


A background image showing a business meeting. In the center, two people are shaking hands. To the left, a man with a beard is looking towards the right. To the right, a woman is looking towards the left. In the foreground, there is a table with papers, a coffee cup, and a pen.

# How to Win Biotech Funding with Successful Investor Presentations

Five Research-Based Presentation Strategies Used by Leading Biotech CEOs

The logo for The Speech Improvement Company, featuring a stylized profile of a human head with sound waves emanating from the mouth, all contained within a square border.

The  
**SpeechImprovement**  
Company

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# Introduction

Biotech investor presentations can be one of the most powerful, productive, and valuable means of securing funding. They are, however, not the same as other business presentations. There are unique requirements, expectations, and challenges. Likewise, there are specific behaviors, skills, and techniques that help or in some cases, hinder funding success.

During 2019, The Speech Improvement Company conducted face-to-face interviews with senior biotech and other life sciences executives to determine what challenges they faced in their investor presentations. We have combined that data with the latest research on investor presentations across multiple industries. In addition, we have coupled those insights with our experiences from over 50 years of training and coaching more than 100 companies' investor presentations and more than 1,000 scientific and business leaders.

We've observed that many biotech executives are ill-prepared to successfully deliver their company's important messages during a formal presentation. It could be simple nervousness, displaying a lack of confidence, poor team coordination, or difficulty conveying complex scientific data to less-technical investors. When visual supports such as slides are used, they are often cluttered, badly designed, and poorly presented.

These are some of the key challenges that biotech CEOs face. In this report, we will share the results of our research and speaker training. We will identify the right approaches you and your team can immediately put to use that ensure high-impact investor presentations. The Speech Improvement Company's goal for this paper is to develop the skills and instill the confidence in your team to deliver exceptional presentations that not only help you stand out in a crowded field, but most importantly, secure the funding you need.

# The Big Challenges We Hear From Biotech CEOs

All life sciences companies - whether they are on the East Coast, West Coast or somewhere in-between, regardless of size, investment stage, or area of expertise - share the same common hurdles when delivering critical presentations. Here is a brief look at the five most frequently reported:

## Presenting technical information to non-technical listeners

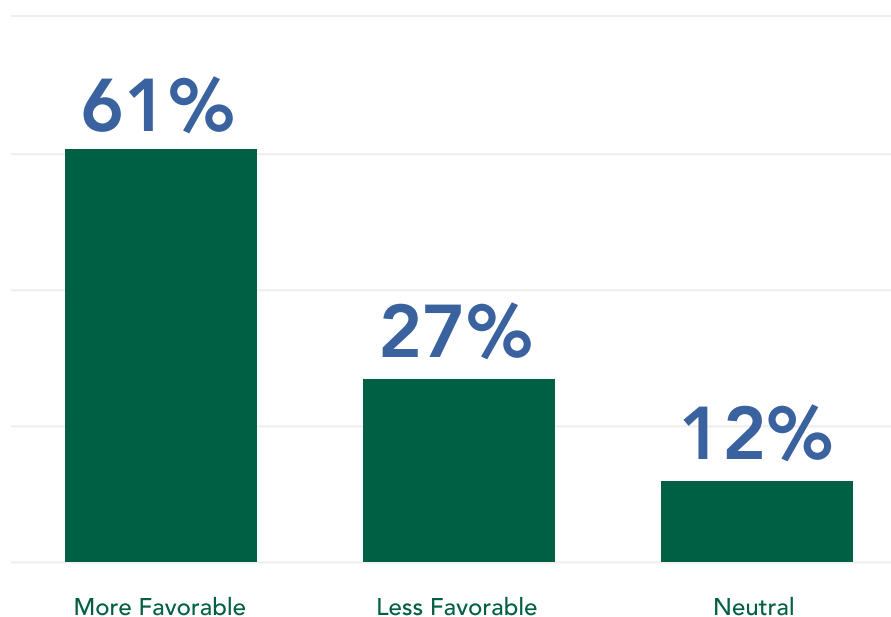


The content of your presentation is by its very nature highly-technical. Your listeners most likely will not have the same level of knowledge as you. The challenge is finding the appropriate way to convey the essence of your research/approach/method in a manner that both depicts its efficacy and conveys the ROI that investors are looking for.

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## "Has your impression of a company changed after reviewing its presentation?"

Corbin Advisors survey of 68 financial professionals across the spectrum of industry sectors and regions.



Source: [www.corbinadvisors.com](http://www.corbinadvisors.com)

## Presenting as a passionate, competent, and cohesive leadership team

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Passion. Competency. Cohesion. These are separate elements that make for a compelling presentation. Maintaining these characteristics can be especially difficult on a roadshow with several presentations, sometimes on the same day. For example, cohesion means much more than appearances, or addressing each other by first names. Investors really want to know “Do I trust that this team can execute the plan and successfully take their science to market?”

## One or more of the team members are not good presenters

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For many C-level executives at biotech start-ups, it is their first time as a member of a leadership team and they have never presented to experienced investors. With diverse backgrounds that are often academic or research-focused, they may not have the experience to participate in critical business presentations that need to persuade, not just inform. You can truly “knock the ball out of the park” when each member of your presentation team does both.

## Presenting a clear, concise, and convincing story of your solution and the company

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Part of showing a cohesive team is that each member must understand and agree to a central, simple theme both for the overall message and their specific contribution. Additionally, successful presentations must be supported by salient data together with convincing messaging without feeling like a sales pitch.

## Presenting support materials that enhance, not supplant your message

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This may be the most egregious mistake that most biotech presenters make. Ideally, slides are used to support the messaging, but all too often, the design of the slides is too dense. Although helpful, the answer is NOT simply reducing the sheer amount of information on any slide. Also, poor introductions and timing of the slides often create an automatic disconnect with the listeners.

“We had a new leadership team who needed to be cohesive on messaging, crafting and simplifying slides, and selling the message properly. Our speech coach forced the five of us to practice it over and over: that proved to be critically important.”

There are best practices for all these challenges, and we would like to share them with you!



Translate Bio is a clinical-stage mRNA therapeutics company developing a new class of potentially transformative medicines to treat diseases caused by protein or gene dysfunction. Their platform is designed to develop product candidates that deliver mRNA carrying instructions to produce intracellular, transmembrane and secreted proteins for therapeutic benefit.

The company had a successful IPO in June 2018, with a valuation of \$582M.

According to Frank DeRosa, Senior VP, Research and Process Development, "As a leadership team, we wanted to convey clear and consistent messaging. We had to open and close it strong, we had to be memorable."

Frank continues, "We were prepping for our IPO and many of the people we would encounter did not have a scientific background. So the most important thing we did was to simplify, stay above the details. That meant we had to learn the background of the people we were going to meet with and then adapt the presentation for different audiences. We received positive feedback as a result. It's a great feeling to know that you conveyed your story to the audience successfully."



**Frank DeRosa**

Senior VP, Research and Process Development  
Translate Bio

# Our Academic Approach: We Wrote the Book ... Literally

We are qualified to address biotech investor presentations because of our experience with, and knowledge of, human communication. From theories on how persuasion works to the best ways to effectively connect with your listeners, we have studied it, written about it, discussed it, and filtered it through interactions with hundreds of companies both large and small.

The Speech Improvement Company's 55 years of demonstrated authority and authenticity ensure that the content in this document contains actionable lessons you can use today. We are not a PR firm that also "drills" presenters, and we do not approach presentations from a theatrical background because you're not acting. What others miss is the essence of persuasion, the field tests and studies on human reasoning, the current academic research on interpersonal communication, and a deep understanding of the interactions and thinking that occurs on both sides of the table. Many of our coaches, including authors of this paper, have studied and taught communication at the graduate level or higher and have collectively authored 13 communication-related books, including a comprehensive textbook in partnership with the National Communication Association on how to coach and train communication skills. When we say we have say "we have written the book on how to be a speech coach," we really have.

The Speech Improvement Company has successfully developed practical, knowledge-based communication and presentation skills training, adapted it and refined it by working with both small and large life sciences companies - from fast-growing biotech start-ups like Magenta Therapeutics, Surface Oncology and Obsidian Therapeutics, to larger, well-known companies such as Biogen, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Shire, Takeda, and Stryker Neurovascular.



# Five Proven Presentation Strategies



## 1

### Presenting technical information to non-technical listeners

On the one hand there is the normal tendency to 'dumb it down.' On the other hand, it is important to recognize that although investors may not be technical experts, they are quite interested in two things; first, is knowing that you and your team are technical experts; second, is knowing enough to make a wise investment decision. Addressing both of these is your responsibility. The extent to which you can accomplish them will largely dictate your success in securing funding.

In your preparation for the investor meeting(s), be able to identify the exact technical information that will be essential to communicate and why it is essential. Decide where it should be presented and who should present it. Determine how it should be presented, i.e., how it should be introduced, explained, and justified. Would a visual, such as a slide be helpful?

Typically, this is when a common mistake is made. The slides are not designed for maximum clarity and learning, resulting in too much data being put on the slides. Remember, you may need to educate the investor-listener on the most impactful parts of your research. At the same time, the presenter must know how to deliver data that will be new to them. That entails everything from clear pronunciation of technical terms to the speed at which the data is introduced, to the synchronization with the slides. If left unaddressed, an excessively technical presentation is likely to fail.



## 2

### Presenting as a passionate, competent, and cohesive leadership team

It is well-known that “products don’t sell, people do.” While this old adage may not be as accurate for modern day biotech investor presentations, it still holds a lot of truth. Investors will have a pervasive need to understand the technical validity of your work. However, most investors are very focused on the leadership team that is expected to build the company to take this product to market. Whether they will be closely partnering with you, or funding you, they want to know that each member of the team shows these characteristics: passion, competency, and cohesion.

Passion does not mean talking louder and faster. It means allowing the authentic joy and excitement you have about what your product/service will do for humanity to be expressed. Leave the joy and excitement of making money from it mostly to the minds of the investors. Of course, how you are going to make them money must be pointed out, but it should not be a major expression of passion. Smiling and using emotional language are two natural ways to show passion. Do not be afraid to use them.

Competency should be demonstrated. While investors will most likely have seen your written introductions and done their research prior to your presentation, it is advisable to give a brief description of the qualifications of each team member. Competency will also be judged by the value and effectiveness that each leadership team member brings to their individual presentation. Allow your competency to show by the way that you confidently handle yourself and your data.

Cohesion is a key indicator to investors that the leadership team they are evaluating is capable of working comfortably with each other to capitalize on their ideas, accelerate development, build a strong, albeit new and inexperienced company, and succeed. It is important to show familiarity with one another by the way you refer to each other and to each other’s content. Short references such as, “Alex will cover...” or “as Margret said...,” will give the impression of team unity and comfortable, productive interactions. It is also worth remembering that team member cohesion starts in the parking lot or in the lobby as you assist one another with materials, coats, etc. Investors are watching and assessing you at every turn, not just when you are presenting.

“Our presentation coach asked me to run through our investor presentation. He informed me, rather bluntly, that the presentation was boring, that it didn’t capture the passion of our product. It was a revelation. I thought we had a good story. We realized it was too muddled and detail heavy.”

# 3

## One or more of the team members are not good presenters

It is not enough to have one person on the team who is a terrific presenter. Everyone needs to be effective, otherwise the presentation will only be "as strong as the weakest link." Often, with start-up teams, there is one outstanding communicator, and the false hope among others is that person can carry the meeting. That may have been true in the early seed, or angel rounds, but in later-stages, investors are evaluating the entire team now that it is in place. If they only connect with one key person, you will be viewed in the same light as a lot of the other not-so-exciting presentations they sit through again and again, and you will miss the opportunity to really stand out. Having all your key executives speak, and speak well, will set you apart and make a major contribution to a successful and memorable meeting.

This is important, so this point is worth repeating: what you did in the past during early funding rounds is less likely to work well in later stages. The people listening are different: fewer and fewer have technical or scientific backgrounds and the science that dazzled early-stage investors now makes some people's eyes glaze over.

So, how do you evaluate other team members' presentation ability? Look for them going too far into the weeds, appearing nervous, not making eye contact, not able to connect with listeners, not responding to questions in a concise manner, being too dependent on slides, lacking passion, or just looking like they do not want to be there. If you see any of that, you have got a problem, and you need to fix it.

Some of those characteristics may not be an issue when speaking in an academic environment, but that will not cut it in a critical business presentation. In academic speaking, technical detail is encouraged, while emotion and bias are frowned upon. Investors need the opposite. Everyone on your presentation team must speak to investors with a high level of comfort, passion, and confidence with each other, in the company's vision, and the team's ability to execute on it. If you find yourself faced with this challenge, invest in training that will move all the presenters to a level of presentation effectiveness that gives all of the leadership team the confidence and peace-of-mind that you can put any of them in front of any investor.



# 4

## Presenting a clear, concise, and convincing story of your solution and the company

This seems almost too obvious to be a serious challenge. Yet, in virtually every interview we did with biotech executives, every research study we reviewed, and every biotech presentation we have coached, it emerges as one of the most critical elements of a successful investor presentation. You should be able to state your entire case in a few simple, declarative sentences. Investors will give little time and little attention if you cannot quickly state your case. One major investor who hears more than 300 presentations a year, told us that if he does not hear a clear and concise message in the first two minutes, he tunes out.

"Clear and concise" means that you should be able to communicate your research, plans, and ideas in simple lay language. Using terms that are familiar to you, often technical terms, may not be effective. As was stated earlier, this does not mean that you must "dumb it down." It does mean to focus on the most important information they should take away and recall when they are making decisions. If they forget just about everything that you say, what is the one thing you want them to remember? This is called the theme of the presentation. There should be a theme for the presentation and each speaker should have a theme statement for their individual presentation. Each of those themes should augment the overall theme of the presentation. A nuance here is that each time the theme is repeated in the presentation, no matter who says it, the same words and emphasis should be used.

To help the investors follow the presentation in a logical fashion, there is a simple four-step process to organizing the overall presentation and each of the individual presentations. First, tell your listeners what you are going to tell them. Include things like the major topic headings, who will be presenting that information, slides or video will be used to help illustrate important points, how much time you anticipate, and any other relevant information. Second, give them a good reason to listen to your presentation. Be able to answer the question that is in their minds, "What is in this for me - how can I make money?" If you cannot communicate solid content and rationale with these two steps, your presentation is more likely to fail.

## EntreMed: 330 Percent One-day Return

The effectiveness of persuasion depends in many settings on receivers' decisions about what information to seek out and how to allocate attention.

Several studies show that potentially valuable information is ignored even when it is public information, due to either high costs of information acquisition or non-rational limited attention. Media reports chronicle the market reaction to results suggesting a drug patented by the company EntreMed might cure a type of cancer.

These results were reported in the science journal Nature and on page A28 by The New York Times. Unsurprisingly, the stock price of EntreMed increased by 28 percent.

Five months later, The New York Times published an article about EntreMed on the front-page that is almost identical to the article published earlier. Despite the fact that the article contains no new hard information, it leads to a 330 percent one-day return for EntreMed, and to a 7.5 percent one-day return for all biotech companies, moving billions of dollars in market capitalization.

The stock price of EntreMed does not revert to the previous level over the whole next year. Several interpretations of these events are possible, but what is clear is that the way public financial information is disseminated can significantly affect the market reaction.

Source: [The New York Times](#)

Third, present your case in an organized and logical fashion using hard data, examples, metaphors, and stories. Fourth, both summarize the most important points you have made and conclude your thoughts with appropriate actions to be taken in order to facilitate your work and to advance the investment. Convincing is not the same as persuading. If your technical data is accurate and relevant to the investors' concern about market viability, that alone may be persuasive. Other data will be judged as convincing depending upon how it supports the case you will make in stating: 1) the problem; 2) the solution you have identified; and 3) the analysis regarding the potential market. It is not good practice for you to view this investor presentation as "selling." Of course, you could refer to it in its rawest form as that, but it would be a mistake to build your presentation or your mindset to approach investors with that as the overriding tone.

# 5

## Presenting support materials that enhance, not supplant your message

The key word here is "support." Most likely you will be using slides during your presentation. While we have coached teams that found it more productive and applicable to use demonstrations, videos, models, or other sorts of visual aids, slides are the most frequently used as support material. Remember that any visual aids should truly aid the speaker in conveying the message and the investor-listener in understanding the message.

That seems so logical. Nonetheless, the most common mistake that speakers make is using slides that are too dense, too busy, and too cluttered with information. It may be important data. It may be critical to understanding. It may be the most convincing/persuasive bit of information. Yet, presenting them in an inappropriate manner can be deadly.

The average American English presenter, when speaking clearly, talks at a rate of 183 words per minute. Human beings can think at about 600 words per minute. Therefore, while the speaker is talking, listeners can hear the speaker, understand what is being said, and in the back of their heads, they have around 400 or so extra words per minute available for other things. But if the speaker brings up a slide with lots of text or other content, the brain needs to use that extra 400 words per minute capacity to process, and it does not like it. It is too much work. Some investors will not do it past one or two slides, so they end up zoning out.

Slides should be minimal. Even for a scientific presentation, you may not need detailed, annotated, highly technical images to help convey complex ideas.

To help get a handle on this, ask yourself "Where would a visual aid help me as I communicate my ideas?" "What will help my investors to clearly understand my message?" "Do I really need visual support at this place in the presentation?" This simple technique will eliminate a majority of the useless information that finds its way into many investor presentations. With these things in mind, you will find that some simple, powerful visuals really enhance the message. To be more effective when presenting with slides, every presenter needs to utilize the following three techniques:

1. Synchronization. The speaker needs to be synchronized while using visual aids. That means your listeners should see it as you speak to it, not before or after. Bullets need to appear as you speak to that specific topic or idea.

### Storytelling Skills for Biotech

According to Scott Berinato, Senior Editor of Harvard Business Review (Jan/Feb 2019), one of the top six talents needed from a data science team is the ability to tell the story of the data insights. This is also true for the biotech industry similarly steeped in complexity and data.

Explaining complex results to non-technical stakeholders is an essential skill in order to enroll support. According to Berinato "Narrative is an extremely powerful human contrivance and one of the most underutilized in data science...it is about understanding the structure and mechanics of narrative and applying them to dataviz [visualization of the data] and presentations."

Putting together a persuasive, compelling story is the "last mile" in enrolling investors and allies in the business vision and must be executed effectively. This includes both content and delivery. Investing in developing your storytelling skills will ensure that last mile will culminate in real results.

2. Introduction and set-up. Being organized and well-practiced is important. Always introduce the next topic and set up the accompanying visual before showing it. This is the secret sauce that Steve Jobs used in his riveting keynote presentations. It sounds simple, but it takes some effort.
3. Talk and do. This is the ability to talk while you are doing things at the same time. For example, if your computer crashes, can you continue your presentation as the computer restarts? Or if you are demonstrating something or using a physical model, can you talk effectively while doing that?

# Client Spotlight



Jonathan Montagu is the Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer of HotSpot Therapeutics. HotSpot is targeting nature's regulatory mechanisms to create allosteric medicines that exhibit high precision and potency. The company leverages its proprietary SpotFinder™ technology, the first antorytd-only platform designed to identify "regulatory hotspots," a unique family of pockets that sit remote from the active site on a protein and are used by nature to control protein function.

They received their seed round in March 2017 and raised \$45M Series A funding in July 2018. Jonathan shared with us how he tipped the needle in his investor meetings. "You need to communicate exceedingly well to be effective. I don't think that we know how good or bad we are. You get feedback from a coach, from watching yourself in videos, and then focus on ways to improve. You think you are good but still, the critical success factor is there is nothing better than the hard work of practicing."

"Our coach forced us to get out of the microcosm that we live in every day where everyone understands what we are doing and why. I was encouraged to look at the listeners and what they really want and need. You need to hit people between the eyes about why it is important to the listeners, to spell it out. This is important to all people creating drug development. The more you can get in their shoes the better. And it takes a huge amount of practice to deliver it comfortably in an effective, persuasive investor presentation."

High-quality practice is key. Jonathan explains "The first time you meet a VC you have to make a good impression. You need a tight speech for that. As you develop your relationship, you must create mini-presentations that are targeted and hit the mark. You don't have time to waste so you must be on your game and know the material inside and out. Practice, both individually and together as a team makes a huge difference."



**Jonathan Montagu**  
Co-Founder and CEO  
HotSpot Therapeutics

# Practice, Practice, Practice

A word about the need to practice. Understanding and implementing these communication strategies in your investor presentations is a start, but effective speakers are like athletes or musicians — they need to practice what they have learned. Not only will you deliver a more focused, confident and ultimately successful presentation, but you will be better prepared for the inevitable complications that will arise such as:



You were scheduled for a half-hour, but when you arrive, you are told you only have 15 minutes. With little to no time, your multiple speakers need to collaborate and cut the presentation in half.

One member of your team is unable to attend a critically important presentation and someone has to cover for him/her.

Technology fails you, the projector cannot connect, power is out, or the investors want to walk the grounds...in other words: no slides.

There is truth to the old adage "You can't learn to swim by reading a book." For the same reason, presenters need to practice, both individually and as a group. The concept of group presentation practice sessions is often underutilized, based on the wrong-headed notion that intelligent individuals in an organization can practice on their own time and come together at the last minute. Patching together individual presentations will often appear disjointed. The interactions are not there. It is not always clear how the individual presentations support one central theme. Often the messaging is askew, the language is different, the "seams" will show, and it does not flow well. Despite the difficulty that can come from aligning the schedules of incredibly busy executives, the need to prioritize and schedule formal group presentation practice opportunities cannot be overstated. If select team members are reluctant to practice a presentation more than once or twice, some good questions to ask as a team are, "Are these presentations absolutely critical to the success of our venture?" "Do we believe that we already have the best presentation these investors are going to see this week/month/quarter?" "Are we going to waste all that time, energy, and personal capital which got the company in front of these investors?" And if you dare: "So what else are you doing Tuesday afternoon that is absolutely, undeniably critical to the success of our business that cannot be moved?" Do not let egos stand in the way: no one is so good a presenter that they do not need a lot of practice.

For most biotech CEOs the best course of action is always, "It's looking good, but let's run through it a few more times."



# Summary and Recommendations

It is clear that biotech investor presentations are particularly challenging. They are critical. There is tremendous competition for funding. There are expectations and standards that must be considered and planned for that are different from other business presentations. It is equally clear that biotech presentations can be very boring and confusing to some potential investors. To recap, our research identified five major challenges that biotech executives face when delivering investor presentations:

1. Presenting technical information to non-technical listeners;
2. Presenting as a passionate, competent, and cohesive leadership team;
3. One or more of the team members are not good presenters;
4. Presenting a clear, concise, and convincing story of your solution and the company; and
5. Presenting support materials that enhance, not supplant your messages.

...and of course, practice, practice, practice. The responsibility of meeting these challenges falls directly on the entire presentation team to demonstrate:

- Skill at conveying technical data;
- Competence in showing confidence and leadership; and
- Its ability to interact and work well together.

Each of these challenges have best practices that strengthen biotech leadership teams in this unique investor presentation setting. In this report we have provided some guidance for addressing these challenges to help leadership teams improve their efforts in securing funding.

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## Ten Questions Venture Capitalists Will Ask Start-ups

1. Why does your company have a high growth potential?
2. Why is the team uniquely capable to execute the company's business plan?
3. Why do users care about your product or service?
4. What advantages does your competition have over you?
5. What is the company's PR strategy?
6. How can your early traction be accelerated?
7. What do you see are the principal risks to the business?
8. How will the valuation of an exit be determined given market comparable?
9. What key intellectual property does the company have (patents, patents pending, trade secrets, domain names, copyrights, trademarks)?
10. How much equity and debt has the company raised; what is the capitalization structure?

Source [www.forbes.com](http://www.forbes.com)

# About The Speech Improvement Company

## Who We Are

Since 1964, the Executive Communication Coaches at The Speech Improvement Company have delivered group workshops and one-on-one executive coaching to people at all levels at thousands of companies, from small to large. Many of them are life sciences companies including Biogen, Pfizer, Novartis, and Genzyme.

We have trained staff and instructed at leading universities and research centers such as Harvard, MIT, and Johns Hopkins. In fact, we are the oldest speech coaching firm in the United States.

## Our Team

All the coaches at The Speech Improvement Company are well-versed in all aspects of human communication and cultural understanding, and have the deep educational background and successful real-world experience to identify speaker strengths, uncover areas of need, and evoke behavioral change.

Our coaches serve as leaders and advisors for local, state, and national professional organizations and to date have written 13 books on communication.

## Our Approach

Our coaching style is direct, empathic, specific, and immediate, that results in quick, positive personal and professional transformation. We first identify key needs, tailor an approach to meet the client's specific circumstances, then deliver training on three levels:

- Intellectual: Does the person fully understand what is being taught?
- Emotional: Does the person deeply believe in the value of what they are learning?
- Behavioral: Is the person able to apply the lesson?

Clients often come to view The Speech Improvement Company's coaches as personal advisors and mentors; More than 90% of our clients return for short- and long-term follow-up service.

## Helping Biotech Executives

To learn more about how our onsite group workshops and individualized one-on-one executive coaching can help your team be more persuasive, informative, and impactful, contact us or visit:

<http://www.speechimprovement.com/biotech>

## Our Life Sciences Clients

The Speech Improvement Company trains executives, managers, and individual contributors, and has extensive experience with biotech and other life sciences companies, including:

Accelaron Pharma Inc.	Massachusetts General Hospital
Agios Pharmaceuticals, Inc.	Medtronic, plc
Alnylam Pharmaceuticals, Inc.	Mersana Therapeutics
AVROBIO, Inc.	Millennium Pharmaceuticals, Ltd.
BD	Nimbus Therapeutics LLC
Biogen Inc.	Novartis International AG
Boston Scientific Corporation	Obsidian Therapeutics, Inc.
Brigham & Women's Hospital	Oxford Immunotec Global
Bristol-Myers Squibb	Partners HealthCare
Cadent Therapeutics, Inc.	Pfizer, Inc.
Charles River Laboratories	Replimune Group, Inc.
Clal Biotechnology Industries	Rodin Therapeutics, Inc.
Constellation Pharmaceuticals, Inc.	Sanofi LLC
Foundation Medicine, Inc.	Stryker Neurovascular
Fulcrum Therapeutics, Inc.	Surface Oncology, Inc.
Genzyme Corporation	Syntonix Pharmaceuticals, Inc.
Harvard University School of Medicine	Syros Pharmaceuticals, Inc.
Hologic, Inc.	Takeda Pharmaceutical Company
HotSpot Therapeutics, Inc.	Translate Bio, Inc.
Infinity Pharmaceuticals, Inc.	Vertex Pharmaceuticals, Inc.
Kymera Therapeutics LLC	Wyeth Pharmaceuticals, Inc.
Magenta Therapeutics, Inc.	Wyss Institute
	X-Chem, Inc.



## About the Authors



**Dr. Dennis Becker**  
**Founder**

Dr. Dennis Becker, our founder, has helped thousands of men and women from all backgrounds. He has an extensive list of clients in corporate, public, and private settings, and also works with political, sports, and media professionals. In addition, he coaches professionals for appearances on the major broadcast networks, as well as CNN, CNBC, and CFN.

Dr. Becker has developed his own unique and insightful approach to helping clients overcome their fears of public speaking and refining their communication skills. He is recognized worldwide for his leadership in the research, invention, and use of Virtual Reality for the treatment of the fear of speaking.

As a speaker, Dr. Becker has appeared before hundreds of clubs and organizations, from local community groups to national associations. He has been featured on radio and television programs as a guest expert or motivational speaker. He hosted a syndicated radio series, called Talking About Talking. Dr. Becker has authored numerous books and instructed at both Harvard and MIT.

Dr. Becker completed his undergraduate degree in Speech Communication and Broadcasting at Emerson College in Boston, his Masters in Rhetoric and Public Address at Emerson, and went on to earn his Ph.D. in Media Communication from The Union Graduate School in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Robin Golinski is an energetic and accomplished coach and trainer at The Speech Improvement Company. Her intuitive and upbeat personality accentuates her insightful and practical communication skills.

Robin saw early on the power of storytelling and humor as effective communication tools for influencing and persuading others. Among Robin's many accomplishments are: co-author of *The Handbook of Communication Training*, former Chair of National Communication Association Training and Development Division, and trainer for Harvard Schools of Medicine, Design and Engineering,

Robin received her B.S. Marketing Degree from Oakland University and is nationally certified from the Instructor Training Institute and an active member of the National Communication Association.



**Robin Golinski**  
**Executive Communication Coach**

## About the Authors



**Laura Mathis**  
**Executive Communication Coach**

Laura Mathis is an admired speaker and communication coach with over 20 years of experience. She is a sought-after keynote speaker, from executive retreats to her 2012 TEDx talk with over 140,000 views.

As an Executive Communication Coach at The Speech Improvement Company, she offers individual one and group coaching to a wide range of clients and industries. She has trained employees from small and large Life Sciences and Healthcare organizations, including Olympus Corporation, Baylor Scott & White, TriCore Reference Laboratories, Lovelace Respiratory Research Institute, Sandia National Laboratories, Presbyterian Healthcare Services, and Blue Cross Blue Shield.

Laura is a published author with the American Bar Association. Her book *Acting Skills for Lawyers* incorporates stage presence and persuasive argument skills for maximum impact before a judge or jury.

Laura is actively involved in TED speaker coaching, the National Speakers Association, Women Communicators of Austin, Executive Women International, and the Association for Women in Communication.

Dr. Ian Turnipseed is a seasoned, experienced Executive Communication Coach and trainer with The Speech Improvement Company. He has been involved in public speaking and training for the past 25 years as a speaker, presenter, coach, trainer, and researcher.

Dr. Turnipseed holds multiple degrees in communication and travels the globe working with leaders of countries, companies, and people in all walks of life helping them become more comfortable and effective when they communicate. Ian is the director of strategy and ethics for the Global Listening Center. He is also a motivational speaker on the topic of communication.

Dr. Turnipseed has helped C-Suite executives to middle school students compose presentations, explore different ways to more effectively communicate with listeners, and develop their own personal communication style. Ian has assisted with publishing books on the best way to strategically structure ideas and best leverage your time to persuade your listeners. Ian has worked with several life sciences companies located in the US, Europe, and Asia. The one common element he addresses across all of his clients is that when you communicate highly technical information to non-technical people it is important to focus on your message, delivery, and team cohesion.

Dr. Turnipseed holds a Doctorate in Mass Communication and Media Effects with a specialization in Cognitive Psychology from the University of Alabama. He also has his Masters in Rhetorical Theory from Alabama and his undergraduate in Journalism from Clemson University.



**Dr. Ian Turnipseed**  
**Executive Communication Coach**

# Appendix: Checklist for Your Investor Presentations

## Presenting technical information to non-technical listeners

1

- Does the organization have an individual experienced in adapting current presentations into a themed presentation, noting details and clarifying what the data means to an investor?
- Is there an understanding that the presentation will change with different funding rounds and different investors?
- Does the organization have someone who can do the research to tailor the message and deliver it at the right level for the mix of investors present?
- Does the organization have an outline of expected investor questions, spanning from simple logistics to potential risks, specifically for each group of listeners?

## Presenting as a passionate, competent and cohesive leadership team

2

- Does the organization truly work well as a team outside of VC presentations?
- Is there a familiarity within the team? Does the team know each other and show up as a cohesive unit?
- Are all the presenters aware of the positive impact emotion can have on investor presentations, and how can this be demonstrated appropriately?
- Is the organization aware of each team member's background, strengths, their primary focus, and how to interweave each team members role into a cohesive presentation theme?
- Does each presenter know the other presenters' key points? Can you cover for one another in the event of an absence at an important presentation?

## One or more of the team members are not good presenters

3

- Have you evaluated each member of the leadership team and determined your confidence in their presentation skills?
- Is a budget in place to address strengthening specific team members' presentation ability and confidence level?
- Has the organization added a learning and development budget toward ongoing presentation and overall communication skills for the management team?

## Presenting a clear, concise, and convincing story of your solution and the company

4

- Is there a person outside of the company who is willing to listen to the existing presentation and help determine if the theme is clear? This person can also serve to determine if complex material is delivered in a clear and impassioned way.
- Does the organization have the appropriate resources to incorporate meaningful stories, examples, pictures, or metaphors within investor presentations? Where can this type of content be gathered from or transcribed?

## Presenting support materials that enhance, not supplant your message

5

- Does the organization utilize external sources to create consistent, quality visual aids, or are the visual aids created by different presenters?
- Is the organization aware of optimal slide design techniques, such as reducing the amount of data per slide, font size, and readability best practices? Has a designer helped make the slides readable and professional?
- Does the organization have someone who can review the slides in tandem with the presentation to ensure slide synchronicity?