



Achieve Your Goals Podcast #83 - Better Than Dying: One Critical Skill For Success

Nick: Welcome to the Achieve Your Goals podcast with Hal Elrod. I'm your host, Nick Palkowski, and you're listening to the show that is guaranteed to help you take your life to the next level faster than you ever thought possible. In each episode, you will learn from someone who has achieved extraordinary goals that most haven't. He's the author of the number one bestselling book, *The Miracle Morning*, a hall of fame and business achiever, an international keynote speaker, ultra-marathon runner, and the founder of vipsuccesscoaching.com, Mr. Hal Elrod.

Hal: All right. Achieve Your Goals podcast listeners, welcome. This is Hal Elrod, your host. And my good friend, Jon Berghoff, is back again. I can't get rid of this guy. I don't know what it is. But one of my good friends and one of the best communicators in the world. The title of today's podcast is potentially - I don't know if this is going to be the title for sure, so I'm going to share with you what I'm thinking - Better Than Dying. That's the tentative working title for today's podcast, Better Than Dying. And you might go, "Well, what does that mean?" Well, Jerry Seinfeld once addressed that public speaking is the number one fear amongst people, and death is right behind it.

And he joked that, "That means if you are going to a funeral, or if you are at a funeral, you would rather be in the casket than delivering the eulogy," which is a crazy prospect. But today we're going to talk about speaking your way to success. We're going to talk about the importance of public speaking. And this something that whether you dream of being a professional speaker, as I did 15 years ago, that was a dream of mine as it was for my guest today, Jon Berghoff. But whether you dream of being a public speaker or you just have goals that you want to achieve that involve other human beings, because public speaking and developing that skill is really crucial if you want to communicate with anyone, if you want to influence anyone, if you want to be a leader in any way.

So regardless of what your goals are, what your profession is, today's episode is really going to be applicable to every single person listening as long as you have a voice and you have other human beings that you interact with in your life. So JB, are you on the line, my friend?

Jon: Yeah, I am. I am. I would rather be speaking than in the casket.

Hal: Yeah, me too.

Jon: That's scary for me.

Hal: Yeah, me too. Now, just so everyone knows, I made Jon turn off the video portion of our interaction right now. He always distracts me and makes faces at me, and so vice versa. But sorry to disappoint you, Jon. You can't see me, huh?

Jon: No, I see a still image of you, the Photoshopped one from 12 years ago.

Hal: Oh, the one when I had chin hair? Is that the one where I was proud that I could grow a little bit of hair on my chin and I went a little too far and didn't shave it before my photo day?

Jon: Oh, my goodness.

Hal: All right. So let's dive into the content here. So why is this important? Again, there's really three things to me that when it comes to public speaking, that skill, if you will, it's about the three elements of communication, right? You're developing the skill to effectively communicate from your ideas to other people that you want to influence with your ideas. And that's the second element, is influence, the ability to influence another human being or a group of people to your way of thinking or to take an action that you believe will help them. Whether it's buying your product or you're trying to convince your significant other that, "Hey, you should go to the gym with me," or "You should go to this marriage seminar with me," or whatever.

And finally is leadership. That's really the third element of public speaking, is you don't find a leader out there that's not a good public speaker. They really go hand in hand. So I brought Jon on. Jon has spoken to hundreds of thousands of people all around the world. Many of you know I brought Jon in to help me run the Best Year Ever Blueprint event last year. And we're getting ready to run that again this December. And I brought Jon in because this is his expertise. And Jon, I'd love to

hear your thoughts on public speaking, why it's important, and let's dive into some of your tactics on how our listeners can develop that skill.

Jon: Sure, buddy. Well, you made the point really well.

Hal: Thank you.

Jon: And so at the risk of belaboring it, I will add that I think the same skills that apply to being effective in front of 1,000 people, which you yourself have done, they apply in so many settings. And you made this point. And it's funny how as you were saying that, I was actually thinking about our conference call that you and I had last night with the hotel. Just to give a little background, right? Isn't that an interesting example?

Hal: I'll wait and listen and I'll let you know.

Jon: Yeah, I got to dig out of this one. So we had a bit of an issue that came up with the hotel where Hal and I are running a meeting coming up. And it was a little bit contentious because Hal and I made the mistake of planning some grand ideas around our meeting and extravagant, creative things we were going to do.

Hal: And we were so proud of these ideas.

Jon: Yeah, yeah. And the meeting's next week. And Hal and I came to realize that the hotel was unaware of some of our big ideas. So anyways, they weren't happy about it and they were asking us to cancel some of our elaborate, crazy ideas. And so Hal brought me in and said, "Hey, you teach negotiating. Let's call them." And here's what's interesting, this is like so many situations in life. How you and I thought we were going to call and just talk to one person, right?

Hal: Yeah.

Jon: And of course, she totally ups the intensity, when we call, by saying, "Well, hold on. If we're going to talk through this, why don't I have my entire team sit here and we'll put it on speaker phone so that I can make sure everyone here's on the same page?" I say that's like a lot of things in life where sometimes we've realized after it's too late how important it is to be prepared. In this case, fortunately, I was prepared enough that I was able to think through ahead of time, "What's the psychology of this interaction?" Right? So this wasn't just a negotiation. It was that. It wasn't just trying to resolve a problem and maintain and

strengthen a relationship, but it turned into me needing to give an impromptu speech that I wasn't expecting to a bunch of people that I couldn't even see, which really makes it a lot harder than if you can actually see and get feedback.

And the long story short, it was successful, wildly successful. We ended up getting permission to do all these. I mean, they literally went to the headquarters of their hotel chain. It's a well-known chain that everyone here knows. They got waivers to do things they've never done. And I think about it, Hal, and that's just a great example, it's a great reminder that the principles that we're going to share right now apply everywhere. So I'm happy to share any principles we want to talk about related to public speaking.

Hal: Well, here's where I'd like to start. There's something that whenever I'm asked by my coaching clients to coach them on if they're giving a speech, or a presentation, or even if they're talking to their team, I actually teach something that you taught me. I believe you learned it at a Train the Trainer event quite a few years ago. You came back from that event just fired up. And you'd spent four days immersed in learning how to run these interactive experiential events around the world, which you went on to do. But you talked about the importance of context versus content.

Most people when they deliver any kind of communication, they focus on the content, "Here's what I want to tell this person," or "Here's what I want to communicate to this group." And you enlightened me really to the importance of you've got to create an effective context. You might call it even a frame for which you're going to deliver the content through, or for which you're going to create this mindset that they're going to receive the content from this place. And so that was a game changer for my preparation and my communication. And I've paid it forward and taught it to a lot of clients. So I'd love to hear your thoughts on context versus content and what that's all about, and then how our listeners can implement that into their lives.

Jon: Yeah, happy to. Well, I think there's a few different ways we could talk about this. So to start with, and you've said it really well, the context will determine how somebody receives the content. I had a mentor of mine, Hal - I can't remember. This was a decade ago - who once said to me, she said that, "The job of a teacher," and I think about this still today when I go teach courses at the business school, "the number one job is not to teach but it is to inspire the audience to want to learn."

And I never forgot that, because her point was that if people aren't inspired at the outset of a presentation, potentially, we never enroll them. We never engage them and we lose them. And so when you say, "Setting the context," just so everyone's clear, this is something that really has to happen really early on and really quickly. And I'll give, in a minute here, my formula for how I do that. And it's evolved over the years. But let me give just another example that serves as a really good metaphor. As I'm standing here talking, I've got a bottle of Fiji water in front of me.

Hal: I thought you were going to say tequila, or Jager, or something.

Jon: Next time, right?

Hal: Whisky, yeah.

Jon: Oh, my gosh. That would be an interesting experiment. No, I've got a bottle of Fiji. And anyone who's had Fiji water is familiar and knows that you're going to pay more money for Fiji than you would for water that I might go down the hallway and get out of the water cooler or any other type of bottled water. And the interesting thing is if I was to ask your audience the question, "Why is it that we pay more money for the Fiji?" somebody might choose to debate and say, "Well, it's because it comes from an artesian well and it's never been touched by man," blah, blah, blah, right?

The truth is we don't really know. We think that. And so I would ask, "Why do we think that? Where did you get that story?" Well, where they got that story is in the packaging, right? So the context or the packaging, when we communicate, is what dictates and determines how people will view the content, right?

So that's essentially what you said. And I always think of that metaphor because it reminds me to build a beautiful package so people value and view what I'm going to present the right way. I do have a little formula that I've used over the years. And I guess we could talk more about how to prepare so that you can execute the formula, but the formula is pretty simple. When I begin a presentation, especially with what I'd consider a colder audience...I didn't do any of this today because a lot of your audience, they've been with you and you did it pretty well, but I would always do this if I'm in front of a brand new audience. Step one, Hal, would be to typically acknowledge the audience. And I'll use different variations of these three or four steps.

But when I say, "acknowledge the audience," what I mean by that is essentially make sure that they understand that I respect, appreciate, or value where they're coming from or what their world is like at this given moment, right? Sometimes I'll literally just say exactly that. Like, "Hey, thanks for being here. You could be somewhere else," or, "The fact that you're not here means you're not off running your businesses, or building value, or with your friends," or whatever it is. So I think it's important that people feel acknowledged.

And in addition to that, that they feel understood. That's part of being acknowledged. I feel like if people don't feel like I understand them as a presenter, then they don't care how much I know, right? So that's what I mean by acknowledging, okay? And then the next thing that I think is important, Hal, is - and sometimes I'll change the order, depending on the environment - after I feel like they feel understood, then what I do is what's called, "earning the right," which is. . .

Hal: Jon, I want to jump in really quick and interrupt you. I want people to think about, as we go through these steps, that this...I call this the context creation formula, essentially. And again, I learned it from you. But this is something that I want you to think about. This applies to every communication that you have. So if you're trying to convince your significant other to go to a movie, right? And you know they want to go to one and you want to go to another, you've got to start by acknowledging where they're coming from and "I know, sweetie, you want to go to this one."

So just think about how this is a much broader appeal than just speaking in front of groups, again, individuals, and whether it's professional or if you're trying to influence your child, or your friend, or your wife, or your husband to do something that you want them to do. So just wanted to make that plug as people listened to the rest of your brilliant tips. Go ahead.

Jon: Well, yeah, if we want to drill into it further. And when we're running a full-length training, like we've got the one we're going to run in September, we would teach: how do you prepare? You need a checklist to really make sure that when acknowledging, it's relevant to the audience. And so a lot of that has to do with psychology. What are their fears, concerns, desires, worries, dreams, aspirations, curiosities, and skepticisms? Every audience is going to have a certain shared experience coming into whatever the situation is. And they're going to have their own individual unique experiences. And the best presenters are ones that understand both levels. They understand, "What does everyone in this audience

have in common? And what are some of the variances in how people arrived at this moment in time?"

Literally, "What has their experience been today, before I came up to communicate? Or yesterday, or in their career?" It's important to really ask these questions from as many angles as possible so that we can, like I said, enter the world of the audience, right? So that's how I acknowledge and enter their world. The second step, Hal, is I earn the right. And the way I earn the right is I make sure that there's some way that I'm getting the point across that I'm qualified to actually be communicating, or sharing, or teaching with them. Now, again, let me restate. There's a lot of environments where I'm not utilizing that step if I already have a relationship. It wouldn't make any sense, right?

The next step, Hal, would be to share with people what's in it for them, for them to continue listening to me, right? So I haven't even gotten into the stuff but, "Hey, here's why it's worth it for you to keep listening right now." And I think one key to this is to make sure that we're focused on the benefits of listening, not the features. So a simple example, if I'm talking to a group of five people - it could be a local community meeting. It could be a sales team. It could be anything - when I'm getting into, "Here's what I'm about to do," a common mistake that I see people make is they say, "Let me walk you through the agenda and tell you what we're going to cover."

The problem with doing that, is that as people become aware of what the agenda is or what the topics are, they will, one at a time, make a judgment and they'll say to themselves, "I'm interested in that topic. I'm not interested." And they'll start pre-tuning out. That's why when I'm covering the, "What's in it for you," I'm focused on the benefits, but I might not always be revealing how they're going to get those benefits, right?

Hal: Mm-hmm.

Jon: And then the last thing, Hal, and this is a big one. The last one is what I call "The rules." Let's say I've just made some big promises, like, "Hey, us spending time together here today, here's what I expect you to get out of this." I've given them the "what's in it for them." I've already acknowledged them. When I cover the rules, I'm making a request of them, "Hey, for you to get the most out of this, here's what I'm going to suggest." And when I work with large audiences, it's things like be here mentally, have fun, be engaged, own your experience. But that helps to set the tone. It's a two-way agreement, right?

Hal: Yeah.

Jon: So that's the formula. I don't use it exactly that way every time but different pieces in different places.

Hal: Yeah, and I think what it does, is it makes someone ready to receive it. And one example to give in terms of how important context is versus content, if you started a conversation with somebody, you taught them a bunch of stuff but you didn't take any time to create that context to prepare the message, the content, then they may literally go, "I don't know what that has to do with me," and then just completely ignore it.

On the flipside, if you were to take, let's say, 80% of your message that you're trying to communicate, and focusing on the steps that Jon just taught - acknowledging them, entering their world, earning the right, explaining how this is going to benefit them, what's in it for them, establishing these rules - if it did that, and especially with the what's in it for me part, you've got them salivating, where they're like, "Just tell me. You just promised me how this is going to change my life. How will it change my life? What do I do?"

And if only 20% of your message was like, "Here's the one thing you need to do. Do this every day. I'd say wake up early and focus on yourself, personal development. But do this one thing every day and it'll change your life." And if you focused more on the context than on the content, then the importance of it and the effectiveness of it is going to be amplified so many times over by the recipient of that content. So just to reinstate what you're talking about, Jon, and how important context is versus just content.

Jon: I love it. And you did it on this call today, right? The way that you explained to folks how widely public speaking applies, that's an example of setting the context.

Hal: Yeah, and I didn't think about it in advance. That's the thing, too, right? When you practice this over and over and over, it just becomes your way of communicating without even really thinking about it. Jon, talk about what the difference is between speaking and training. For me, I'm much more of a speaker. And I literally brought you in to Best Year Ever Blueprint because you are a trainer. And there is a significant difference. So can you talk about what the difference is between speaking and training?

Jon: Yeah, I'd be happy to. The big difference, for me, is it has a lot to do with the environment that I'm in, and also really what's the outcome I'm trying to generate. So your audience might be familiar with the keynote speaking that you do. And maybe they've been in different environments where it's more of a facilitated training experience. The simplest explanation, for me, and this is just my view of it, is as a trainer, my goal is to create an experience so that somebody learns through experience.

Oftentimes, great public speakers, they very simply will just share a message. And because of the effectiveness of their storytelling or their ability to communicate, that will create a change for the audience. However, I have found that if I'm in an environment where I need people to develop a skill, where I really need to change a behavior, I have a much better chance of doing that...I don't consider myself a very good public speaker.

Hal: Neither do I. Keep going.

Jon: Yeah, yeah. Then we agree on that. I've got a better chance of creating behavioral change or teaching somebody a skill by having them actually experience it in that moment. So that, I could talk about endlessly, because that's really what I've done. I haven't done as much public speaking as you. I stand for nine hours and I teach at a business school. And someone might say, "Oh, you're speaking the whole day." But if you sit in the class, 70% of the time, the participants are doing something so that they can internalize the material. So on a high level, that's the difference. Again, it's not good, bad, better, worse. It's just a different experience that we're creating.

Hal: Got it. Fantastic. I'd love your opinion, and I'm happy to share mine, on what makes someone a great speaker. What makes them a great speaker? Is it their confidence? Is it how funny they are? Is it how well they move across the stage and use their hands for gestures? What do you think are the characteristics of a great speaker or trainer, just as the individual and how they perform and how they come across?

Jon: Yeah, that's a great question. Well, let me think about this. I would say for either a speaker or a trainer, I think one of the most important skill sets is empathy. And when I say empathy, meaning - we talked about this a little earlier - the ability to enter the world of those around us, the ability to understand what it's like to be somebody else. I think that's number one. And to do that at a level of depth and

detail, to really understand. A great example is when someone who regularly communicates and maybe they're used to speaking to accountants. Just making this up here. Well, when they go and they speak to real estate agents, are they adept enough, are they empathizing enough to where they'll change all of their language so that the audience feels like they're understood? They'll use language that is industry specific.

And that's a superficial example. I think even more importantly to be really effective in this skill of empathy, is understanding the emotions of an audience. I think the most important skill of a leader is the ability to inspire. You could ask all of your listeners, "What's it like to have worked with great leaders and shitty leaders?" And they could tell us the answers. You don't need all the decades of research. We've all seen it. And it all boils down to, "Can somebody inspire somebody else?" And I think that's a key skill for a speaker. But I think to be able to inspire, we've got to be able to empathize. I also think that a great speaker has to have a level of self-awareness, which is connected to empathy. But they have to have enough self-awareness and ability to moderate their own emotions so that they can then inspire those emotions in whoever they're speaking to.

Because at the end of the day, an audience can only feel whatever we want them to feel in direct relation to how authentically do I feel that, as the person speaking to them? This is why I see sometimes folks struggle. They're trying to create an environment where there's humor. Well, one, that's something you've got to practice and test. And it takes a skill. You have this skill, Hal, I think much better than I do. You have this skill. You've developed it over the years. You've studied comedians. I know that. I've watched you do that.

Hal: Sure.

Jon: But if you want people to feel lighthearted, I as the speaker have to feel lighthearted. If I want them to feel intensity, I have to feel that intensity. And I'll add to this, Hal, on self-awareness, that I think it would really help speakers if, as part of their preparation, they were to ask themselves not just what are the behaviors I want to change, the actions I want to inspire, but what are the emotions I want to inspire in my audience? And when they rehearse whatever they're going to say, rehearse being in the state that we want the audience to be in when we deliver that message. And I should also ask certain people in the audience before I present, to afterwards tell me specifically, "How do you feel when I communicate? And is there anything that you would suggest I try differently in terms of the emotions that I communicate?"

So Hal, that's off the top of my head, the answer to your question. I think empathy, self-awareness. For a trainer, I would add to that a certain level of presence. A lot of speakers will speak and frankly they don't need to be as present, because a lot of times, they're just giving the same speech. As a trainer, it's in reverse. There's nothing I say the same way twice. And a lot of what I'm doing has everything to do with what's going on with the audience in that moment. So being aware of what's going on in the audience, understanding the power of the present moment, and being willing to adapt and to change based on what's happening in the present moment, that's a huge skill for trainers. And it takes way more than this podcast for me to get deep into that.

Hal: Sure.

Jon: But those are a few.

Hal: Yeah, and even for me as a speaker, and I think you know this, my presentation isn't scripted. It's different every time. And that presence is so important. I probably learned that from you, too, I don't know. I go up there. I have a general idea of what I'm going to. . . I'm going to tell this story. I'm going to talk about The Miracle Morning, whatever. But I really just try to be so present that I read the audience. And it's amazing when you are fully present. Sometimes the brilliance, if you will, that almost flows through you from, I don't know, a higher power from the universe, God, something, but so often, and I know you've done this, where you say something in the middle of your training or your presentation and you've never said it before in your life.

And it was powerful. It was profound. It was perfect. It was what was needed in that moment and it just came. I don't know if you can speak to that or what. Have you had that happen where the words come out of your mouth and you're like, "Where in the hell did that come from"?

Jon: Yeah. Yeah, I have had that happen. Although, sometimes I have that happen and it's not in the positive. It's like, "Whoops! That didn't make any sense."

Hal: Yeah, I've done that before. I actually dropped an F bomb once in a speech, and I was horrified. And I had just taught the audience they can't change a philosophy minutes before. And when I said the F word, I froze and I was stuttering. And this guy in the front row yells out, "Can't change it, yo pal Hal." And everybody goes, "Yeah." And it was funny. But yeah.

Jon: You're to me, Hal, reinforcing the importance for anybody who's communicating in front of a group. And keep in mind, for your listeners, and Hal and I can debate this, but I would argue that being great at public speaking applies as a skill maybe as much if not more than anything else that can impact our everyday lives. Think about as an example if you're giving a toast at a dinner. And you may not have thought of that as a goal achievement topic. However, I would argue that if you've ever given a toast and then when you're done, you thought, "Man, I missed a huge opportunity to create a certain feeling," or if you've ever seen someone give a toast and think, "Wow, they just created a moment because of how exceptional they were," you start to realize the ability to communicate in front of a group of any size is really, really powerful.

And I say all that because, Hal, your point of being present and having something great flow through us, one of the keys to doing that is not only being really well prepared, because the less prepared we are, the more we will start to be insecure. And then because we're insecure, we'll focus on ourselves and not the audience.

So being prepared is critically important. Beyond that, just reminding myself when I am facilitating a training, whether there's 500 or 5 people, that this is about them and I've got to not let it be about me. I've got to get out of the way. And how important it is for me to know when I should not say something versus when I should. And that's where, again, in the training environment, knowing when not to add insight is really, really important. But it all comes back to being present to what's going on in that given moment.

Hal: Now, I know you and our other good friend, Jon Vroman, who was voted Best Speaker in America two years in a row, are doing a training on this topic of public speaking. I'm going to share your three tips here of a great speaker: empathy, ability to inspire, and self-awareness and presence. I've got a few thoughts on what to add to that. But before I do, for anybody listening, if they want to go further, take a minute to talk about this event. When is it, where is it, and how can people learn more?

Jon: Yeah. Well, it's funny. You're right, Jon Vroman and I are running this event. And I'm sitting here thinking, "He should be the one doing this podcast." He's ten times the public speaker that I am, especially just his level of experience. But he spoke at your Best Year Ever event last year. And it was life changing, to say the least, for everybody who was there. So this event we're running next month, September 15 through the 17th, if anyone's interested, they can check out

speakertrainerexperience.com. And what John and I are looking to do, in a nutshell, it's quite different than a lot of the speaker trainings that are out there, for two major reasons.

One of them is while we are going to spend a certain amount of time, maybe 20% of the time, talking about building a speaking or training business - and we are going to introduce some of our own opportunities there for some of the participants that we certify to join us and some of the opportunities that we have - the bigger emphasis is going to be on the skill building. And the way we're going to run this event to be authentic, is it's going to be an experiential learning event.

So from the minute folks step into the training until they leave, they'll be doing whatever it is we teach. And the way that we're going to separate the time, is probably about 30 to 50% of the time is going to be skill building purely on public speaking skills: storytelling, structuring messages, how to build an inventory and to know which types of stories are examples to use, when and where, how to deliver them to get the greatest impact.

And I know Jon's got endless wisdom on this. And he's really, really great at it. And then we're going to spend the other half of the time focusing on teaching folks how to train and facilitate. And we're going to teach folks the science of experiential learning - and there is an entire science behind it, how people learn - and then how to teach in a way that ensures that your audience has the highest level of integrating, learning, and internalizing what it is that we're teaching. So it's going to be a ton of fun. We're limiting it to...we're only going to guarantee 20 spots. In fact, at the time that this podcast plays, I don't know if any will be left. We just announced it the other day. We filled a few spots in the last day. But speakertrainerexperience.com, Hal, if they want to learn more about it.

Hal: Very cool. And as I told you today, I'm kicking myself. I can't make it, and I'm really bummed. But luckily, I know you, so I'll pick your brain afterwards. I want to wrap up with what I feel like are important to be a great speaker. And there's three tips that I'm going to just wrap up here with. Number one is vulnerability. There's a great quote from Robin Sharma. He said that, "When you're vulnerable with people, they fall in love with you." And this for me became apparent. I can literally picture myself on the stage where it was pretty recent after my car accident. My brain damage was very strong. I was very insecure about forgetting my speech right in the middle. And right in the middle of my speech, sure enough, I forgot it. And I started sweating. My heart was racing and I was nervous.

And in the moment, just on my feet, I said, "Hey." I go, "Guys, this is a team effort." I said, "We're in this together. I forgot what I was talking about. Did anybody remember?" And people started shouting out the answer, shouting out the answer. And finally, somebody got it. And I said, "Thank you," and I picked back up. And there was just this sense of team, this unity that the audience felt like, "This guy's not perfect. He doesn't remember his speech." But rather than that being a flaw or a negative in my speech, it was actually a positive. They felt connected to that. So giving up being perfect for being authentic. And I think so often we worry when it comes to communicating or public speaking, we're nervous that what if we mess up? What if we mess up? Or "I've tried to memorize this approach or this script, what if I don't say it right?"

And couple things is, number one, the audience doesn't know what you were going to say, so whatever you say is perfect to them. And then when you admit your mistakes or you're messing up, people actually feel really connected to that, because nobody's perfect. So vulnerability. Second tip for being a great speaker is storytelling. That's one of the most important skills. When you tell a story, it goes from the logical skeptical part of the brain where people assess facts and it goes into the other part of the brain. And Jon, you could talk about probably the technical, scientific aspects of which parts of the brain are stimulated by stories, but essentially in layman's terms, the part of the brain that enjoys a story. And then you're able to influence someone through that story without them... It kind of turns off the skepticism that they have.

And that's why so many great books that are parables, that's how they influence someone and they embed these lessons within the stories. So a great book, by the way, if you want to get better at storytelling, the first book I ever read on the topic and it really stuck with me, it's called The Story Factor by Annette Simmons. And there may be better books out there, if you want to just go to Amazon and type in storytelling. You can see if there's any other books that have better reviews or are more relative to what you want to learn. And then the last tip I'll give, so vulnerability, storytelling, and then entertaining. The ability to entertain, and Jon, you mentioned this earlier, but I went to a seminar and this was a few years ago.

I loved the speaker and I loved the content, but we were in there all day and I noticed that at parts I would just completely tune out and not even hear what he was saying for ten minutes. And then I'd tune back in and go, "Oh, gosh. What did he say?" And I just realized that he wasn't keeping my attention. And then a few days later, I went to a stand-up comedy show and it was like four hours long. And I realized there wasn't a moment. There literally was not a moment in four hours

where I wasn't totally on the edge of my seat for what the comedian was going to say next. And from that moment forward, it was this realization that the way that stand-up comedians deliver their content is very different from most speakers. And at that moment, I said, "I'm going to stop studying speakers for the most part, or at least I'm going to heavily weigh my learning and my modeling over comedians."

And I literally set my DVR every day to record Comedy Central stand-up comedy. And every single day at lunch, I watched that. I did that for probably two years. And I started implementing that into my speaking. And so even if you don't want to be super funny, just the way that they structure, the way they set up their stories, and whether it's a joke or a story, it keeps you engaged. So I encourage you, if you want to be a great speaker, study not just speakers but study stand-up comedians and model what they do.

So Jon's three tips, just to summarize: empathy, the ability to inspire, and self-awareness, which leads into presence. And then my tips were vulnerability, being vulnerable, storytelling, and entertaining, being an entertainer when you're up there performing. There was a book that I read called Light Yourself on Fire, or something, when you're on stage and let people watch you burn. People will watch you. You have to go up there, be dynamic, be vulnerable, letting yourself out there, and making sure that this is an experience, that they get to have an experience, not just sit and listen to a speaker. Jon, any final thoughts, comments, questions, concerns, compliments?

Jon: Yeah, yeah, I've got all of those. I forgot to mention, we do have six or seven free videos. They're meant to preview our training, but we give away what we consider to be a couple good ideas. So if people go to speakertrainerexperience.com, I think there's six or seven, at this point, free videos people can check out.

Hal: I haven't even watched those. When we hang up, I'm going to go look at those right now. So Jon, thank you for your time today again, buddy. I always have a lot of fun doing the podcast with you.

Jon: Yeah, love it, buddy. Take care.

Hal: In the last episode we recorded, I made the threat that it was our last one. And look, I didn't follow through with that threat.

Jon: I know. I can't believe it. You had me back.

Hal: All right. The last one's got to be coming sooner than later.

Jon: See you in four days, buddy.

Hal: Yeah. Yeah, we're running our Quantum Leap Mastermind two day retreat next week. I'm excited. Achieve Your Goals podcast listeners, thank you for tuning into another episode. I hope you got a tip or two or three that you can implement into your life, into your world, to help you achieve your goals. Because the goals that you set, wake up every day, work towards them because you deserve nothing less. And I appreciate you. I appreciate your time, your energy, and your attention. And I will catch you next week on the Achieve Your Goals podcast. Take care, everybody.

Nick: And thank you so much for tuning into this episode of the podcast. So now we want to know what were your big takeaways from this episode with Hal and Jon. Let us know by heading on over to halelrod.com/083 for episode number 83, and leaving a comment there on the show notes page. You can also send Hal and Jon a message on Facebook or Twitter letting them know what your big takeaways were. Also, if you haven't done so yet, please go subscribe to the podcasts on iTunes and leave a rating and review. This is really the best way for you to show your appreciation for the show by letting others know what you like about it and what you appreciate about it. Because this helps spread the word and helps other people realize if this is the show for them. So thank you so much. And until next week, it's time for you to go there, take action, and achieve your goals.

Man: If you're looking to grow your business using podcasting but don't have the time to edit the audio, insert the intro and outro, write up the show notes, post the episode to all the different sites, and do all of the ridiculous back-end work that's required, then you need yourpodcastguru.com, where you bring the content and we take care of the rest. We'll even co-host the show for you. Visit yourpodcastguru.com right now to explode your audience and crush it in the podcasting world.