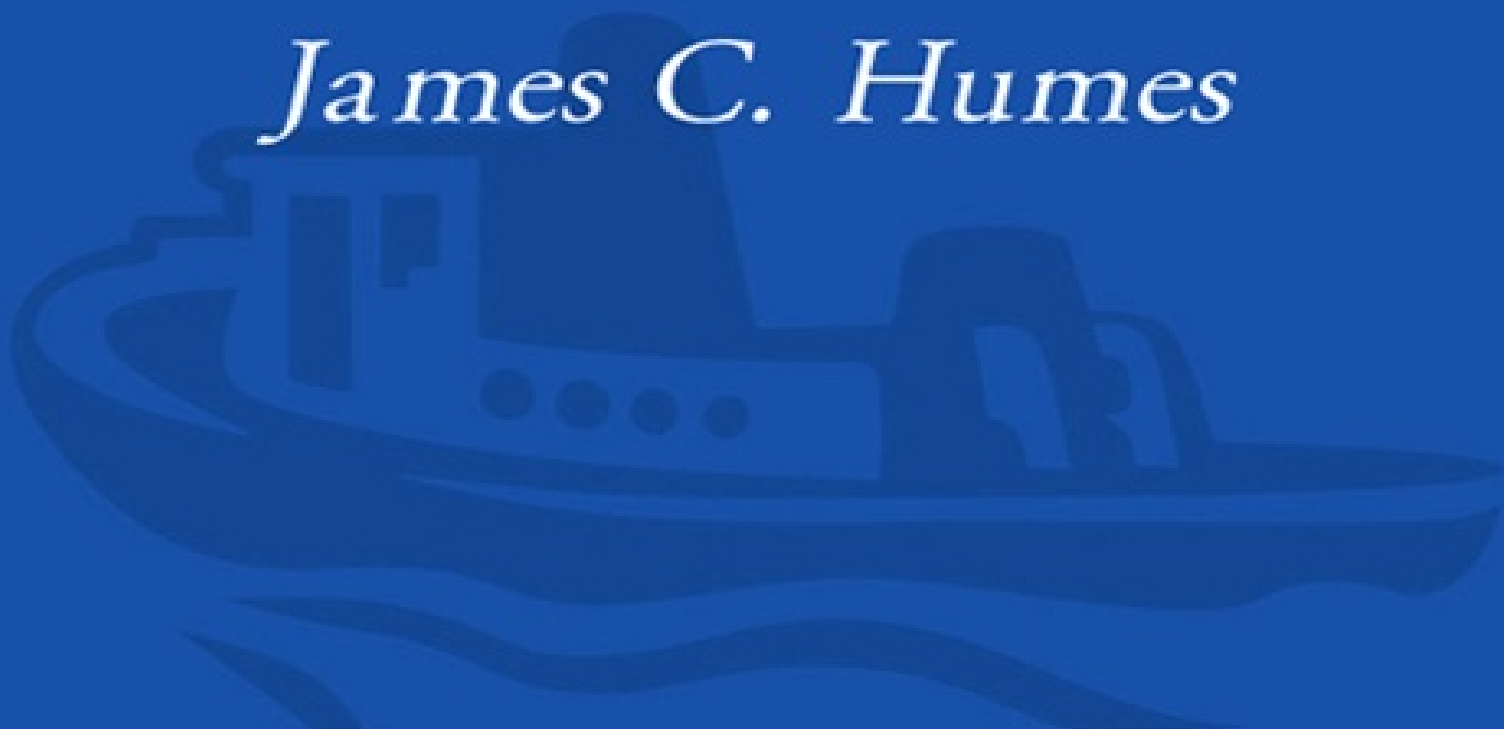


# SPEAK LIKE CHURCHILL, STAND LIKE LINCOLN

21 Powerful Secrets  
of History's  
Greatest Speakers

*James C. Humes*



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# Speak Like Churchill, Stand Like Lincoln

21 POWERFUL SECRETS  
OF HISTORY'S  
GREATEST SPEAKERS

↔ James C. Humes ↔



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*To Marc Holtzman*

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*A leader who takes his inspiration  
from the resolve of Churchill and the  
vision of Lincoln*

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# Introduction

Leadership is selling. And selling is talking.

The ability of a chief executive to talk for and promote his company is a chief factor in determining the worth of that company in the marketplace. Harold Burson, founder and head of one of the nation's biggest public relations agencies, Burson & Marsteller, commissioned a survey that found that 86 percent of analysts said they "would buy stock based on the CEO's reputation." Burson concluded that it's the winning personality and selling ability of the CEO that is crucial to the growing health of the corporation. If a company's chief executive cannot persuade, convince, and sell the unique strength and future of his company, his company stands in jeopardy.

Burson all but admitted that the services of a public relations firm, such as his own, couldn't, by itself, turn the CEO into a selling star and the premier marketable asset of his company.

## Star Power

Public relations people can write speeches for a CEO, they can prepare press kits and press releases, they can devise visual aids, they can make the CEO practice liquid vowels and smooth out his regional accent, they can plant stories in the *Wall Street Journal* or *Forbes*—but they *can't* manufacture a winning public personality.

Today 60 percent of the companies that were on the Fortune 500 list in 1970 no longer exist. The stock value of companies in those days was assessed by the value of the company's real estate, plant facilities, equipment, vehicles, and highway access, as well as by other physical factors. In today's "information revolution," many of the tangible assets valued in the past are no longer relevant; therefore, they no longer count. How do you measure the worth of software? How do you put a finite value on information?

Amid this chaos of change, the selling ability of the chief corporate figure is the key measuring factor. For example, when Steve Jobs went back to Apple, the stock rose 200 percent in a day because he exuded competence and confidence.

Ask yourself this: Do I have the communication skills to rise to the top? Do I have the star power to keep my company growing?

## Age of the Personality

If today is a world of change, it is also the age of the personality cult.

The owners of *Time* magazine know this. *People* magazine, which is the offspring of *Time*, now far outsells its parent.

Hollywood knows this. The power of a proven star is what bankrolls and markets many a new movie. The script and story plot are almost irrelevant.

The political world knows this. John Major, prime minister of Britain from 1990 to 1997, suffered a massive defeat when he ran for reelection. Some said his defeat was because his incumbent administration was plagued by sex

scandals. Though the sex scandals had nothing to do with him, as leader of the ruling party, he was a lamb led to political slaughter. Why? Because of the personality power of his opponent, a man named Tony Blair.

The *New York Times* reported on February 2, 2001, that Blair is the most popular British prime minister in history—more popular than either Churchill or Thatcher. Yet the article quotes one observer as saying that Blair delivers “a gravity-defying performance of style over substance.” The article goes on to state that Blair’s performance “is slick talk of accomplishments, not solid accomplishment itself.”

Tony Blair is a Powertalk artist. So is his American soul mate, Bill Clinton. Despite the impeachment crisis and the Monica Lewinsky affair (not to mention “Whitewater,” “Filegate,” and “Travelgate”), Clinton’s popularity soared—all because he knew how to project a winning personality.

The nemesis of Presidents Bush and Clinton, Saddam Hussein, survives—impervious to bombings and the U.N. Inspector’s demands—and now confronts the son of Bush. Saddam Hussein knows how to wield the cult of personality and play David against the Goliath of the United States.

In the corporate world, as in its political equivalent, leaders like the elder Bush may not survive. Once, when I was drafting remarks for him, President Bush told me, “All speeches are bullshit!” But “bullshit” may be the language of leadership. Bush didn’t understand the appeal of Reagan, who had mastered the art of Powertalk.

## The Spider and the Lion

The day of the “Spider” CEO—that is, the tireless, dedicated, detail-oriented administrator who painstakingly weaves together the corporate structure and manages it—is over. Those who seemingly possess at least eight arms reaching in various directions are no longer effective. These are the Harold Geneens of AT&T and the John Akers of IBM, who were adequate leaders in an increasingly obsolescent asset-based company.

In this information revolution, it is the Lion rather than the Spider who survives the corporate jungle and climbs to the top of the heap. No wonder a giant motion picture company once made the lion its symbol. The bushy-maned and large-headed lion projects the look of power and roars in a powerful voice.

Leaders with marketable personalities are the winners. Mastering the art of Powertalk can turn the Spider into the Lion.

Franklin Roosevelt was such a Lion. His measures weren’t what led us out of the depression. The war did that. But his Powertalk was what lifted American hearts and hopes and won him four elections.

Winston Churchill was another Lion. When Britain stood with its back to the wall, he turned his words into weapons and scared the Nazis, effectively discouraging them from invading Britain. Churchill personified Powertalk.

By reading this book, you’ll uncover the secrets of Power leaders, from ancients like Demosthenes to recent public figures like Reagan, from soldiers like Napoleon to holy men like Jesus. You’ll find tools and techniques that those leaders developed, polished, and honed as the secret techniques to rise to power.

Not all these men or women were necessarily born to greatness.

- The stature-challenged Napoleon devised a ploy to command presence.
- Lincoln figured out how to rise above his screechy voice and hick accent.
- Churchill developed techniques to overcome his lisp and stutter and make his delivery sparkle like diamonds.
- Martin Luther King, Jr., a black in the white world of America, found a way to be heard.
- Margaret Thatcher, a woman in the men’s club of Parliament, overcame a strong gender bias.

## **Presence, Poise, and Power**

The twenty-one Power Secrets outlined in *Speak Like Churchill, Stand Like Lincoln* reveal the charisma tricks of the greatest communicators and change makers in history. With little effort, you can learn them, too—some in a moment, some in an hour, some in a day. They are almost as simple as buying a new tie or putting on fresh lipstick. Adopting these twenty-one techniques will supply you with the presence, poise, and power to electrify your talk.



## Power Pause

*I stand in pause where I shall first begin.*

—WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

For most would-be leaders, looks are a prime asset. Yet Benito Juarez, the first democratically elected president of Mexico (the first who wasn't a dictator), was less than five feet tall and ugly. "Poor Juarez looks like a toad," the rich folks said. Juarez was also the first president who was not Spanish but full-blooded Indian.

How could one so ill-favored overcome the prejudices of the property owners, all of whom were Creoles (full-blooded Spaniards)? Or be accepted by the mestizos (those of mixed blood), who looked down on Indian peasants? Yet despite his short stature and the fact that his political speeches in Spanish reflected the coarse accents of his Zapotec Indian language, Juarez rose to the highest position in Mexico.

### Generating Audience Anticipation

At age twenty-six, Juarez ran for the Mexican legislature. When the homely little Indian rose to talk, most in his audience were disdainful of him, but Juarez contrived his own kind of presence. He did not speak immediately but looked over the various faces in the audience and forced each condescending listener to meet his gaze. The murmuring of the crowd stilled to a hush as Juarez stood for almost a minute staring his audience up and down while silently repeating his opening lines. Because he knew that many of his listeners might think his command of Spanish inadequate, he used a long pause to heighten their anticipation.

Finally, after that long silence, Benito Juarez began:

*Libertad, Dignidad, Humanidad ...*

His compelling words were heard loud and clear by his attentive audience.

### Bonaparte's Beginning

Napoleon was another master of the Power Pause. Like Juarez, he was "stature-challenged" and he spoke to his French troops in a voice that bore the crude Italian accent of Corsica, his island birthplace.

But Napoleon, who had few if any peers in the rallying of troops, would stand silent for forty to fifty seconds before beginning his battle address. It seemed as if, for every second he waited, he grew a micrometer taller in his troops' eyes.

Napoleon is among the most dominant of personalities in world history because, among

other factors, he knew the keys to charisma. The Power Pause method was his key to magnifying his message.

## Stage Silence

Whether you're presenting a new club president, introducing a speaker, making the brief remarks at a ceremonial function, or talking to a chamber of commerce, stage some silence before you speak. Much like an actor might convey a character of stature, you can enhance your credibility through the way you act.

Coriolanus, the title figure in Shakespeare's play of that name, is a man of commanding presence. Another character says of him: "He has eyes that pierce the body armor of a knight." While performing the Coriolanus role onstage, the actor Christopher Plummer registered that trait through a dramatic Power Pause.

NAPOLEON KNEW THE KEYS TO CHARISMA. THE POWER PAUSE METHOD WAS HIS KEY TO MAGNIFYING HIS MESSAGE.

Try staging the strategic delay the next time you deliver a sales pitch or answer a query posed to you during a conversation. If someone in your audience asks you a question, rather than blurting out a quick answer, pause while you absorb the question and put your thoughts into words. Before you speak, frame your reply in your mind—in a sentence with a subject and a predicate. A hurried answer suggests that you didn't give the question a full hearing. A deliberate pause before you talk adds weight and wisdom to both your actual answer and your audience's perception of it. You're perceived as having really listened to the questioner instead of rushing in with a stock, or canned, answer.

When you are answering questions, think of the Power Pause as the seat belt you strap on before you drive, as a safety measure to prevent rambling slips. Before you answer, take time to look directly into the eyes of your questioner and hold his or her gaze a beat.

## Hitler's Hiatus

Adolf Hitler, whose eloquence was exceeded only by his evil, was a master of the Power Pause. Films show him fussing with his moustache, mopping his forehead, and fidgeting with his notes for five minutes as he faced thousands in Berlin Square. Then, after a long Power Pause that drew his audience's undivided attention, he would open, almost in a whisper:

*We want peace.*

## Amplifying Authority

Elizabeth Cady Stanton, the pioneer in woman's rights, made herself into a brilliant orator in part by capitalizing on the power of silence. Stanton knew that men regarded any woman who lectured or preached a freak of nature. She was familiar with the barb of England's famous eighteenth-century essayist Dr. Samuel Johnson, who stated:

*Sir, a woman preaching is like a dog walking on its hind legs. It is not done well but you are surprised that it's done at all.*

Even those of her own sex found the idea of a woman as an authority figure discomfiting. Stanton knew she had to command attention and respect before she uttered a word to her listeners. The Power Pause was her way of amplifying her authority. It worked well for her. Elizabeth Cady Stanton's speech at Seneca Falls, New York, in 1848 remains an enduring masterpiece:

*Man cannot fulfill his destiny alone, he cannot redeem his race unaided.*

Just as the works of even genius artists Raphael or Rembrandt need proper framing, so too does a speech. A Power Pause is such a frame.

## Psychological Equalizer

When five-foot, two-inch Queen Elizabeth II came to Washington in 1991 for a state visit and presented her ceremonial remarks in the Rose Garden, she could barely peer over the lectern that was adjusted to President Bush's height. A stool was quickly located for her to stand on. Once properly elevated, she paused before she began speaking, in effect forcing the audience to react to her silence.

JUST AS THE WORKS OF EVEN GENIUS ARTISTS RAPHAEL OR REMBRANDT NEED PROPER FRAMING, SO TOO DOES A SPEECH.

The Power Pause can be a psychological equalizer for women. In 1957, I witnessed Queen Elizabeth dramatically pause before beginning her remarks at the Governor's Palace in Williamsburg, Virginia. That pause commanded a rapt audience, and the queen presented ceremonial greetings that sounded truly profound. Yet when her remarks appeared in the newspaper the next day, they sounded rather trite. Her Power Pause had ensured her listener's attention and magnified the force of her words.

Men as well as women, whether short or tall, can gain stature through strategic silence. In the presidential campaign of 2000, the Power Pause would reinforce the subsequent remarks of not only five-foot, five-inch Gary Bauer, but also of Bill Bradley, who stood a foot taller.

## Stand, Stare, and Command Your Audience

Before you speak, try to lock your eyes on each of your soon-to-be listeners. Force yourself before you begin your presentation to say in your own mind each word of your opening sentence. Every second you wait will strengthen the impact of your opening words. Make

your Power Pause your silent preparation before any presentation you make.

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MEN AS WELL AS WOMEN, WHETHER SHORT OR TALL, CAN GAIN STATURE THROUGH STRATEGIC SILENCE.

Stand, stare, and command your audience, and they will bend their ears to listen.

## Power Opener

*Look with favor on bold beginnings.*

—Virgil

Successful persuaders open their messages powerfully, *not* with little ingratiating words of appreciation or praise. In 1875, a former slave opened his talk to the business establishment of Atlanta. Did Booker T. Washington begin by thanking his hosts for the opportunity to speak? Did he start by thanking his white hosts for extending the invitation to a black man? No! This is how he opened his talk to the southeastern United States Cotton Exposition:

*Gentlemen, one-third of the population of the South is of the Negro race.*

By stating that stark fact, he grabbed the attention of his audience. For the rest of the speech they followed intently.

### Opening Amenities, Opening Inanities

The prime time of any talk or presentation you give is during your opening words. Everyone in the audience is waiting to see what you look and sound like. Do not waste that psychological edge with trite blather! Go for the Power Opener.

Churchill once said, “Opening amenities are opening inanities.” By starting with something pleasant but unoriginal, you’ll sound dim and dull. Yet 99 percent of all executives begin their remarks with something like this:

*It is a pleasure to speak to Middletown’s Kiwanis. I’ve always had great respect for your civic endeavors in the community ...*

It’s banal, boring, and blah!

Now listen to how the great black leader Frederick Douglass opened an address in Ohio on July 4, 1852:

THE PRIME TIME OF ANY TALK OR PRESENTATION YOU GIVE IS DURING YOUR OPENING WORDS.

*Pardon me—why did you ever invite me? I and the people I represent have no reason to celebrate this day.*

Certainly not what Douglass’s audience expected!

Another example of a strong beginning comes from Churchill, who on May 10, 1940, opened his talk to members of Parliament, most of whom for years had mocked and derided his warnings about Hitler, with this unexpected grave plea:

*I speak to you for the first time as Prime Minister in a solemn hour for the life of our country, of our Empire, of our allies and, above all, for the cause of freedom.*

In another dramatic statement of reconciliation, Thomas Jefferson began his inaugural address in the U.S. Capitol in 1801 with these words:

*We are all Republicans, we are all Federalists.*

Jefferson's goal was to bridge the enmities of the two national political factions.

Effective speakers of today emulate history's greatest when they make that opening sentence count. Dr. John Ross, a Presbyterian minister in Pueblo, Colorado, and one of the most commanding preachers I have ever heard, once told me this: "Jamie, if you don't catch their attention in those first moments, the men will be daydreaming about how the Broncos will handle the Raiders, and the women worrying about whether the roast in the oven will be done when they get home."

## **Begin with a Bang**

Begin with an ear-catching line, as did the aging elder statesman Bernard Baruch in his testimony to a commission on the atomic bomb in 1946. He dropped this one:

*We are here to make a choice between the quick and the dead.*

The Massachusetts patriot Sam Adams opened a talk to his state's assembly in 1776 with this powerful line:

*We are on this continent—to the astonishment of the world—three million souls united in one cause.*

Or listen to how Senator Daniel Webster began his oration defending the Compromise of 1850:

*I speak today not as a Massachusetts man, not as a Northern man, but as an American.*

You can also open with a personal anecdote that either tugs at your audience's heartstrings or tickles their funny bones. Lincoln once amused his listeners by beginning his reply to Stephen Douglas with this:

*It is true what Mr. Douglas said, that I did run a grocery store and I did sell goods including whiskey. But I remember that in those days that Mr. Douglas was one of my best customers. Many a time have I stood on one side of the counter and sold whiskey to Mr. Douglas on the other side. But the difference is that I have left my side of the counter, but Mr. Douglas still sticks tenaciously to his.*

Lincoln knew that, in this series of Illinois debates with Douglas, he had to engage the sympathy and attention of the audience early against the more famous orator and statesman. As the lesser-known politician, Lincoln did not waste that strategic opening moment with insipid pleasantries.

**"Yesterday, December 7<sup>th</sup> ..."**

If you have dramatic news to impart or a startling fact to reveal, try opening with it, as President Roosevelt did in 1941:

*Yesterday, December 7, 1941—a date which will live in infamy—the United States was suddenly and deliberately attacked by the naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan.*

Or mark President Truman’s stirring opening words from his radio speech on August 1945:

*Sixteen hours ago an American airplane dropped one bomb on Hiroshima ...*

IF YOU HAVE DRAMATIC NEWS TO IMPART OR A STARTLING FACT TO REVEAL, TRY OPENING WITH IT.

Perhaps you are saying to yourself, “Look, I’m not president of the United States. I’m just making a simple presentation of a new product.” Even though you’re not speaking from the White House to the entire nation, you can still begin with a dramatic statement that is important to your audience.

## Crushing a Cliché

I once saw a CEO of a ceramics company open his pitch by waving with two hands a beautiful serving plate that looked as elegant as anything Spode or Lenox made. Suddenly he threw the plate to the floor with all his might. It did not break, but he did shatter the cliché of beginning with platitudes of praise.

Churchill was once asked why he never began a speech with “It gives me a great deal of pleasure ...” He replied:

*There are only a few things from which I derive great pleasure, and speaking is not one of them.*

Churchill believed in grabbing the minds of his audience at the start.

## Parenthetical Praise

One CEO said to me, “Jamie, don’t I have to say something nice about the people who invited me?”

“No,” I told him, “at least not in the beginning when the audience thinks that you are compelled to say it.”

Churchill once explained that praise in the beginning of a talk sounds like flattery, whereas the same praise wedged into the middle of the speech comes off as sincerity. He called this delayed appreciation parenthetical praise.

I once heard a woman interject such praise in the middle of her civic talk: “And speaking of

leadership, no one exemplifies it more than Mayor Flaherty, who ...”

I also heard a congressman tuck his expression of appreciation in the middle of his speech using what sounded like free association to set it up: “By the way, those numbers in the newspaper about costs are as far off as my drive on the eighth hole when I was playing golf with your chairman, Bill Reilly, last year ...”

Whether it’s a few remarks at a dedication ceremony, an in-house pep rally to your sales force, a presentation pitch for a new product, or a formal address, use a Power Opener.

I don’t care if every talk you hear begins with remarks such as “It’s an honor to speak ...” Such expressions are simply too trite—like an old coin whose edge has been rubbed smooth that it no longer has a feel of distinction. Remember, if words of praise in the beginning sound trite, those you are praising cannot treasure your compliments.

If you truly do consider being invited a special honor, say that later in your talk, when it sounds like you really do consider it an honor. Here’s an example:

*By the way, I have spoken in many towns across the country, but this is the first to which I have been given a key. I only hope that my message can open up new opportunities for your city.*

## **Start with the Strength of a Leader**

If you want to sound like a leader, start strongly. Mediocre speakers meander in the opening phrases of pleasantries. The difference between so-so and superb speakers is often this: One begins banally, the other with a bang.

For example, the CEO of a big paper product company started off a winter sales meeting this way:

*We see before us the biggest sales year in our company history [pause ...] unless we blow it!*

Chief Seattle, the great Indian chief of the Northwest, opened his address to a white audience in 1854 with these critical remarks:

*There was a time when our people covered the land as the waves of a wind-ruffled sea covered its shell-paved floor. Now that is a memory, a mournful memory.*

One of the greatest preachers in America is Dr. James Forbes of New York. He opened his sermon on man’s relationship with God by sounding a tuning fork and then saying: “God hears you and you can hear God.”

## **Fivescore Years Ago ...**

I heard Dr. Martin Luther King in August of 1963 on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial when he spoke to hundreds of thousands. King’s opening echoed the words of a martyred president:

*Fivescore years ago, a great American in whose symbolic shadow we stand, signed the Emancipation Proclamation*



## **Attention Grabbers**

As you sit down to write your remarks for a coming talk or presentation, spend a lot of time on your opening sentence. Prepare it, polish it, and practice it.

Plan that Power Opener. Then take a Power Pause and deliver a zinger that will zap the ho-hum expectancy of your listeners. A Power Opener is an attention grabber and an audience awakener. Begin your talk with a bang!

## Power Presence

*Clothes, which as it seems, makes thee.*

—WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

General George Washington would freshly powder his wig, brush his waistcoat and blue tunic jacket, and then check his tights and stockings to make sure they were straight. Finally he would buff his black boots before descending the stairs at Mount Vernon to greet his guests.

He was no less attentive to his appearance when he entered his tent headquarters or rode onto the battlefield.

### Mien of a Monarch

In American history, probably no one projected more Power Presence than George Washington. It was not his oratory that commanded the awe of those who served him but his aura. Women who danced with him said he was godlike. His charisma was in his looks. At six feet, three-and-a-half inches, he was just about the tallest man anyone in that day had ever seen. He was known to be the tallest Virginian. His carriage—even into his final days—remained ramrod erect. Even the imposing Charlton Heston, who once played the role of Washington, did not do justice to our first president's presence.

Sir Winston Churchill, in his *History of the English-Speaking People*, writes that it was the “presence” that Washington conveyed that kept the Continental Army in the field despite the defeats and the winter rigors of Valley Forge.

Washington was elected unanimously to be the presiding officer of a quasi-legal rumormongering session that was later to be called the Constitutional Convention. His acceptance of that role gave the convention its sanction. If Washington hadn't agreed to preside over the proceedings, Americans might not have acknowledged its authority.

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CLOTHES MAKE A STATEMENT. THE SELECTION OF GARMENT SHOULD NOT BE CASUAL OR BY CHANCE.

After the constitution was ratified, Washington was elected unanimously by the electoral college, an institution created by the new charter, to be president. He was an “elected king” in all but name. Indeed, some of his Continental Army officers had urged him to be king, an offer he rejected. Even a German principality in Europe inquired of his availability to accept a throne. He spurned that too. (Washington was not the first or the last heroic general to be offered a throne in Europe. The present monarchies in the Netherlands and Sweden owe their origins to foreign generals.) Projecting a majesty far greater than most of the effete offspring of Bourbon or Stuart lines, George Washington was, to borrow Shakespeare's words, “Ay, very much a king.” Washington knew how to cultivate that mien of a monarch; he understood Power Presence.

As Reagan did centuries later, Washington viewed the presidency as theater. He made it a traveling show by taking a carriage to cities and towns of the new states. Just outside the city, he would get out of the carriage, brush off his clothes, and buff his boots. Then he would mount Prescott, his white stallion, to stage his procession into the city.

## Pop Idol

In a strikingly different way, Benjamin Franklin also knew how to strike a Power Presence. When he arrived in Versailles to become the American minister to France, he wanted to stand out among the bewigged members of King Louis XVI's court, who were garbed in the silk and velvet fashions of the day. Franklin's daughter Sally said, "Poppa, you must buy new clothes if you're going to Versailles."

Franklin answered, "I want to look more like a pioneer than a prince."

So instead of silk, Franklin wore just plain American broadcloth and no wig. He understood "radical chic" two hundred years before the term was coined. At a time when the "natural man" of Rousseau was the philosophical rage, Franklin played the role of the New World "natural man" and inspired a coterie of groupies. He was the first American pop idol exported abroad.

In 1783, at the time the peace treaty that ended the American War for Independence was signed, Benjamin Franklin sported his slightly tattered brown Manchester greatcoat that buttoned from the neck to the knees. Fellow peace commissioner John Adams berated him for wearing such attire on this glorious day for Americans. Franklin replied:

*Adams, I wore this coat on that day of the "Cockpit Trial," prosecuted by that British Attorney General Wedderburn about ten years ago, and I want to give my old brown coat a little revenge.*

Clothes make a statement. The selection of garment should not be casual or by chance.

James Monroe, our fifth president and the last of the Virginia dynasty, made a statement with his clothing. He, too, mastered the Power Presence by doing so. In a day when the Regency fashion of trousers had replaced the eighteenth-century tights and stockings of gentlemen's style, Monroe wore his officer's uniform and cockade hat to remind those who attended his levees at the executive mansion of his service in the Revolutionary War, now a distant memory. In fact, he preferred the title Colonel Monroe to that of President Monroe. His garb was a statement to visitors that Monroe, like George Washington, had been a Revolutionary War officer.

## The Signature Symbol

Abraham Lincoln is not thought of as a president who nurtured his image. But why did this six-foot, four-inch figure of a man, who towered over his contemporaries, choose a stovepipe hat as his signature symbol? It only accentuated his height. Plus the long shawl he wore

draped over the shoulders of his dark suit enhanced the lankiness of his frame.

FDR's cigarette holder, Churchill's cigar, and Stalin's pipe—these were familiar symbols during the World War II era. The statue of Winston Churchill in front of the British embassy has the wartime prime minister holding a cigar in his hand. On the other hand, the recent dedicated Franklin Roosevelt Memorial in Washington is a disservice to our Depression and World War II. President Franklin Roosevelt is shown seated in a wheelchair. Instead of the jaunty, buoyant smile that people of my generation remember from photos and newsreels, Roosevelt's face seems tired and taut. Absent is the cigarette in its holder, which the "politically correct" removed.

The Roosevelt Memorial Committee also chose to reinforce the disability theme by featuring the famous sayings of Roosevelt in braille (but so far up that even basketball player Shaq O'Neal, if blind, could not reach to touch them on tiptoes!). Curiously, FDR's most famous line, "a day that will live in infamy," from his Pearl Harbor address, does not appear in the twenty presidential quotations cited on the memorial.

## **FDR's Invisible Wheelchair**

The seniors among us never saw a photograph of Roosevelt in a wheelchair. Roosevelt, who understood Power Presence, never allowed a camera to photograph him in a crippled state.

In 1924, when Roosevelt was to deliver his speech on behalf of Governor Alfred Smith for the Democratic presidential nomination, he arrived at an empty Madison Square Garden early enough to position himself in a chair behind the lectern. Four years before, Democratic Party delegates had witnessed a healthy and robust Roosevelt, whom they chose to be vice-presidential nominee on their ticket with Governor Cox of Ohio. There was no way Roosevelt was going to let them see him enter in a wheelchair. When the time came for him to speak, he propelled himself in a leap and grabbed the lectern. During the applause that greeted him, a gasping Roosevelt had time to collect himself from the draining effort. A Power Presence was all-important for Roosevelt.

## **Power Accessories**

Winston Churchill knew the impact of Power Presence. His "power attire" was a navy blue pinstriped three-piece suit with a gold watch chain he had inherited from his father bisecting the vest. He usually chose a blue polka dot tie that brought out the color of his eyes. The cuffs of his white shirt bore gold links with the Marlborough crest. A crisp white handkerchief flared from his lapel pocket.

Churchill, like Roosevelt, was a born actor. He knew the power of his props: the heavy black-rimmed glasses he donned for reading his speech, the cigar he waved with his left hand, and the "vee for victory" sign he flashed from his right hand. Even his hat was distinctive—a hybrid of homburg and bowler, custom made by Locke's of London.

## Maggie's Handbag

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The second greatest British prime minister of the last century was fanatic about her appearance. For Margaret Thatcher, no week went by without her bouffant coiffure being lightened and touched up. Her tailored suits—either solid violet, navy blue, or forest green—were immaculate and ever adorned with an exquisite brooch pinned to her left lapel. She was a star and played the role. Beside her, her male ministers looked drab. She appointed no female to her cabinet. She liked to be the only woman in a room or in a photograph. With her handbag and carefully modulated voice, she had the presence of a schoolmarm or nanny presiding over her charges, the other British politicians.

CHURCHILL KNEW THE POWER OF HIS PROPS: THE HEAVY BLACK-RIMMED GLASSES HE DONNED FOR READING HIS SPEECH, THE CIGAR HE WAVED WITH HIS LEFT HAND, AND THE “VEE FOR VICTORY” SIGN HE FLASHED.

Her handbag was every bit as much a prop as Churchill's cigar. In fact, one of her handbags recently sold in a charity auction for \$150,000. A political opponent once said of her, “Maggie never saw a British institution without hitting it with her handbag.”

One minister told of arriving at 10 Downing Street for a cabinet meeting. The prime minister was not there, but her huge handbag was in the middle of the table. No one spoke until the handbag dominated them.

## Star Style

If everyone has his or her fifteen minutes of fame, then everyone has that moment when he or she is the star—whether as speaker at a luncheon, presenter of a plaque or an award, presiding chairperson at the annual meeting, or featured honoree at the trade association banquet.

People may no longer speak of their “Sunday suit,” but you should have your own “star suit” to properly dress for such an occasion. Unless you are a perfect size 44 long, seek out a tailor. A good tailor can mask any bulges you might have. You might choose a navy blue pinstripe as Churchill did—and perhaps follow his doctrine of selecting not muted but bold stripes that can be seen even in the back row.

You might opt to have a tailor make a nail-head gray worsted such as former secretary of state Cyrus Vance would choose for speaking. Then give your suit its own signature style—perhaps a bow tie or red vest, as a former Wisconsin governor and orator featured. Maybe your characteristic stamp will be a maroon tie with matching kerchief springing from the breast pocket. Senator Margaret Chase Smith, the first woman to be nominated for president, always had a red carnation. First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy wore her characteristic pillbox hat.

ADOPT A STYLE THAT SUITS YOU—AND THAT PEOPLE WILL IDENTIFY WITH YOU.

A CEO named Hamilton had ten ties in the Hamilton plaid. He wore one every time he wore

the featured speaker, rotating them for freshness.

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But avoid experimenting with that signature style in the way Hillary Clinton trotted out new hairdos. Keep your style simple but the same! Think of Barbara Bush and her hallmark white pearls that complemented her white hair. Then adopt a style that suits you—and the people will identify with you.

## **Sparkle Like a Star**

You might think accessories such as shoes and details such as clean fingernails don't warrant much of your attention. Well, your shoes must be shined, your suit must be pressed, and your fingernails must be cleaned. Even a president can't afford to ignore particulars, as this story indicates:

*Abraham Lincoln, who was about to meet some visiting clergy to accept a petition, was shining his shoes when a cabinet minister came into his office for a quick answer to a question. The cabinet secretary asked in surprise, "Mr. President, are you shining your own shoes?"*

*"Whose shoes would I shine?" replied Lincoln dryly.*

The head of a top re-insurance firm told me, "Jamie, no one, no matter how good his background, was ever hired if he had scruffy shoes or dirty fingernails."

## **Staff and Sporty Attire**

A man's or woman's wardrobe should contain staff and sporty attire as well as star clothing.

The staff suit is useful when you're selling a client, pitching a product, making a call, or delivering a market analysis at an in-house conference. You're not a star this time but are playing a supporting role. You shouldn't risk upstaging the boss or department head with overly pretentious dress.

## **Style for Men**

Staff attire is more straightforward than stylish. A two-piece rather than a three-piece suit in gray or navy blue is appropriate; and a muted stripe, but not Mafia wide, is fine. Wear a four-in-hand, not a bow tie. For shoes, don't wear suede, but dark brown or black cordovan.

In addition, invest in what one CEO called "the most underused and understated piece of clothing: the classic white shirt." Treat yourself to at least five white shirts. A button-down is good, but the straight collar (not wide Italian style) with buttoned cuffs is hard to beat. French cuffs are acceptable if you choose cloth instead of jeweled cuff links.

A blue button-down Oxford is always appropriate, too, but reject the earth colors, which

political consultants selected for Vice President Al Gore in an effort to make him more warm and accessible. It didn't work.

Forget, too, the new Regis Philbin look featuring solid green or navy blue shirt with ties of the same hue. You're an executive, not an emcee. Leave the designer handkerchiefs for your evening dress-ups—and your gigs as emcee.

As for sports jackets, wear them at the country club, but not in the corporate suite!

But, you might ask, what about Friday “casual day”? (Of course, in many West Coast cities like Los Angeles, *every* day is casual!) An executive in an old blue chip firm told me after I moved to the Hawaii office, “Jamie, we have instructions never to wear a tie because the clients we call on don't wear ties.”

Sporty does not mean sloppy. A polo shirt with khaki slacks and “docksider” shoes, or a navy blue blazer or a jacket with polished loafers, sends a crisp and clean message.

Dressing for success is easy and doesn't have to be expensive. You don't have to be a dandy like Beau Brummel! For everyday wear, try a white shirt, gray suit with suspenders, and dark shoes. I knew one out-of-work would-be executive who got by for six months with a wardrobe consisting of a navy blue suit, wash-and-wear white shirts, black shoes, a blazer and gray slacks. For weekend wear, he chose khakis with a wash-and-wear blue button-down shirt. That was all he owned. But it was enough to land him a job as counsel to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

## **Style for Women**

Women executives have to be more choosy and careful than men do since clothes for women are more complex. There are so many choices of fabrics and styles, and styles constantly change.

For guidance on dressing right, think of what I call the three D's: Princess Diana, Diane Sawyer, and Elizabeth Dole. They choose tailored suits and simple cuts, in solid colors that include pastel hues—but no flowering prints or busy designs. These women look professional.

## **Accessories to Accentuate**

Women's accessories accentuate—such as a gold chain or pearl necklace, *or* a Liberty of London or Hermes scarf. Jewelry should be minimal. “Rings on your fingers” may be a familiar nursery rhyme, but wearing many rings is not appropriate for your time at work; they become distractions rather than enhancements. And the jangling of bracelets is jarring, to say the least.

As for footwear, take the advice of Princess Diana, who reportedly once told a friend that the biggest fashion error in America was shoes:

Yet some women wear white shoes with red or white outfits. Why? It may be patriotic, but is definitely idiotic. And heels? No one trying to maneuver on three-inch heels can look professional.

If you are receiving an award at a dinner, remember that you are not dressing as Cher, Madonna, and Dolly Parton might be. These fashion disasters show too much cleavage and too little coverage, too much leg and too little common sense. Sure Erin Brockovich made it to the top, but only in Hollywood.

## **Understating Can Be Empowering**

Think of the three D's: Diana, Diane, and Dole. Their classic signature styles prove that the understatement can be empowering. Understatement is the secret of Power Presence.

UNDERSTATEMENT IS THE SECRET OF POWER PRESENCE.

That advice applies to your scent as well as your suit. Women who reek like “Miss Samples” at Bloomingdale’s cosmetic counter seldom make it in the corporate world. Other pariahs in the professional world are women with too much makeup and too much hair.

Because it’s difficult if not impossible to overcome a bad first impression, it’s best to avoid making a negative impact.

A woman corporate consultant said this:

*I try for the Estee Lauder look—the kind of bare and blush that suggests no makeup at all. As for hair, “beehives” belong in an apiary, and that stick-up gel look belongs in the zoo with the porcupines.*

Remember that less is more and less is best. The “do” on your head should look like you did it yourself. Blood-red talons may get you attention but are likely to turn off your listeners. Your hands are integral to your gestures when you speak, and extremely long or colorful nails will take attention away from your message.

Invite cheers for what you say, not leers for how you look. Women can still be feminine and fashionable without being flirty or flashy.

## **Be Wise**

The reclusive naturalist Henry David Thoreau may have said, “Beware of an enterprise that requires a new suit.” But if you seek success in the public eye, your choice of suits should further any enterprise or career in which you are engaged.

Let clothes proclaim your professionalism. Let the all-time great orators, or the three D's be the models for your Power Presence.



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