



## Once More With Feeling

***You've said the same words a thousand times. So how do you keep them fresh for today's audience? A legendary singer has the answer.***

Between in-person speeches and online classes, I give roughly fifty talks a year on the subject of storytelling alone. While I tailor each presentation for the audience at hand, there are certain portions that are invariably repeated. And when I arrive at those portions, a little voice in my subconscious pipes up. "Again?" it asks. "Are you really saying those *exact same words* again?"

Sound familiar? Even if you're not hearing voices (yet), I'm guessing there are times when you find yourself reciting an all-too-familiar script. Perhaps you're pitching to a prospective donor, interviewing a job candidate, or talking to the press. At first you're in the moment, but before you know it, your mouth is on autopilot and your mind is... beginning... to.... Sorry. Where was I?

As someone who does a *lot* of public speaking, I must confess this was getting to be a problem, but about a year ago, singing legend Tony Bennett gave me an invaluable piece of advice. (And by that I mean Mr. Bennett was being interviewed on National Public Radio, but the advice he shared was so spot on that I felt he was talking directly to me.)

The NPR interviewer asked Bennett a question about his signature song, "I Left My Heart in San Francisco," one that several other interviewers have posed as well: When you've sung that song so many times, where do you find the inspiration to belt it out *with gusto* one more time? I turned up the volume on my car radio. If ever there was an analogy to my particular problem, this was it.



Tony Bennett

September 2011

### Once More With Feeling

How to breathe new life into a familiar script

### Beth Drews Scholarships

Nominations open for 2012

### The "Fatal Five" of Presenting

Are they lurking in your presentations?



## About Us

*free-range thinking* is written by Andy Goodman and edited

Bennett chuckled and admitted that this was, indeed, a challenge. He'd lost count of the number of times he'd sung that standard. But whenever "San Francisco" appeared on his set list, he consciously took a moment before the performance to stop and think about what the song meant to him.

Bennett said the song had opened doors for him around the world, and that he'd had the privilege of singing it before kings and queens, presidents and prime ministers. It became an "all-access pass" for a crooner who had been relegated to singing in bars, and now he was performing for sold-out crowds in concert halls and arenas.

In those moments of reflection, Bennett said he felt grateful for all that the song had done for him, and once that feeling started flowing through him, he knew he was ready to perform. Audiences may respond to the lyrics, the song's sentiment, or his delivery, Bennett added, but he believed they also connected with this unspoken feeling of gratitude.

I've taken his words to heart ever since, and now, whenever I'm waiting for my turn to present, I consciously think about the unique opportunity I've been given. When I start to feel gratitude, I know I'm ready to begin. And should that little voice ask, "The same words? Again?" I will be able to answer with conviction, "Yes, the same words, and happy to say them."

*(Special thanks to Anna Christopher of NPR for her help with this story.)*

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## Beth Drews Scholarships

***Nominations for 20 scholarships in 2012 are now being accepted.***

To honor the memory of Goodman Center co-founder Elizabeth Fair Drews, we established the Beth Drews Scholarships in 2010. Under this new program, twenty people from the nonprofit community were selected to receive full tuition to the classes of their choice offered by The Goodman Center.

We are now accepting nominations for scholarships in 2012. Please note that nominees must be full-time employees of nonprofits, and nominations *must* come from foundations. If you are a grantmaker and know of a nonprofiteer who would benefit from a Goodman Center class, we hope you will send the name our way. And if you work at a nonprofit, we encourage you to discuss this opportunity with your colleagues at foundations so they can put your name forward.

To learn more about the scholarships and to download nomination forms, just [click here](#).

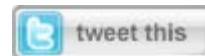
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# The "Fatal Five" of Presenting

***Are they lurking in your presentations? Join us online in September for "Why Bad Presentations Happen to Good Causes" and make sure they aren't!***

Based on unprecedented research and incorporating the advice of twenty highly regarded public-speaking experts, ***Why Bad Presentations Happens to Good Causes*** is a two-hour online class designed to help presenters at all levels, from newbies to seasoned veterans. Curriculum in this course includes:

- The three most common characteristics of excellent presentations
- The five most frequent mistakes (and how to avoid them)
- How to structure presentations to ensure your audience learns more
- Why PowerPoint should never be used as a presentation *and* a handout
- Techniques to help you deliver talks with greater confidence



Classes will be held on September 28th and 30th from 11a-12n Pacific each day (2-3p Eastern), and tuition is \$250 per student. (Group discounts are available.) To learn more and register online, [click here](#).

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