



The Raphel Report

**Observations on marketing,
advertising, sales and
promotions
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The Golden Gove

The "Book of Lists" ranks the average person's ten worst fears.

Number one is not death (tied for sixth), or heights (second) or insects and bugs (third). Coming in first place is "talking to an audience."

This high anxiety is not confined to the average person. Sarah Bernhardt would throw up before every performance. Even Sir Laurence Olivier came down with stage fright when he was sixty.

Somewhere, sometime, somehow you will be called upon to speak to a group. It may be with your business peers or the local service club or standing up at the town meeting to give your opinion.

But the thought makes the heart beat faster and the hands become clammy for the fear persists.

That's the reason for self-help groups like the Toastmaster's Club. At this group's annual international meeting they give their "Golden Gavel Award" to a speaker they choose as The Best of the Best.

One of their choices was William "Bill" Gove who died December 9, 2001 at the age of 89.

Gove was Sales Development Manger of Minnesota Mining (the 3M company) when he left to be an independent motivational speaker more than 50 years ago. In his lifetime, he gave more than 5,000 speeches, was the first president of The National Speakers Association and won every major speaking award in the speaking industry.

I met Bill when we belonged to a group of twenty speakers in an organization known as "The Speakers Roundtable." Attending their annual meeting was a delight to listen to these renowned professionals and hear their stories.

When Bill entered the room, the conversation stopped and all eyes turned to meet him, the "speaker's speaker." He'd smile, greet us all by name and immediately tell a story of what happened to him that day, captivating his listeners.

There will come a time in the future when you are called upon to stand and deliver a talk somewhere, sometime, somehow. When that time arrives, it will help you to remember some of the advice the Golden Gove shared with me and others. When he was approaching 90 years, he was still giving seminars teaching professional speakers

I have listened to hundreds of speakers through the years and, invariably, I'd hear them tell a story I first heard from Bill.

Some of his thoughts. . .

What would he do if he had to do it all over again?

"I'd spend less time thinking about what has to be done and more time doing it. Life is not

lived at the level of, 'I'll think about it' or 'I'll do it when I feel like it.' Life is about doing what's in front of you and doing it whether you feel like it or not. Here's why: the emotion always follows the doing."

"Each of us has, inside of him, all he needs to be twice as good as he is. To be somebody instead of anybody. Our society needs fewer copies and more originals."

On learning to do things.

"Some things are easy to learn and easy to do. Like crying.

Some things are easy to learn and hard to do. Like speaking.

Some things are hard to learn and easy to do. Like tying your shoelaces.

Some things are hard to learn and hard to do. Like golf."

See yourself as part of the audience.

"A writer writes alone," he said, "a painter paints alone. A sculptor sculpts alone. But a speaker cannot speak alone. Every speaker needs an audience."

Material heard is different than material read.

He called his presentations "mini-speeches." Each had a premise, a problem and a payoff. But the real importance was the way the speech was delivered. His theory: "The messenger is more important than the message."

Speak for your assigned time. And stop.

Bill said most speakers don't have the ability to tell time. The sign of a pro is to finish right on time. He said he was able to do all this in spite of the fact that he was "two years older than the state of Arizona."

Bob Frare, a speaker who has written books on professional selling, wrote about the last time he saw Bill. "He had just returned from church and I noticed his name tag from church was still on his shirt. I told him and he said, "Oh, I just want to make sure God knows it's me."

Not to worry. We're sure he was greeted, as his audiences did - with enthusiasm when he arrived.