



- [Home](#)
- [NonProfit Library](#)
- [Tribes Library](#)
- [TRAINING](#)
- [PRODUCTS](#)
- [About Us](#)
- [Contact Us](#)

Fear of Public Speaking

Public Speaking is one of the most effective community engagement tools there is. And just because you are afraid of public speaking doesn't mean you can't be a big part of helping your organization create a dynamite Public Speaking program. Some of the most critical roles in creating a speaking program are done behind the scenes, where everyone can be comfortable playing a part.

Use It Today

Here are some things non-speakers can do to help your organization's speaking program be wildly successful:

- ▶ Take 20 minutes at your next board meeting to discuss possible speaking venues.

Consider large groups, and consider groups with only 5 people.
 Consider public groups, such as a Chamber of Commerce function.
 Consider private groups, such as employee volunteer groups or a church auxiliary.

- ▶ List every possible place your organization might speak, and consider who on the board knows someone to approach at each of those groups. You will be surprised at how much your organization and your board already has to build upon as you consider who you all know! (Use some of the tips in FriendRaising and in Building Support through Public Speaking for details on approaching these folks, as well as the Life List Generator, for determining who your board members know [▶ CLICK](#))

- ▶ As part of your board's letter of commitment, add the requirement that each board member will connect the organization with one speaking opportunity per year, regardless of the size of the group. The opportunity could be in someone's living room, or in a hall seating 500 people - simply require that everyone bring in one opportunity, regardless of the size.

Not every board member has to be the one to do the speaking, but every board member should be expected to act as the connector between the organization and the opportunity to speak.

- ▶ We often hear of the power of asking clients and program participants to speak. But there is a group of potential speakers organizations rarely think to ask - a group whose words could carry as much weight as those program participants: their supporters!

Ask your current supporters (donors, volunteers) if any of them enjoy public speaking, and build on their enthusiasm to build a Speaker's Bureau. There is nothing as effective as a speaker who can say, "I do not work for the organization. I am a donor, and I give because of the amazing things this group does..."

- ▶ Take baby steps towards conquering your fear of public speaking. There is no better way to begin than by doing so for a cause you believe in and care about, because you have nothing personally on the line. It's not for your business, your livelihood. It's not about you at all. It's about something you care passionately


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about. And one of the keys to conquering the fear is that passion.

The following article may help you start. ► [CLICK](#)

Toastmasters can help as well (check your local phone book for a Toastmasters group near you).

Public speaking is one of the most effective community engagement tools there is. When we rely solely on the person who enjoys speaking to assemble the whole program, we diminish what that speaking program can accomplish for your organization. So do it now! At your next meeting, commit to making Public Speaking an integral part of how your organization connects with the community you serve.

Excerpted from

Building Support through Public Speaking: Tips Tools and Secrets Any Nonprofit Leader Can Master - To Learn More [CLICK](#):

<http://www.help4nonprofits.com/Tools/SpeakerKit/SpeakersToolbox.htm>

and from

FriendRaising: Community Engagement Strategies for Boards Who Hate Fundraising but Love Making Friends - To Learn More [CLICK](#):

<http://www.help4nonprofits.com/FriendRaisingBook.htm>

Information about Letters of Commitment for board members can be found in **Board Recruitment and Orientation: A Step-by-Step, Common Sense Guide** - To Learn More [CLICK](#):


<http://www.help4nonprofits.com/BoardRecruitingBook.htm>

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