I’ve found thus far is that it tells more about the content of the speech. More specifically, it tells us that there are personal stories being told. That doesn’t mean that the content of the stories is *great*, but personal stories are by no means a bad idea.

**The total number counted does not include in-story character dialogue.

- **“Ladies and Gentlemen” or “My Friends” [MF] - x 2**

The speaker used “*Ladies and Gentlemen*” to address the audience.

- **Physical Descriptions or VAKS [PD] - x 2**

Descriptive physical characteristics of people and locations. The ones I included were any overt words that described the setting for where the speaker was at during the story, where the speaker wanted to take the audience, or descriptions of people in the scene.

Describing complex processes may also be included since they are intended to make it easier for the audience to imagine.

Physical in this case is what was heard, smelled, and what was seen. It also means that “*We were at my house*” is not enough—this requires specifics that are intended to paint a picture in the minds of the audience. I intentionally left out what was felt emotionally or metaphorically.

In this speech, the descriptions were not overly detailed, but because they were common experiences for just about everyone, it made them easy for the audience to picture. Examples: A rowdy customer at Starbucks or grocery store, and a phone call to a bank and dealing with an automated voice.

- **Callbacks [CB] - x 2**

Humorous and other. Most of the humorous moments were callbacks to *something* or *someone* from the speech journey. Foundational phrases after the first one are essentially [callbacks](#) as well—I included them in the total. If we exclude the Foundational Phrases, there was 1 callback.

- **Rule of Three [R3] - x 3**

The [rule of three](#) is all inclusive. Whether used for misdirection to make a joke or not.

- **Questions [Q] - x 5**

Questions directly aimed at the audience (rhetorical or not). I did not include questions from in-character or speaker's internal dialogue.

The original intent of the Questions category was to include only thoughtful questions—things that made the audience reflect on their lives. However, even benign questions aimed at the audience can help build a connection to the speaker, just as addressing the audience as “My Friends” or “Ladies and Gentlemen” does.

The majority of the questions were more conversational rather than an attempt to get the audience to truly reflect.

Also, the questions would have been more effective if there was no quick follow up after first asking the question. Example: “*But my question is this, is that the best way to deal with those types of situations? Being angry or argumentative.*”

Those added words should have been cut. Let the audience do their own thinking.

- **Time Transitions [TT] - x 1**

Transition words that indicated that there was a time change from the speaker's point of view. The idea is to show progression from one point in the speaker's life to another. So, if there are multiple time transitions within the same story, they may or may not be counted. These help to prepare the audience for a change in the story in order to prevent confusion.

There was only 1 Time Transition used and it was to begin the core story.

- **Stories [ST] - x 1**

This includes all stories told throughout the entire speech. Some stories may not be entirely true, but the idea is that the speaker is telling the audience a story that happened, either in their life or somebody else's. This does not include metaphorical stories, intentionally exaggerated tales or things like “Imagine you are...”

In this speech there was only one story about the bank experience.

- **Stage Movement [SM] - x 4**

This section covers how many times the speaker moved to a different place on the stage during the speech. Minor movements for in-story character changes (for dialogue) or for small side steps for illustrating points or addressing different parts of the audience will not be counted. I'll also keep track of any Transition Words that are used just prior to the speaker moving to a new spot on the stage, or anything else that's notable about the speaker's stage movements.

Words that preceded the movement:

- “Grab the phone...”
- “Run down to my living room...”
- “And with that I decided to give it another shot...”
- “BAM! She gets everything reversed...”

On another note, my stage movements were ordinary, and perhaps too predictable. I basically did a circle. Started center, went to audience’s left for my phone call, then went center back, then went to the audience’s right for final phone call, then back to the middle to finish. I treated the stage movement as an afterthought when it deserved more attention.

- **Vocal Variety [VV]**

Vocal Variety is a combination of vocal elements. Short of measuring the speaker’s voice in decibels, this section will make note of the most apparent changes in the speaker’s voice throughout the speech. Varying the voice means that the speaker may get louder, softer, use a higher pitch, lower pitch, use inflection, talk faster, speak with rhythm, slow down to a crawl and even purposeful pauses.

**Note that the total amount of changes which make up Vocal Variety are not counted like the rest of the Color Key sections. Instead, this section is intended only to highlight the most salient changes in the voice and to give you successful examples of Vocal Variety.

I condensed them into categories below and provided some examples for each:

Raise Voice [Louder, Higher Pitch, Inflection]

- *“I want you to listen to me and I want you to listen to me right now!” [Actually yelling]*
- *“look, you guys charged this service fee to my account, well it overdrew my account, and then you charged an overdraft fee on top of that. You need to get my money put back into my account and you need to do it right now.”*

Lower Voice [Quieter, Lower Pitch, Softer, Whisper]

- *“Hi, how are you doing? Yeah, I just got this service fee charged to my account, yeah, well, I didn’t have the money at the time and so it overdrew my account. Yeah, well, then I got charged an overdraft fee on top of that. Yeah, I really don’t have the money for this so if there is anything you can do to help me out, anything at all, I would be extremely grateful.”*

Speed Up [Speak Fast, Quick Burst, Rhythmic]

- *“The bank charges an overdraft fee on top of the service charge fee which caused my account to be overdrawn in the first place.”*
- *“Grab the phone, dial up the bank, finally get on the phone with a human being, I skip the formalities and I just start barkin’ orders.”*

Slow Down [Talk Slow, Slower Rhythm, Pause]

- “But what I would do in those situations is immediately form this wall of resistance. In other words, I did everything that I could to not help the customer.”

***Initials were put at end of sentence if multiple Color Key elements were in the same sentence.

Observations:

- **Props:** No props.
- **Gurus and Side Characters:**
 - **Gurus:** Strangely, I was the guru, but it was “me” as a Domino’s Pizza employee. And it was more the realization and awareness of how I treated similar situations when a customer would do the same thing to me that I did to the bank representative (on my original phone call). Dale Carnegie, *How To Win Friends And Influence People*. Also, the moment the 2nd Wells Fargo returned my money to my account after changing my approach—confirmation of my “A HA” moment of my job.
 - **Side Characters:** Bank Representative 1 & 2 were side characters. Side characters are part of the stories but don’t directly contribute to a learning moment. This isn’t a problem, just an observation. Side characters help give depth to a story.
 - A Guru is someone or something in the speech that teaches the speaker (and ultimately the audience) something meaningful. As a speaker, you don’t want to be the wise Guru. You want to be the dolt who learns from the guru(s), and that’s who end up teaching the audience as well. **Tip:** Self-deprecation can be an important element in allowing the guru to shine.
- **Screamin’ Start:** My opening line was me yelling (actually yelling!) at the audience. The line was “*I want you to listen to me and I want you to listen to me right now!*”—I did receive some advice after the Division contest (from a speaker that ended up getting 2nd at this District contest), and the advice was to *not* do what I did. It was attention grabbing, sure, but it may have made the audience (perhaps subconsciously) not like me much. I think by the end of the speech I dug myself out of that hole, but it might have been better not to dig one in the first place.
- **Perfection:** I can point to several glaring issues with this speech that could have been the root cause for not placing in the top 3. One of which was a pause (memory hiccup) where I had to gather my thoughts. The reason is, I ended up receiving much more laughter at a spot where there hadn’t been any previously, and that caused me to lose focus.

I had experienced a mid-speech blackout during a speech in the past (not fun) and it taught me a hard lesson which came in handy during this contest: Don't panic. Thankfully I didn't panic and was able to continue. Once I did, I got to the finish line without issue.

- **Microphone:** If I could go back, I would have used and practiced using a microphone. I was the first speaker in the contest and that gave me the option to set the tone. I was more comfortable without using one but having to raise my voice that loud made it hard for me to vary my voice. And as a result, it sounded a bit harsh, like I was yelling much of speech. Lesson learned.
- **Company Names:** One thing that is uncommon is using actual names of companies like I did (Wells Fargo and Domino's Pizza). I wouldn't recommend this in general. This speech was originally created for my local Toastmasters club and was not constructed for the contest.
- **Foundational Phrase:** Though not a great demonstration of how to best use a Foundational Phrase, this speech didn't even have a Foundational Phrase at the start of the contest. I ended up adding it a couple days before the Division contest—read more about that [here](#).
- **Tie Up Loose Ends:** This speech did not have a clever tie-up at the end. Originally when I first gave the speech, I did a contrasted version of how I began the speech, which was by yelling at the audience (telling them to listen me right now!). I ended up cutting that and opting to end with the Foundational Phrase instead.

Feedback / Criticism:

- **Too Casual:** In this speech I used a lot of lazy conversational speech. Words like “look”, “now,” “Think to myself” / “Grab the phone” (omitting “I” before those words), “Probably like...” (instead of “You’re probably like...”) “well,” “You know” “So” “Like look”—This is something I would have fixed if I could go back.
- **Angry Phone Call Note:** The phone call to the bank made me seem like a hot head. I should have toned it down a bit to avoid making the audience think I was a maniac. Should have went with upset, but still light-hearted.
- **Humor Note:** The humor stats were not too far off from many of the past champions (*15.6 per speech on average*), but I overlooked several areas that could have brought laughs. **TIP:** Look for areas where you can implement callbacks to something that was said earlier in the speech. These are already familiar to the audience and easy places to get laughs. For instance, one of my biggest laugh moments was when I said, “*Now, I’m not going to tell you the name of the bank, but it rhymes with Ells Argo.*”—I could have done this same thing when I brought up my old job at Domino's Pizza.

Here is the line I delivered: “*Well as I’m doing that, I start to think about my job at the time, which was at Domino’s Pizza.*”

Imagine if I did this instead: *“Well as I’m doing that, I start to think about my job at the time. Now, I’m not gonna tell you the name of where I worked, but it rhymes with “Omino’s Izza.”*

- **Out of My Element:** I said a few phrases that weren’t my style. One was a recommendation from an experienced Toastmaster, and although it didn’t feel right, I gave it a try...at the contest!! Not a good idea. I should have practiced that line at a couple of local clubs beforehand. Here is the line: *“Otherwise, it’s gonna be a LOOONG day.”* The word “Long” I said in a voice that felt awkward to me and just not my style, and it hardly got a smile.

When I did the *“The sad puppy dog...instead of the madman that failed me just moments before”* I said the sad puppy dog part very silly, like baby talk. It worked well but still felt wrong. I suppose I made the right choice in keeping it, though.

And the final sentence, *“If you WANT THAT HONEY...”*—I said that part loud and more playful. I should have said it a more serious tone since it encompasses my speech’s core message.

- **Incongruent Actions:** At times I used action words, but my movements didn’t back them up. For instance, one of my stage movements came after me saying this line: *“I run down to my living room.”* But instead of actually running, I strolled even slower than a normal walk’s pace. I should have changed the word from “run” to “went” or just synced up my movement.
- **Too Fast:** My pace and phrasing were extremely fast in places, almost machine gunnish. That explained how a 1078-word speech finished in just under 7 minutes. Compare that to Manoj Vasudevan’s speech which had 705 words and finished in 7:04. I am naturally a fast talker and it’s an area that I’ve been working on the past few years.
- **Too Many Words:** That brings me to my next point...I had way too many words. The average word count for past champions is roughly 200 to 300 less words than what I had in my speech. It’s best to get crystal clear and cut out the fat. I failed to do so in this speech.
- **Prolonged Close:** Too much talking at the end. The message could have been wrapped up much sooner. Also, because of that, it came off as if I were preaching and *telling* them, rather than just letting them figure it out based on my story. I could have at the bare minimum cut out the previous 132 words that came before my final sentence, and the final message would have been just as clear if not clearer.
- **There are Levels:** Being that this contest was 4 years ago, I’ve learned that there are many levels to the art of public speaking. And this speech is an excellent example of the difference between an *okay* speech and a championship speech. It’s helpful to see the difference.