

MARK BROWN

CHAMPIONSHIP SPEECH BREAKDOWN

Speech Transcript:

You never get a **second chance** to make a first impression.

Mr. Toastmaster and **Friends**...

That phrase is fairly common. At first look **we** automatically draw quick conclusions about people for various reasons.

It could be their appearance, other people's opinions, **our** own preconceived ideas, or just plain ignorance.

We don't always give a **second chance**. Let me explain. **[SM]**

Recently my wife Andrea, our three children and **I** sat down to watch a very important film, **Beauty and the Beast**. **[ST]**

Oh, **you've** seen it! Then **you** know that this is a film **you** can't watch just once. **Your** children won't let **you**. **I've** seen it thirteen times, since last Monday. **[H]x4 [SM]**

Don't get **me** wrong, movie is great for children. The **music, the magic, the mystery**, but the message, the message is important for all of **us**. **[SM]**

Picture this, the villain is the influential Gaston. **He's tall, dark, handsome**. **I can relate to that**. **[R3] [SM]**

Gaston is in love with a beautiful Belle, but she spurns him and befriends the beast. In a fit of jealousy Gaston uses his influence and turns the entire village against Belle and the Beast.

Except for seeing his face once in a magic mirror, the villagers know nothing about the beast. But Gaston, ahhh, he fuels their fear of the unknown, and whips them into a frenzy.

This angry mob cuts down trees and they make clubs, they brandish **knives, pitchforks, and torches** and they march through the forest singing, “We don’t like what we don’t understand in fact it scares us and this monster is mysterious at least. Bring your guns, bring your knives, save your children and your wives, we’ll save our village and our lives. We’ll kill the beast!”

Why? [Q] [SM]

For years the Beast had...lived in isolation but no one took the time to say wait, “What’s he really like? Who is this beast?” **[SM]**

Oh no, he wasn’t given **a second chance**, and the irony is, the real beast was in the hearts of the angry mob. He was a victim of the real beast: Intolerance, indifference, and ignorance. **[R3] [CB] [SM]**

Oh well, it’s a movie, it’s a fantasy, but intolerance, indifference, and ignorance are a reality. **We’ve** got to deal with it every single day. **[R3] [SM]**

I’ll give **you** an example. Pat Harper, a beautiful network news anchor reported on the plight of the homeless in New York City **a few years ago**. **[ST] [SM]**

To appreciate their circumstance, **she dressed as they dressed, she walked as they walked, she lived as they lived**, for several days. **[SM]**

She carried a concealed microphone and a hidden camera crew followed her every move.

It was Christmas time, a season of **love, cheer, and goodwill**. But here’s what the cameras saw. **I’ll** never forget this.

It was **snowing, bitterly cold**, and there she sat. **Huddled in a doorway shivering**, trying to fend off the **bone-chilling winds**, but hardly anyone noticed her. Those who did hurried by.

Some looked right at her and yet right past her. Others looked right through her as they thought, “heh, **homeless, useless, worthless!**” No one took **a second look**.

To them, this **beauty had a beastly appearance**. But the **real beast** was in the hearts of those who treated her with disdain. Oh yes, the beast of **intolerance, indifference, and ignorance**. **[R3]**

The sad truth is it happens all the time. I'm not just pointing fingers here, because, I admit, I've done it, too. [SM]

But we don't always think about it until we come face to face with it. [SM]

Perhaps you have been a victim of the beast? Think back. [Q]

Do you remember the pain you felt when you faced intolerance just because you were different? [Q] [CB]

Do you remember when you faced in...indifference? Because like Pat Harper and so many others, well, your situation, that's your problem! [Q]

And do you remember when you faced ignorance like that of those villagers? Because someone felt as they did, "ah, we don't like what we don't understand. In fact, it scares us." [Q] [SM]

Do you remember how deeply it hurt? [Q]

Perhaps you have participated in acts of intolerance, indifference, and ignorance. Are you guilty of feeding the beast? [Q] [R3] [SM]

Is there someone out there, someone in your workplace, someone in your neighborhood, someone in your home who has heard your beast roar? [Q] [R3]

Oh my friends, do they not deserve a second chance? [Q]

As the film Beauty and the Beast concludes, the Beast dies. And in his place, because of Belle's love, a-ha you guessed it, a handsome prince lives. You see Belle gave him a second chance. [SM]

Don't you just love it? My children did. It's a perfect fairy tale ending. [Q] [CB]

But, that story is a fantasy. Reality as we know is not so romantic. And the fantasy will never become reality unless we attack the beast, the real beast! Intolerance, Indifference, and Ignorance. [R3] [SM]x2

Yes! Let's kill the beast because everyone deserves a second chance. [SM]x2

SPEECH STATS:

Word Count: 814

Speech Length: 6:44

Title: A Second Chance

Click [here](#) to watch the speech

COLOR KEY

- **Humor [H] - x 8**

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

This speech averaged **1.19 LPMs** (Laughs Per Minute) and **101.75 WPL** (Words Per Laugh).

First laugh came at **0:40 seconds** of the speech.

He didn't have a high volume of humor overall, but he did have solid laugh moments. But even so, his voice was so interesting that the amount of humor, or lack thereof, was hardly noticeable.

- **Foundational Phrase [FP] - x 7**

Foundational Phrase for this speech: **"A Second Chance"**

Other notable and related phrases:

- *"The Real Beast"*
- *"Intolerance, Indifference, and Ignorance"*

In one variation of the FP during Pat Harper's story, he said "...a second look." This was a play on the FP and so I included it in this total.

The title of his speech was also his FP although it is not included in the total. Despite not being included in the total, it is significant since the Contest Chair reads the speech title 2 times before the speaker even begins.

The other notable phrases Mark used were very much related. "The Real Beast" was defined as "Intolerance, Indifference, Ignorance."

- **"You"; "Your"; "We"; "Us"; "Our" - x 38**

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.

- **“I” or “Me” or “My” or “Myself” - x 11**

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.

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

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

The speaker used “*Friends*” and “*My Friends*” to address the audience.

- **Physical Descriptions or VAKS [PD] - x 5**

Descriptive physical characteristics of people, things, 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.

- **Callbacks [CB] - x 16**

Humorous and other. It’s common for speakers to derive humor from callbacks to *something* or *someone* from the speech journey. Foundational Phrases after the first one are essentially callbacks as well.

The idea of a callback is to move on from “it” (the eventual callback) so the audience is no longer thinking about it, and then call it back later so it’s an “A HA!” moment of familiarity. For that reason, only *some* of the Foundational Phrases may be included, and some may not. Normally the Foundational Phrase (subsequent ones after the first) get counted in the Callback section, but in this speech, only the ones that had a recognizable phrase were included.

- **Rule of Three [R3] - x 12**

The [rule of three](#) is all inclusive. Whether used for [comedic](#) effect or not.

It's common to see the Rule of Three used all at once in a single sentence such as, "*He was tall, dark, and handsome.*" Mark used it in a variety of ways including making it part of one of his core phrases.

- **Questions [Q] - x 10**

Questions directly aimed at the audience (rhetorical or not).

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 or rhetorical 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. Because of that, those types of questions were included as well.

- **Time Transitions [TT] - x 2**

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.

- **Stories [ST] - x 2**

This includes all stories told throughout the entire speech. Some stories may be slightly exaggerated, 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 were 2 stories. The first story began with Mark and his family watching the movie *Beauty and the Beast* and then it includes his telling of what the movie was about. The second story was about Pat Harper's experience when she dressed up as a homeless to experience what they go through.

At the end of the speech, he did bring back the movie *Beauty and the Beast* to give its conclusion. Because it was a callback to the first story, it was not counted as a third story.

- **Stage Movement [SM] - x 19**

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 anything else that's notable about the speaker's stage movements.

Despite having 19 official stage movements, Mark didn't move very far in either direction on the stage. Most of his movements were close in proximity, many times he simply moved his upper body or took a half step in either direction. This is unique amongst the champions I've broken down. It's a good reminder that you don't have to use all the real estate of the stage in order to have an effective speech.

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

Observations:

- **Speech Time:** New SHORTEST time for a championship speech that I've broken down, coming in at 6:45. The previous title holder was from [Aaron Beverly, the 2019 champion](#). His speech was 6:58.
- **Props:** Mark did not use a physical prop although he sang a song from the *Beauty and the Beast*, and that was a nice substitute.
- **Fully Committed:** He committed to his voice and his impressions. This made them work even though on the surface they might have seemed *over the top*. My old improv instructor used this as one of his tenants. Whenever you were a character, you either committed fully to that character, or you didn't do it. He let us have it if we ever broke the rule. Half-assing was out of the question. Mark did not make this mistake.
- **Vocal Variety:** Very good contrast that was entertaining and engaging. Good singing voice, too. Also, he is typically the one who does the announcements for Toastmasters at the International Conventions where the speech contest finals take place. Unrelated but worth mentioning is that he was also the keynote speaker at our Toastmasters District speech contest a few years back, and needless to say, I [learned a lot](#).
- **Descriptive Gestures:** He used descriptive gestures and body language when called for. A good example would be when he told the story about Pat Harper's news story. To describe the weather he said, "It was snowing. Bitterly cold" and don't forget "Bone-chilling winds". As he said those words, his hand and physical gestures matched the occasion. Another example is when he said, "This beauty had a beastly appearance." He put his hands up as if he were face to face with a monster. These gave depth to his stories.

- **Alliteration:** He used alliteration for one of his main phrases with *Intolerance, Indifference, and Ignorance*. He also used it for “*The Music, the Magic, the Mystery, but the message...*” The title of the movie *Beauty and the Beast* also uses this technique. There are other examples as well: “Beautiful Belle”; “Befriends the Beast”; “Magic Mirror”; “Fuels their Fear.” Overall, he used this technique very well.
- **Picture This:** He used the phrases “Picture this” and “Think back” which is a powerful technique to use in order to get the audience to *imagine* your words. They are trigger words that the audience can’t help but adhere to. Other phrases in this category could be “Imagine this...”; “Ask yourself?”; “Think about this...”; “Let me tell you a story”; “I’ll never forget this...”
- **Anchors:** He used the movie *Beauty and the Beast* as the core anchor to guide his entire speech. Then, he used the “Beast” as a metaphor to describe what the true beast was, which was Intolerance, Indifference, and Ignorance. His Foundational Phrase was tied to the angry mob not giving Beast a second chance and not thinking about whether he was truly evil or not, since they didn’t actually know anything about him.
- **Humor Note:** Each time he got a little “goofy” or over the top, he’d bring it back home to reality with humor. The contrast of theatrics versus his more serious side. For example, when he sings the song from the *Beauty and the Beast* and *really* gets into it, and then right afterward he asks, in a serious voice, “Why?”
- **Gurus and Side Characters:**
 - **Gurus:** Belle. Pat Harper. The movie, *Beauty and the Beast*.
 - **Side Characters:** Mark, Andrea (Mark’s wife), his children, Gaston, the townspeople, the Beast, and the by passers in Pat’s news segment were all 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.
- **He Named Names:** He gave his wife’s name (Andrea) instead of only referring to her as “my wife.” That’s a simple way to give his real-life characters some personality to make them more “real” in the minds of the audience.
- **Humanize / Relate:** He came down to the audience with “*I’m not just pointing fingers here because I’ve done it, too.*” This is an important line because I do believe there was a lot of “pointing fingers” at other people for things that don’t necessarily seem “beastly.” In Pat Harper’s story, homeless people are a plight as Mark put it, but what were some of those people in the examples to do under those circumstances? Bring a homeless person home to spend the night? That seems more of a city job rather than from the pockets of individuals who have families and themselves to support. What if those same people had just written a check to a charity just before they passed Pat Harper on the street? Just saying!

- **Foundational Phrase Note:** In this speech, Mark used an interesting technique for his Foundational Phrase. In past championship speeches I've broken down, the FP is usually just the "solution" to the problem, and the problem is usually covered in the speech, although not usually part of a memorable phrase that could be described as the Foundational Phrase. In this case he used a Foundational *Problem and Solution*. He made it a point to have the audience remember both the problem and the solution. He repeated what he considered the problem, and he also repeated the solution. The problem as he put it was *The Real Beast*, described as *Intolerance, Indifference, and Ignorance*. The solution which is the primary FP is to give others *A Second Chance*.
- **Tie Up Loose Ends:** He tied up the speech by bringing back the *Beauty and the Beast*, and its conclusion. So not only did he tie up the loose end of his speech by closing with how he opened it, he also tied the knot on the movie as well (how it ended).
- **Call-to-Action:** His Call-to-Action was more of a general one. He ended the speech with this:

"And the fantasy will never become reality unless we attack the beast, the real beast! Intolerance, Indifference, and Ignorance. Yes! Let's kill the beast because everyone deserves a second chance."

So, it basically calls on the audience to be more self-aware and on the lookout for situations where there may be some Intolerance, Indifference, and Ignorance. This is what I'd expect as a Call-to-Action for this type of inspirational speech. In other words, broader and not very specific.

Feedback / Criticism:

- **Relatability:** Some of the humor was relatable to *parents*, but audience members without kids may not be able to relate and thus not think the references as being funny. Particularly the joke about how many times a kid will watch the same movie over and over...as a parent, I can 100% relate.
- **Dry Mouth:** During the speech it looks like he was experiencing dry mouth at times. This could be due to nerves or because he was putting everything he had into his words. I've experienced it when I first started in public speaking, which *was* due to me being nervous, but I've also had it happen as a result of not taking a moment to breathe after delivering a long sentence.
- **Inconsistency:** To introduce the idea (or the problem) he gave **4** examples.

*"At first look we automatically draw quick conclusions about people for various reasons. It could be their **appearance**, other **people's opinions**, our **own preconceived ideas**, or **just plain ignorance**."*

This is inconsistent to later in the speech when he describes the real beast as 3 things: *Intolerance, Indifference, Ignorance*. This is not a major issue, but it is something that I noticed.

- **Cliché Message:** I felt that the message was cliché, a feel-good one. The final message he left us with is that everyone deserves *a second chance*. I do not believe this. Take murderers as the

obvious example. But what about low-level trust things? Someone betrays your trust by divulging a secret they said they'd keep? Betraying a relationship by sleeping around? I don't subscribe to the idea that EVERYBODY deserves a second chance. Exceptions could be had depending on circumstances, but it's certainly not a healthy blanket rule.

Also relevant, if I see an actual beast, I'm not going to get to know it. If I see a stray dog, I'm not going to befriend it and hope for the best. I'm okay with that.

- **Not Crystal Clear:** I didn't feel that the examples, which were intended to get the audience to think about an instance where their beasts "roared," were specific enough. For example, Mark said the following:

"Perhaps you have participated in acts of intolerance, indifference, and ignorance. Are you guilty of feeding the beast? Is there someone out there, someone in your workplace, someone in your neighborhood, someone in your home who has heard your beast roar? Oh my friends, do they not deserve a second chance?"

That seemed too broad of a question. And maybe the bigger reason for the lack of clarity is that neither the *Beauty and the Beast* or Pat Harper's example are entirely relatable in the average person's day-to-day life. One is a cartoon fairytale and one is a news anchor pretending to be homeless. Perhaps a more relatable, personal story would have been a nice addition.

- **Perfection:** I think it's important to remember that even champions aren't perfect. There seems to be at least one verbal hiccup in these championship speeches. Mark had a couple minor ones. One was when he said, "*For years the Beast had...lived in isolation but no one took the time to say wait, 'What's he really like?'*"

The other was when Mark asked, "*Do you remember when you faced in...indifference?*"

These were tiny snags, and clearly, they did not cost him.