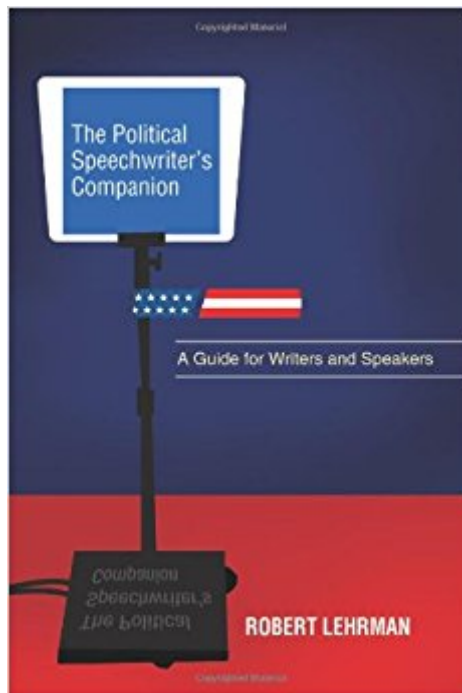




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The Political Speechwriter's Companion: A Guide For Writers And Speakers



Synopsis

Other guides on public speaking focus on how to convey knowledge or understanding. While it is useful to master such informative speech, other goals and strategies are essential for a politician: publicity, for one. To communicate optimism, to rely on material written by others, to speak repeatedly, day in and day out. Above all, politicians need to persuade their audiences. They can use facts or appeal to values, but in the end, they must urge action. Politicians are advocates. Robert Lehrman, former speechwriter for Vice President Al Gore, offers both speakers and writers the LAWS of political speech. He explains how speakers can deliver: Language the audience will understand and remember, Anecdotes that make listeners laugh and cry, Wit that pokes fun at opponents but also shows their own lighter side, and Support in the way of statistics, examples, and testimony. With how-to guidance in each chapter including annotated speeches Lehrman shows how to apply the LAWS at every step, even providing an entire chapter on delivery. Lehrman also opens up his Rolodex to readers, interviewing speechwriting luminaries who offer up their best advice in a Behind the Scenes feature. As Delivered boxes point to Web links for watching notable speeches, while a handy Speechwriters Checklist concludes every chapter.

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Customer Reviews

Robert A. Lehrman served as Chief Speechwriter to Vice President Al Gore and, in 2004, as Chief Speechwriter for the Democratic National Committee during his more than three decades of experience writing speeches. He has written for political figures, celebrities, heads of nonprofits, and

corporate CEOs, most recently as speechwriter to the Chairman and CEO of Pfizer. He created and co-teaches the political speechwriting course at American University and speaks often at other campuses, conferences, and associations, on the topic of political speechwriting. Author of a number of award-winning novels and coauthor of a highly acclaimed non-fiction book for young adults, Lehrman has a B.A. from Tufts University and an M.F.A. from the University of Iowa Writers Workshop, where he studied with Kurt Vonnegut and Richard Yates

Fantastic book for any speechwriter, novice or experienced. The frameworks and examples are incredibly helpful. This and Fletcher Dean's "10 Steps to Writing a Vital Speech" are the only two books on speechwriting you'll ever need.

Bob Lehrman has more than three decades experience writing speeches. He has written for politicians, celebrities, nonprofits and corporate CEOs. He worked as Chief Speechwriter in the White House to Vice President Al Gore. He's currently an adjunct professor at the American University in Washington, DC where he teaches, together with political humorist Eric Schnure, a well-regarded graduate-level speechwriting course. This is the textbook for their course. It's an invaluable resource for writers and speakers in the political and corporate worlds. Lehrman's writing career began as a novelist who studied with Kurt Vonnegut at the Iowa Writers Workshop. He still enjoys the balance between writing under his own name and putting words into the mouths of the powerful. Lehrman is the author of four novels and numerous op-ed's. But it's the experience gained as a speechwriter in both houses of Congress, as well as the White House, that is the source of the lessons he shares in the classroom and his book. Bob and Eric teach two semesters a year. Many of their students have wanted to be speechwriters since middle school, when they became hooked on episodes of *The West Wing*. A common question he's asked is "How do I get a job as a political speechwriter?" He points out that with 200,000 candidates running for 60,000 elected positions in America every two years there's no shortage of work for anyone who can stand the long hours and low pay. He reminds students that political speechwriting is hard work. Ten hour days, six days a week, are common. Corporate speechwriters make three times the salary and can go home to their family. But corporate speeches are often information dumps built around PowerPoint. Those who want to influence public policy, to express ideas their bosses want to make into law, are drawn to politics. It's obvious from his background that Lehrman is a staunch Democrat. But he teaches the techniques of persuasion to supporters of any political party. In fact, his willingness to draw lessons from speeches delivered by both sides is a refreshing surprise in our increasingly polarized world.

Testimonials inside the front cover of his book come from both Republicans and Democrats. The book took him two years to write. However, some of the lessons it contains were those he first shared with interns in the Clinton White House in the 1990's. Don't be misled by the title. Lehrman claims that 90% of the content is useful for speechwriters outside politics, including those of us who write for the corporate world. Lessons include:- Realizing that the beliefs and values of the secondary audience might be more important than the people who are actually in the room when the speech is delivered;- Why it's important not only to research facts and figures, but also spend time researching the stories and poetry that makes a speech sing;- Why Monroe's Motivated Sequence is the best way to structure a political speech;- Ways to make a speech memorable and move the audience to action, including checklists for everything from speech structure and supporting arguments to problems that are relevant to the audience and plausible solutions. The challenge, he reminds us, is mastering the nuts and bolts while keeping the text of many political speeches at a 7th grade reading level so the majority of the audience can follow along. Lehrman's book illustrates, with links to dozens of speeches, how some of the best writers practice their craft. He takes us behind the scenes with colleagues such as Clinton speechwriters' David Kusnet and Lissa Muscatine and George W. Bush speechwriter David Frum. Bob Lehrman is aware that the fundamentals of speechwriting have not changed since Aristotle. His systematic approach to teaching the craft, as outlined in this book, gives us all the opportunity to learn new ways to improve.

Tremendous text for political speechwriters or politicians giving a speech

This is more than a companion. It is a manual for speechwriting that provides tools, examples, and tips to help develop and refine remarks for any public speaker, especially politicians. This book is a must for your professional development library for written and oral communication.

This is a really helpful guide to the craft of speechwriting. The elements of an effective speech are presented and broken down to see how and why they work. Excerpts from the speeches of well known politicians do a nice job of showing these elements at work in the real-world. I would definitely recommend this to anyone needing to improve their speechwriting skills.

This book is the perfect addition to any political speechwriters arsenal. It contains tried and true tactics coupled with inspiring anecdotes certain to give your speeches the life they need to engage audiences. Highly recommend this book.

Succinct and clear with internet resources. You can follow the explanations and, after being "primed" by Lehrman, you can enjoy the empty speeches of every politician from now on with delight! After reading this book you would be like a kid in a candy store watching 'debates' with the same structure and rhetoric...

A great book for any political speechwriter and/or giver.

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