



The
SpeechImprovement
Company

Five Reasons Biotech Investor Presentations Fail

And How You Can Avoid Them



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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, different from other business presentations. There are unique requirements, expectations, and challenges. Likewise, specific behaviors help or, in some cases, hinder funding success.

The Speech Improvement Company recently conducted face-to-face interviews with senior biotech and other life sciences executives to learn about their challenges when giving investor presentations. We have integrated that data with the latest research on investor presentations across various industries. Additionally, we have combined those insights with our experience gained through more than 58 years of training and coaching over 1,000 scientific and business leaders, and more than 200 company investor presentations.

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, lack of confidence, poor team coordination, or difficulty conveying complex scientific data to less-technical investors. In addition, 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 identify five significant areas of concern and the suitable approaches you and your team can immediately put to use to 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 Five Big Challenges We Hear From Both Biotech CEOs & Investors

All life sciences companies—whether on the East Coast, West Coast, or somewhere in-between, regardless of size, investment stage, or area of expertise—share the same hurdles when delivering *critical business* presentations. So here, in no particular order, is a brief look at the five most frequently reported areas where they fall short:

1. *Presenting technical information that is not clear to non-technical listeners*

The content of your presentation is, by its very nature, highly technical. Your listeners will most likely not have the same level of knowledge as you. The challenge is finding the appropriate way to convey the essence of your research/methods/results in a manner that demonstrates its efficacy and how it gets the ROI investors are looking for.

2. *Not coming across as a passionate, competent, and cohesive leadership team*

Passion, Competency, and Cohesion – These elements make for a compelling presentation when demonstrated by *everyone* on the team. However, maintaining these characteristics and interactions 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 their first name. Investors want to know, "Do they work well together? Do they even like each other? Do I trust that this team can execute the plan to profitably drive their science in the marketplace?"

3. *One or more of the team members are not good presenters*

Your presentation must not ride on the coattails of one or even two good presenters. For many C-level executives at biotech companies, it is their first time as a top-level member of a leadership team, and they have limited experience presenting to seasoned investors. With diverse backgrounds that are often academic or research-focused, they are often comfortable delivering technical presentations to other like-minded professionals. However, they may need to gain the experience to participate in business presentations that need to persuade, not just inform. You can genuinely "knock the ball out of the park" when each member of your presentation team delivers a balance of both.

4. *Failing to present a clear, concise, and convincing story of your solution and the company*

Part of showing a cohesive team is that each presenter must understand and agree to a central, simple theme both for the overall message and their specific contribution. Consistency across all the presentations means more than having slides or handouts with the same background, colors, and fonts. They must all reinforce the main message(s). This rarely happens when busy executives create (and often practice) their presentations individually, not as a group. Additionally, this well-crafted, convincing messaging must be supported by salient data without feeling like a sales pitch.

5. *Using support materials that supplant or detract, rather than enhance your message*

This may be the most egregious mistake that biotech presenters make when speaking to business people. Typically, slides or videos are used to support the messaging, but all too often, the design is too dense and, therefore, unclear to investors. When the investors' eyes glaze, you can be sure your presentation is going off the rails. Although helpful, the answer is NOT simply to reduce the sheer amount of information on any given slide or video. Also, poor lead-up, introductions, and timing of these visual aids often create an automatic disconnect with the listeners.

You can deliver stand-out presentations: There are best practices for all these challenges, and we would like to share them with you.

Why Listen to Us?

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 large and small companies.



The Speech Improvement Company's 58 years of

demonstrated authority and authenticity ensure that the content in this document contains proven, real world, 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 this isn't 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, emotions, and thinking that occur on both sides of the table.

Many of our coaches, including the 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 train communication coaches. So when we say, "we've written the book on how to be a speech coach," we really have.

We've honed our techniques by teaching presentation skills to over 150 life sciences clients, including Biogen, Boston Scientific, Harvard University School of Medicine, Pfizer, and Takeda.

Accordingly, we've been chosen to partner with [MassBioEd](#), the education arm of the [Massachusetts Biotechnology Council](#), to offer technical presentation training to their members.

So, here's our advice on ways to avoid these five common pitfalls.

1. Present Technical Information Clearly to Non-technical Investors

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



In preparation for the investor meeting(s), identify the technical information essential to understanding why it is vital. Is it intended to inform, educate, motivate, persuade, challenge, etc.? 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, video, or model, be helpful?

Typically, a common mistake is made when slides are used. The slides are filled with data since they are not optimized for clarity and learning. Remember that while the "takeaways" from your research may be obvious to you, others may not understand them; thus, you may need to explain them to the investor-listener. The presenter must also be able to provide information that will be fresh to the audience. That includes everything from adequately pronouncing technical terms to introducing new data efficiently and keeping the presentation in sync with the slides. If ignored, an overly technical presentation will likely fail because one or more investors will be "lost in the weeds."

2. Be Seen as a Passionate, Competent, and Cohesive Leadership Team

It is well known that “products don’t sell, people do.” While this 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 equally focused on the leadership team expected to build the company and successfully take this product or service to market. Whether they will be closely partnering with you or funding you, they want to know that each member of the team shows three key 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. Smiling and using emotional language are two natural ways to show passion. Don't be afraid to use them. Leave the joy and excitement of making money from it mainly to the investors' minds. Of course, how you will make them money must be pointed out, but it should not be a major expression of passion.

Competency should be demonstrated throughout. While investors will most likely have seen your written introductions and done their research prior to your presentation, it is advisable to start with a brief description of the qualifications of each team member and why they have a seat at this table. Competency will also be judged by the value and effectiveness each leadership team member brings to their presentations. Allow your competency to show in how you confidently handle yourself and your data.

Cohesion is a crucial indicator to investors that the leadership team they are evaluating can work comfortably with each other to capitalize on their ideas, accelerate development, build a strong, sometimes new and inexperienced company, and succeed. It is important to show familiarity with one another by the way you refer to each other and 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 the lobby as you assist one another with materials, coats, etc. Investors are watching and assessing you as you arrive, when you depart, and at every turn, not just when you are presenting.

3. Ensure All of the Executive Team Members are 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, especially with newly formed management teams, there is one outstanding communicator; the false hope, among others, is that person can carry the meeting. That may be true for start-ups in the early seed or angel rounds, but in later stages, investors are evaluating the entire team now



that it's in place. If they only connect with one key person, you will be seen in the same light as many of the other not-so-exciting presentations they sit through repeatedly, and you will miss the opportunity to stand out. Having all your key executives speak, and speak well, will set you apart and make a significant contribution to a successful and memorable meeting.

This is important, so the point is worth repeating: what works during early funding rounds is less likely to work well in later stages. The people listening are different: few have technical or scientific backgrounds, and the science that dazzled early-stage investors is now a given. They want to assess the team's ability to capitalize on that and whether they like to be a part of it.

So, how do you evaluate other team members' presentation abilities? Look for them going too far into the details, appearing nervous, not making eye contact, not being able to connect with listeners, not responding to questions concisely, 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 a problem and need to fix it with proper training and coaching.

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 in each other, the company's vision, and the team's ability to execute it. If you find yourself faced with this challenge, invest in training that will move the presenters to a high level of presentation effectiveness; one that gives the leadership team the confidence and peace of mind that you can put any of them before any investor.

4. Present 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 the majority of biotech presentations we have coached, it emerged 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 you little time and attention if you cannot quickly state your company's reason for being the right fit. One major investor, who hears more than 300 presentations a year, told us that he tunes out if he does not hear a clear and concise message in the first two minutes.

"Clear and concise" means that you should be able to communicate your research, plans, and ideas in simple layman's language. Using terms that are familiar to you, often technical terms, may not be as effective. As stated earlier, this does not mean you must "dumb it down." It means focusing on the most important information they should take away and recall when making decisions.

Imagine that they had forgotten just about everything you say. What, then, is the one thing you would want them to remember? This is called the theme of the presentation. There should be a theme for the presentation, and speakers 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 exact words and emphasis should be used.

To help the investors follow you logically, here is a powerful but simple four-step process to organizing both the overall presentation and each of the individual presentations:



Firstly, tell your listeners what you are going to present to them. Include things like the major topic headings, who will be presenting that information, whether slides or video will be used to illustrate important points, how much time you anticipate, and any other relevant information.

Secondly, please give them a good reason to listen to your presentation. Be able to answer the question in their minds: "What's in it for me? How can I make money?" Your presentation will likely fail if you cannot communicate solid content and rationale with these two steps.

Thirdly, present your case in an organized and logical fashion using hard data, examples, metaphors, and stories.

Lastly, summarize and emphasize the most important points you have made. Conclude your thoughts with appropriate actions to be taken in order to facilitate your work and advance the investment. Convincing is not the same as persuading. If your technical data is accurate and relevant to the investors' concerns about market viability, that alone may be persuasive. Other data will be judged as convincing depending upon how well 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 a good practice for you to view this investor presentation as "selling." Of course, you could refer to it in its rawest form, but it would be a mistake to build your presentation or your mindset to approach investors with that as an overriding tone.

5. Use Support Materials that Enhance Your Message

The keyword 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, or models as visual aids, slides are the most frequently used. Remember that any visual aids should truly support the speaker in conveying the message and the investor-listener in understanding the message and not simply act as "window dressing."

That seems so logical. Nonetheless, a very common mistake that speakers make is using slides that are too dense, too busy, and too cluttered with information. We see it all the time; this may be important data, critical to understanding; and the most convincing information. Yet, inappropriately presenting them can be deadly.

When speaking clearly, the average American English presenter 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. However, if the speaker brings up a slide with lots of text or other content, the brain needs to use those extra 400 words per minute capacity to process it, 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 clearly understand my message?" "Do I really need visual support at this place in the presentation?" This simple technique will eliminate useless information that finds its way into many investor presentations. With these things in mind, you will find that a few simple, powerful visuals are all that's needed.

Furthermore, 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. Your listeners should see it as you speak, not before or after. Bullets need to appear as you talk about that specific topic or idea. Most presentation software supports "builds" or "animations" that allow the speaker to control the timing of what appears and when. Use it.

2. Introduction and set-up. Being organized and well-practiced is important for this. Always introduce the next topic and set up the accompanying visual *before* showing it. This is the secret sauce that Steve Jobs used to create anticipation in his riveting keynote presentations. It sounds simple, but it takes some effort and practice.

3. Talk and do. This is the ability to talk while doing other things simultaneously. For example, if your computer crashes, can you continue your presentation as the computer restarts? Alternatively, if you are demonstrating something or using a physical model, can you talk effectively while doing that?

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 also 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 cannot attend a very important presentation, and someone has to cover for him/her.
- Technology fails you, the projector cannot connect, the power is out, or the investors want to walk the grounds; in other words, no slides, no video.

There is truth to the old adage, "You can't learn to swim by reading a book." For the same reason, presenters must practice 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 when it's time to go live. This overconfidence is rarely successful. Patching together



individual presentations will often make them appear disjointed. The interactions are not there; it is not always clear how the individual presentations support a central theme. Usually, the messaging is askew, the language is different, the "seams" will show, and it does not flow well. When a presenter can't attend, others cannot easily cover for them, and the overall presentation suffers.

Despite the difficulty that can come from aligning the schedules of incredibly busy executives, the need to prioritize and schedule multiple, formal group presentation practice opportunities cannot be overstated. Suppose selected team members are reluctant to practice a presentation more than once or twice. In that case, 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 that got the company in front of these investors?" And if you dare: "So what else are you doing Tuesday afternoon that is absolutely, undeniably, and so clearly essential to the success of our business that it 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 with the other team members.

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."

Our checklist in Appendix B will help you plan and practice outstanding investor presentations.



In Conclusion

Based on our experience coaching more than 200 scientific and business investor presentations, personal one-on-one interviews with biotech leaders, and our 58 years of communication training and coaching, it is clear that biotech investor presentations are particularly challenging. They are indeed critical. There is tremendous competition for funding. Some expectations and standards that differ from other business presentations must be considered and planned. 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 message.

...and of course, practice individually and as a group.

The responsibility of meeting these challenges falls directly on the entire presentation team to demonstrate the following:

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

Each challenge has 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.

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 in thousands of companies, from small to large. Many of them are life sciences companies, including Biogen, Pfizer, Novartis, and Genzyme.

We have trained and instructed staff 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.

Helping Biotech Executives

To learn more about customized group workshops and/or one-on-one executive coaching, either in person or remotely, contact us at info@speechimprovement.com or +1 (617) 739-3330.

Our Life Sciences Clients

3TBiosciences
7 Hills Pharma
Acceleron Pharma
AcureX Therapeutics
Agenus Inc.
Agius Pharmaceuticals
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Allergenis
Alynam Pharmaceuticals
AMAG Pharmaceuticals
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Cadent Therapeutics
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CareDx
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Cello Health
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Clal Biotechnology Industries
Coherus BioSciences
Constellation Pharma
Constellation Pharma
Cubist Pharmaceuticals
Cynosure

Cytrellis Biosystems
Dynogen Pharmaceuticals
Evelo Biosciences
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Fresenius Medical Care
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Fulcrum Therapeutics
GE Healthcare
Genocea Biosciences
Genzyme
Glaxo Smith Kline
Haemonetics Corporation
Harvard Chemistry & Chemical
Biology
HCA Healthcare
Hologic
Hookipa Biotech
HotSpot Therapeutics
Ikena Oncology
ImmunoGen
Indevus Pharmaceuticals
Infinity Pharmaceuticals

InfuSystem Holdings
Integra LifeSciences
Integrated Biometric
Intrommune
Johns Hopkins School of
Medicine
Johnson & Johnson
Kaiser Permanente
Karos Pharmaceuticals
Karuna Therapeutics, Inc.
Kymera Therapeutics
Liberty Biosecurity
Lonza Biologics
Lyndra Therapeutics
Magenta Therapeutics
Mallinckrodt Pharmaceuticals
Marathon Biopharmaceuticals
Mass General Hospital
Mass. College of Pharmacy
Matrix Biology Institute
Medtronic
Mersana Therapeutics
Millendo Therapeutics
Millennium Pharmaceuticals
Nano PharmaSolutions
National Cancer Institute
NephCure
New England Medical Center
Nimbus Therapeutics
Novartis
Nucleate Bio
Obsidian Therapeutics

Olympus Surgical Technologies
OSI Pharmaceuticals
Oxford Immunotec
Parexel International
Parthenon Therapeutics
Partners Healthcare
Pfizer
Pieris Pharmaceuticals GmbH
Piramal Pharma
Primus Pharmaceuticals
Pro-Pharmaceuticals
Providence Cancer Center
Purdue Pharma
Q32 Bio (Formerly Admirx Inc)
Quantum Health
Rallybio
Regeneron Pharmaceuticals
Replimune
Rodin Therapeutics
Roka Bioscience
RTI Biologics
Sage Pharmaceuticals
Sanofi
Sarepta Therapeutics
Serono Reproductive Biology
Institute
Shanghai Zerun Biotechnology
Shire Pharmaceuticals
Siemens
Sirtris Pharmaceuticals
SmithKlineBeecham
Sound Physicians

Stoke Therapeutics
Stryker Neurovascular
Sunovion Pharmaceuticals
Surface Oncology
SV Health Investors
Syndax Pharmaceuticals
Synta Pharmaceuticals
Syntonix Pharmaceuticals
Syros Pharmaceuticals
T2 Biosystems
Takeda Pharmaceuticals
Teleflex
The Broad Institute
Thrive Bioscience
TIMS Medical/Foresight Imaging
Translate Bio
Triana Biomedicines
Tufts Medical Center
Venn Biosciences
Vertex Pharmaceuticals
Vigil Neuroscience
Vivreon Biosciences
Voyager Therapeutics
Warp Drive Bio
Wave Life Sciences
Wyeth Biotech
Wyss Institute for Biologically
Inspired Engineering
X-Chem Pharmaceuticals
XRC Labs
Zimmer Biomed

Appendix A: Checklist for Your Investor Presentations

Presenting technical information to non-technical listeners

- 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 investors?
- Does the organization have someone who can check the latest 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?

Presenting as a passionate, competent and cohesive leadership team

- Does the organization truly work well as a team outside of VC presentations?
- Is there comfort and familiarity within the team?
- Does the team appear to others as a cohesive unit?
- Is the organization aware of each team member's background, strengths, primary focus, and how to interweave each team member's role into a cohesive presentation theme?
- Does each team member know the other presenters' key points? Will they reinforce or reference them in their presentation?
- Can you cover for one another in the event of an absence at an important meeting?

One or more of the team members are not good presenters

- Have you evaluated each member of the leadership team and determined your confidence in their presentation skills?
- Is everyone experienced at delivering business, not just technical presentations?
- Are all the presenters aware of the positive impact emotion can have on investor presentations, and how can this be demonstrated appropriately?
- Is a plan and 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

- Is there an unbiased person outside the company 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?
- If not, where can this type of content be gathered from or transcribed?

Presenting support materials that enhance, not supplant your message

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

Appendix B: Meet the Authors



Dr. Becker has developed his unique and insightful approach to helping clients overcome their fears of public speaking and refining their communication skills.

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. He 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 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](#) and [Outwitting the Manipulator: Protecting Yourself in Real-Time](#); 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; she is nationally certified by the Instructor Training Institute and an active member of the National Communication Association.



[Laura Mathis](#) is a trusted speaker and communication coach with over 20 years of experience. She is a past TEDx talk speaker and coaches clients who want to speak at TED-type events and conferences such as JPM.

As an Executive Communication Coach at The Speech Improvement Company, she offers individual and group coaching to many 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, Boston Scientific, Sandia National Laboratories, Triumvira, MassBioEd, Harvard University, MIT, and Blue Cross Blue Shield.



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

Topics in which Laura brings her specialized expertise include AGM Shareholder Presentations, Virtual Communication, Managing Employees Remotely, Virtual Presentation Skills for Online Events and Conferences, Outstanding Customer Service, Management and Leadership Communication, and TED-style talks.

[Dr. Ian Turnipseed](#) is an 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.

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



Ian has coached over 230 conference speakers across several industries, including retail, financial services, and life sciences. He has taken their presentations to a higher level by addressing their public speaking challenges, such as controlling nervousness, simplifying complex (and often scientific) information, genuinely connecting with the listeners, and being more authentic. 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 crucial 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.

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