

# Creating Excitement So Your Listeners Have to Have It!

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Have you ever heard of Mary Kay Ash? She was the founder and former Chairman of *Mary Kay Cosmetics*. Though now deceased, in her days as the CEO of her organization, she inspired thousands of housewives to introduce her skin care and color cosmetic line through home parties, promising them pink Cadillac's and diamond pins for achieving outstanding sales. She was known as a passionate speaker who could generate excitement in thousands of women eager to be successful. What she did could help you to attain similar results.

First and foremost, she knew her audience—women, and she knew what it was that they wanted—personal and financial success. She began her company in 1963 at a time when women were paid less and had limited prospects for advancement. She knew that her audience was just like her. When she presented them with an unprecedented opportunity for financial independence, career advancement and personal fulfillment, they wanted in.

She kicked off conferences, not by talking about the company's latest and greatest products, but by talking about her belief in her listeners' success. In fact, she made a big deal out of recognizing their achievements. She was smart enough to know that audiences rarely got excited about products but how selling these products would benefit them on personal level. When she finally did introduce her products, it was the means to the end.

Ash also willingly shared herself and told her own story about being passed over for promotion and earning less than the men in her former companies. She told her audience how she finally gave up and quit, thinking it was time to retire. Then, she took a risk and decided to create a company that would

allow women to be successful. Months before Mary Kay Cosmetics was to open, her husband died, but she persevered anyway. Her often quoted line was "If you think you can, you can. If you think you can't, you're right." Her personal stories unabashedly pulled at people's heart strings, and they bit. If she could do it, they could do it.

Ash was also an enthusiastic fireball. When she spoke, there was excitement in her voice, and you could see it on her face and in her body language. There was never a doubt that she believed in what she was saying. Her belief was, "A mediocre idea that generates enthusiasm will go further than a great idea that inspires no one."

Early on, she decided that audiences need some "surprises" to kick start them on their quest. These were in the form of pink Cadillac's, diamond pins and other expensive feminine items. When the curtain was drawn and the items revealed at her annual conferences, audiences shrieked with excitement. She hit on the things that represented success to her audience.

Today, Mary Kay Cosmetics is an incredible success story. There are 1.6 million independent sales professionals and revenues have exceeded 2.2 billion dollars. This is undoubtedly due to a woman sharing her vision and exciting others to make it come to fruition. As you look at the messages you share with others, consider whether you are conveying enthusiasm because, as Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "Nothing great was ever achieved without it."

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