

**CAPTURING VOICE:
HOW TO SPOT A SPEECHWRITER THAT MAKES YOU A BETTER YOU**

SUMMARY

After being considered for dozens of speechwriting opportunities, I have found the two most common reasons I do not land the assignment are (1) the speaker decides not to hire anyone, or (2) they find a writer whose writing style is the same as their own. When I delve more into this second reason, I find that my portfolio with its wide variety of subjects, tone, formats and industries works against me, because they cannot ascertain my personal style.

My experience is that those speakers who search for a writer whose style is the same as their style are looking for either a coincidence or for a style they *wish* they had. I believe a good speechwriter is one who can write to the speaker's authentic voice and style, not to our own. I capture individual voices and hone them to be more focused and polished, while still retaining the authentic voice that spills over into the casual conversations that follow.

As an example, attached are speeches by two different men serving as the Undersecretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology & Logistics (AT&L) speaking in subsequent years to the Missile Defense Agency (MDA). This is a good example of my ability to capture unique voices while staying within the confines of the expectations of the role of the speaker to the organization.

Note in the first speech by Michael Wynne that I reference two videos. Mr. Wynne saw them while watching television one weekend. I was able to track them down, clear them, and ensure the technology worked – including cues from speaker to technician.

Note in the second speech, I learned the tidbit about Ken Krieg's son's birthday party in a casual morning conversation. I then drafted an example and the Undersecretary edited it so that the details were accurate. I also had to clear this for security reasons as we were not allowed to release certain details about family members.

These are two examples of my resourcefulness for capturing voice and authenticity. They also show how I use limited time with the principal speaker to tailor speeches for them.

These two examples also show two important formatting options. I see the drafting of the remarks to be the first step, not the end game, for the speechwriter. My job is take care of my speaker by setting him – or her – up for success before, during and after the speech.

The first example shows how I prepare my document for the speaker which includes my personally crafted event snapshot cover – “Audience Analysis” – and the notes that support the speaker, such as reminders to pause around important facts to help the speaker focus on delivery. The second example is the follow-up news release version I created for media distribution and posting online.

I also write the introduction to my speaker for the emcees so that the audience is not bored by a long, random list of accomplishments – aka “the obit intro.” I write an introduction that culls out the appropriate information that shows my speaker is an expert. I also draft talking points from the speech to distribute to direct reports, so that they can accurately quote leadership and support the message.

RESULT

The result was two well-delivered speeches that were immediately posted online for future reference. In addition, I created talking points from each of these speeches that I distributed to their direct reports for use in the speeches, emails and newsletters by the direct reports so they could quote the Undersecretary and reinforce his points.

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AUDIENCE ANALYSIS
OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE (AT&L)

EVENT: 3rd Annual Missile Defense Conference
 Ronald Reagan Awards Dinner

SPONSOR/CONTACT: Lt Gen Trey Obering, Director MDA, 703-695-6344

DATE OF EVENT: 13 April 2005/ Cocktails 1830; Dinner 1930

LOCATION DETAILS: Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade
 Center Washington DC. Dinner and speech will be in
 Atrium; there will be a stage with a podium

SPEECH TITLE: Conference Theme is "America's Ballistic Missile
 Defense: A Historic Beginning"

SPEECH TYPE: 15 minutes w/two videos, no Q/A

MEDIA: Open, however none have RSVP'd to attend. Has
 been open previous two years and no media have
 covered the dinner either year.

AUDIENCE: External/Internal. Audience includes Missile Defense
 Agency government, military and contractor
 employees; industry leaders and employees from the
 big 4 (Boeing, LM, Raytheon, NGC) as well as
 members of academia

SIZE: 850

**REMARKS BY
THE HONORABLE MICHAEL W. WYNNE
UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
ACQUISITION, TECHNOLOGY, & LOGISTICS**

**“AMERICA’S BALLISTIC MISSILE DEFENSE:
A HISTORIC BEGINNING”**

MDA RONALD REAGAN AWARDS DINNER

WASHINGTON, DC

**APRIL 13, 2005
8PM**

Thank you, Trey [**Gen. Obering**], for that introduction. And welcome everyone to the Missile Defense Agency's Ronald Reagan Awards Dinner.

The management guru Peter Drucker said, "People who don't take risks generally make about two big mistakes a year. People who do take risks generally make [**PAUSE**] about two big mistakes a year."

I'm here tonight to say that I certainly hope I'm looking at a group of risk takers who made a couple of mistakes this year. I would hate to think that a few glitches had stripped us of our entrepreneurial spirit.

So, let's not focus on our failures, except to learn from them. Because despite what the media might say, we have had more successes than failures, and we will have many more – of both.

We are on the cusp of something great, of a dream born more than 20 years ago, when President Reagan created this organization. I believe that missile defense is still an exciting, scientific frontier. One that – if we position it properly – could be the catalyst to inspire new generations to join our ranks of scientists, mathematicians and engineers.

The Missile Defense Agency has the opportunity to cause a renewed interest in science and technology, just like the great space race of the 1960s. I am sure you know what I'm talking about because I would venture a guess that many of you are a product of that space-inspired generation.

We need to ask ourselves what each and every one of us can do to inspire the next generation. For those of you who may have forgotten that first rush of adrenaline when you joined our industry – as well as those of you who stumbled into it – watch this.

[CUE: ROCKET MAN VIDEO]

Let's not forget that feeling as we continue our journey into 2006 and beyond.

Now, for the most part, this next year will be more of the same as this past year, but with improvements and modifications from lessons learned this year.

And we will do it all of this despite \$5 billion in budget cuts over the next few years. Luckily, Secretary Rumsfeld gave us the flexibility to make our own cuts.

General Obering did a great job making those cuts with the precision of a surgeon's scalpel. I applauded his choices by approving of his plan. The cuts showed our commitment to our plan.

They may slow us down a bit, but I am proud to say that the cuts did not increase our program risk, and we did not discontinue any programs. I think the whole drill went very well.

The Missile Defense Agency is still on track with all of our plans to be fully operational in the near future, and I can assure everyone here that we all remain committed to this.

[PAUSE]

So, what does the future hold? Well, let's go back to Peter Drucker for a minute who said, "The best way to predict the future is to create it."

And that's what I'm looking for you all to do. So, let me give you a couple of ideas about what I see lying ahead of us.

First, we must step up our efforts to respond effectively and efficiently to the needs of the warfighter. Those able-bodied Marines working under General Cartwright have some definite ideas regarding what we need to do to make the missile defense a success. And we are listening to them and taking action.

The next step is for us to find ways to be more proactive in our discussions with the warfighter, and to include them earlier in the process, even back to the design and development stages. After all, they are our most important customers.

[PAUSE]

The second area I see that we need to expand in the future is the area of interoperability – not only with other Services, but also with our allies, friends and partners.

So far, we've done a much better job working with other nations than with our own Services. Even with all of these cross-country programs, we could still do more.

As for working with our Services here at home, I believe the next natural step is to become interoperable with our Services' air defense systems. This includes the Air Force's Cruise and Patriot missiles and the Navy's Aegis system. We should be developing a system of systems to integrate air defense into our missile defense.

[PAUSE]

The third area we need to concentrate on is the area of recruitment. Where is our next generation of scientists and engineers?

We are competing with industry for the same top talent. I think Exxon Mobil explained our dilemma very well during a recent commercial at the Master's Golf Tournament. Watch this.

[CUE: EXXON AD]

We cannot let our science, math and engineering talent dry up. We must do our part to attract the best and brightest to these career fields. I will be introducing soon details on the National Defense Education Act.

I challenge all of you in industry to create similar incentive programs.

R&D will be a staple of the Missile Defense Agency for a long time to come. Therefore, we are going to need these scientists and engineers for a long time to come.

In fact, we could hire experienced talent today, if we could find it. Currently, almost half of our funded slots are unfilled. We cannot afford to let this happen at MDA, or it won't matter if we get hefty budget cuts, because there will be no one there to work for us. No one there to take us into the next decade.

[PAUSE]

Last year, I went to Congress and testified that we were on track to put on alert, near the end of the year, an initial capability to defend the nation against ballistic missile attack.

Well, I'm proud to say this year that I was able to report to them that we've done just that. Because of the work all of you have done, the United States of America is no longer completely vulnerable to ballistic missile attack.

[PAUSE]

**These are exciting times at the Missile Defense Agency.
Don't let anyone tell you any different.**

**Thank you for your service and all you do for this great
nation. Everyone in this room has contributed to her safety
and security, and there is no higher calling than that.**

God bless America.

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United States Department of Defense
Speech

Fourth Annual Ronald Reagan Awards Dinner

Remarks as delivered by the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics Kenneth J. Krieg to the Missile Defense Agency's Fourth Annual Ronald Reagan Awards Diner, Washington, DC, March 23, 2006.

Thank you, General Trey Obering, Director of the Missile Defense Agency (MDA), for that introduction. Tonight we are honoring Under Secretary of State Robert Joseph, a man who has worked hand-in-hand with the Missile Defense Agency to make our Nation a safer place.

Under Secretary Joseph is a great partner, and a great example of the cooperation that is necessary to keep programs such as ours viable and effective. Bob has been in many of the chairs around the table, and has managed to avoid that common Beltway problem of “Where you stand depends on where you sit.”

His leadership has been insightful, strong, probing and principled. Tonight, I want to add my congratulations to him for this well-deserved honor for his hard work over the years.

I enjoy events like this dinner tonight where I have the opportunity to share a meal with not only the Under Secretary, but also our international friends and colleagues. And I am able to spend quality time outside the office with great minds such as our former award winner Lt Gen (ret) Ronald Kadish. I learn a lot at events like this that I can't learn sitting in a formal meeting.

But I have a confession to make. I have to say: I'm a family man. As interesting as this is, I really enjoy hanging out with my family. In fact, this past weekend was my son's 13th birthday.

Yes, I am now officially the father of a teenager, and in some cultures, he's considered a man – not in the Krieg household, mind you, but in some places – and I will get in a lot of trouble if he ever hears about this evening!

Anyway, I hope you'll indulge me with one brief story. Because it just goes to show how much we can all learn from a teenager.

So it's our son's big 13th birthday, and my wife and I were trying to decide how we should celebrate it. We came up with lots of different ideas, and weighed the costs of each option in terms of money and time.

For example, taking half a dozen kids to the arcade for a couple of hours takes a small amount of prep time, but it costs a lot of money.

Yet, baking a cake, making the amount of snacks six young teens can consume in two hours at your home, and cleaning it – before and after – takes a lot of time, but a homemade party does save you some money.

So, we asked our son which he preferred, and he said he wanted to go to a Capitals Game! Ok, well that threw us for a loop. This option is now going to take three-hours for the game, plus the cost of food, which we all know is not cheap.

And then they have to come back to the house for the cake and presents. So now we were looking at an option that was going to cost us both more time and more money!

Sound familiar?

Well, it should sound very familiar, and not just to parents, but to anyone who's been in acquisitions. Because my wife and I made some classic mistakes – first, we didn't ask the customer what he wanted; second, we balanced cost and schedule without taking the customer's requirements into consideration; and third, we allowed the requirements to change despite the fact that the change had a significant impact on the cost and schedule!

So, this story brings me to why I am here tonight and not home with my family. I need your help! As we honor the accomplishments of a great man tonight, we are reminded that lessons can be found everywhere; we just need to keep an open mind and pay attention.

In fact, the Department of Defense, industry leaders and our friends and allies can all learn about efficient, effective business practices from the Missile Defense Agency.

General Obering, you and your team are leaders in acquisition strategy, particularly when it comes to large weapon systems that involve emerging technologies. Your creative strategies show that the American entrepreneurial spirit is alive and well, and that it actually does have a place in the public sector.

MDA's business practices do four very important things:

- They are giving the Nation an increasing amount of capability over time, even as we develop.
- They are tailored to be flexible – with options for changes in direction depending upon need.
- They take very hard problems and break them down to more manageable chunks while keeping them in a “systems of systems” engineering approach that makes clear the effects of one action on the other.
- And they allow the agency staff to have a deep and increasingly interactive engagement with their customers.

I recognize up front that not many programs are – or should be – like Missile Defense. But these are some interesting lessons learned.

Your use of Capability-Based Acquisition and Spiral Development to move our missile defense system forward has been remarkable. Central to your success has been your use of what's known as “Knowledge Points.”

For those of you who aren't familiar with Knowledge Points, they are the points within a program's development where we get data from discrete tests, demonstrations or processes.

The key word here is “data.”

This data can come from flight tests, ground tests, subsystem or component tests, functional demonstrations or manufacturing demonstrations. The key is that data produce knowledge and confidence.

Knowledge Points are the points along the acquisition timeline where we are in a position to gather data, or facts. Timing is important. We need to gather data early and often throughout the process. And it must be the data necessary to build confidence that we have, in fact, reduced risk.

It is gathering data to show we have reduced risk enough to warrant a decision on whether or not to move forward in development or production. This means, of course, that the third key aspect of Knowledge Points is that they must be linked to decisions.

Armed with Knowledge Points, MDA has been able to tackle the complex worlds of Capability-Based Acquisition and Spiral Development. Both of these business processes are key to developing our cutting-edge weapons systems.

Congratulations on a job well done. You have mastered the art of balancing on the three-legged stool of requirements, cost and schedule. What lies before you now is a new test, a test of perseverance and will.

This year – 2006 – will be the year that MDA must show its mettle as you run your next series of tests.

Even before I became Under Secretary and was serving in PA&E, I watched MDA grow and mature. I know you are up to the task, and I will do everything I can to support you. But in the end, it is General Obering and all of you who must show the world what you are made of.

I look forward to watching you move into this next stage of your development, and I expect great things, just like I do with my own son.

Thank you for all you do for the Department and for the security of our Nation, including that of my own family and yours.

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