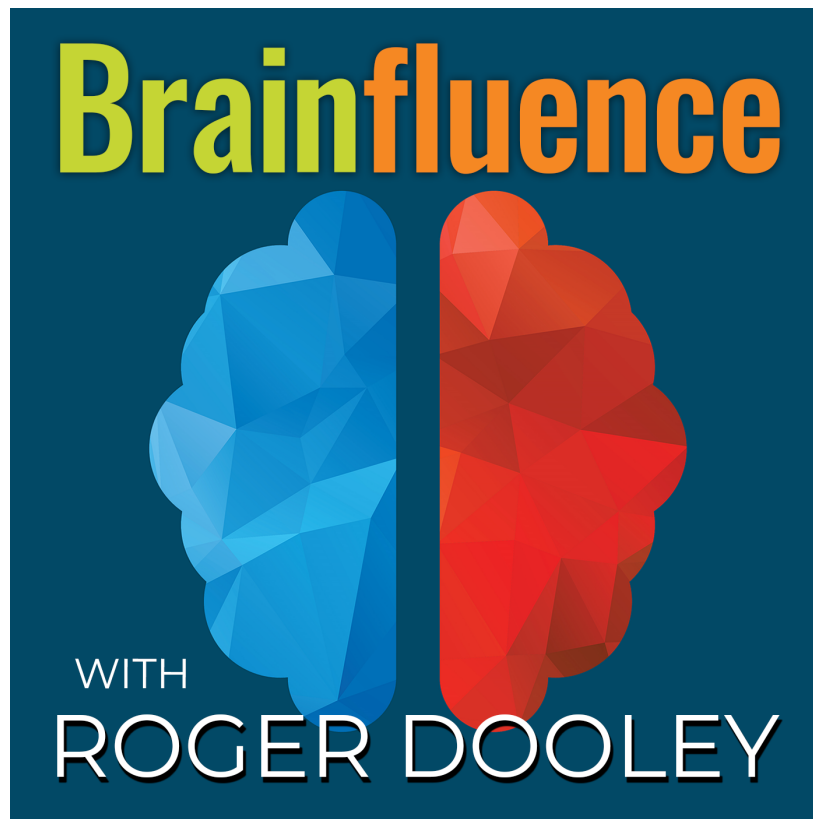


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Roger Dooley

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Welcome to Brainfluence, where author and international keynote speaker Roger Dooley has weekly conversations with thought leaders and world class experts. Every episode shows you how to improve your business with advice based on science or data.

Roger's new book, *Friction*, is published by McGraw Hill and is now available at Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and bookstores everywhere. Dr Robert Cialdini described the book as, "Blinding insight," and Nobel winner Dr. Richard Claimer said, "Reading Friction will arm any manager with a mental can of WD40."

To learn more, go to [RogerDooley.com/Friction](https://www.RogerDooley.com/Friction), or just visit the book seller of your choice.

Now, here's Roger.

Roger Dooley: Welcome to Brainfluence. I'm Roger Dooley. Today my friend Michael Port returns to the show. Michael has a golden touch. He left a successful acting career for a new career in business. After rising quickly on the business development side of the fitness industry, he became a consultant helping other industries develop business. His first book *Book Yourself Solid* has sold hundreds of thousands of copies now, and somewhere along the way he diversified into these speaking and communications coaching space with his Heroic Public Speaking business.

In a past episode, Michael was there to discuss his book *Steal The Show*, which I highly recommend. And a lot has changed since then though. So I decided it was time to get Michael back on the show and let him steal my show.

Welcome back, Michael.

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Michael Port: Thank you so much.

Roger Dooley: So your business in these COVID times must have changed pretty dramatically. How have things changed for you?

Michael Port: Well, sure. For those who are watching on video, you can see behind me we're at Heroic Public Speaking HQ.

Roger Dooley: Those look like empty seats back there.

Michael Port: Those are very empty seats. Very, very safe. There's nobody else here at the moment. But prior to COVID, we would have events every single week here that were full with waiting lists months in advance. And of course we could bring in a few people and have very awkward socially distant events where people feel anxious because they don't know who's safe and who isn't. But that doesn't gel with our philosophy of creating a safe environment for the people that we serve. So we've decided to hold off on doing any in-person events until we know that people will feel safe and comfortable. And in the meantime, we're doing a lot of virtual events, live streamed events. We've put up programming online, and we did a lot of hybrid programming in the past. Really I started in this industry in 2003, and have been running virtual programming for decades. So it wasn't new to us. We were fortunate that the pivot was really quite smooth, quick for us that we didn't have to get up to speed on how to run virtual events or how to film classes and learn the methodology behind online programming. We were already pretty well versed in that.

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But it's not our first choice, frankly. We like being in the room with people. Probably not our second or even third choice. But it's definitely a lot better than being in an environment that isn't safe.

Roger Dooley: Yeah. There's really something to be said about meeting in-person, and I have to acknowledge, Michael, that you and our mutual friend Mike Michalowicz were instrumental in the birth of my book Friction. At least not so much the birth. It had been conceived already, but in perhaps helping the labor and delivery along part way through because we all met at an author's retreat that you and Mike hosted. And just the ability to be in-person with both you and Mike as experts and authors and other both authors and budding authors really creates a different sense of focus than if you were tuning into a webinar or something to accomplish the same task. But these are the days we live in.

Michael, a lot of your clients are professional speakers. What changes are you seeing in that industry? I mean, I know I'm seeing some pretty big changes. What's your perspective on that?

Michael Port: Yeah. And the professional speaking industry has changed dramatically of course because in-person events for the most part are on hold. So it's really just a simple question of supply and demand. Right now there are certainly lots of organizations doing virtual events, virtual programming, and there are lots of really skilled speakers delivering high quality virtual programming. But because the industry operates on a supply and demand econ 101 framework like most industries, there is a lot of supply and not a lot of demand, even for people at the top of their

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game because it's a lot easier to deliver a virtual program because it doesn't take as much time. So certainly the industry thinks, "Well, we don't need to pay what we needed to pay before." And because there's so much more supply, they're going to be able to pay less. So most speakers are charging maybe 30% of what they were charging for in-person events.

Now if they have a lot of demand, hopefully they can do more of them to make up for that difference. But let's say a speaker works 50 times a year, meaning speaks 50 times a year, which is a pretty full plate for a professional speaker. Some do more certainly but 50 to 55 gigs is a pretty full plate. It would take them a day to travel there, then they're there for the gig, then the next day they travel home. So maybe they could get in two gigs a week, but that's it. Now-

Roger Dooley: Don't even talk about international gigs.

Michael Port: Of course, international gigs, they maybe a whole week you're out of pocket for that one gig. So yeah, sure. You could do a gig every single day of the week now virtually or two a day. But the amount of demand that you'd have to have would be so high that it's just not likely unless maybe you're Simon Sinek or Brene Brown or that level of theme in the industry. So it's just an unfortunate consequence of the pandemic. But again, once events come back and I think that will not really happen in any significant way until there is a vaccine that people are comfortable with, supply and demand will change because there will be again more demand and lower supply of speakers. So the fees will go back up.

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But we spend a lot of our time worrying about our speakers trying to find ways to support them, but it's definitely a difficult time for most people in the industry. There's no doubt about it.

Roger Dooley: Right. And to be fair, the conference organizers, they're under tremendous pressure too because now some previous paid events are going free because people aren't going to pay what they would've paid for an in-person event. There's so much free content on the web. Many people are not going to pay unless it's truly exceptional content. They're not going to pay \$500 or \$1000 for two days of virtual speeches. You know what I mean? Same way people are rebelling at paying \$50,000, \$60,000 for a college education via Zoom. It's like, "Okay. We're not quite getting the same experience."

Michael Port: As a father of three kids who will be going to college in a couple years, I really resonate with that concern. Even here at Heroic Public Speaker, we're doing multi-day live stream programming that we're offering for free because it just makes the initiation process so much easier if we can give people an opportunity to experience what our virtual programming is like. Then a significant portion of them will raise their hand and say, "I'd like to do more comprehensive virtual training with you." But I think they need to experience the quality first without a higher barrier for entry, meaning without having to put down significant amounts of money because most of what they're seeing out in the world is not particularly compelling. How does anyone know if an event is actually going to be effective when what they're seeing typically is not particularly compelling. So we just said, "We're going to take the price point out of the equation, make it free,

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and do those multi-day live streams so that people can say, "Wow, that's not only the best live stream event I've ever been to, but that might be one of the best events that I've ever been to in-person or virtual." So that's our goal when we're doing those events. But we decided right off the bat just make them free, make them easy.

Roger Dooley: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Right. And I know you've got an upcoming event here just a few days after this podcast first airs. And we'll get to that near the end, and we'll provide links both here on the show and also we'll put them on the show notes page so people can access all of the free content. And speaking of free content, one thing that I did find on your website, Michael, was a free download of relatively short PDF of guide to presenting in a virtual mode. Some really good insights in there. And one of the things that you talk about is energy, community energy where most speakers tend to feed off the energy from the audience, depending on what kind of speaker they are. They can gauge whether they're losing the audience or whether the audience is keeping up with them. They can actually draw some inspiration if the audience is really responding. When you're simply talking into a microphone and a camera, it's not so easy. So how do you suggest dealing with that?

Michael Port: Well, this is a major issue that anybody who gives speeches contends with even when the speech is in person because very often you'll hear a speaker say, "Oh well, it didn't go that well. The audience wasn't great. They didn't give me much." Well—

Roger Dooley: If the audience wasn't great, they're probably assigning the blame to the wrong person there.

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Michael Port: Yes, exactly. Because I really hate to break it to the speaker but it's never the audience's fault. If a speech doesn't work, it's never the audience's fault. If the speech you're delivering to a particular audience is not relevant for them, that's the speaker's problem or it's the meeting planner's problem that they booked the wrong speaker. But if you can't engage the audience, it really is ineffective to blame them. Same thing as an author. If you're writing a book and people don't respond to the book, you hear, "The readers are idiots. If they were smarter, they'd understand it." Well, that's not a particularly productive way of thinking about our work in service of our audiences.

Roger Dooley: Oddly enough, Michael, just about a week or two ago on a different podcast, I used pretty much the same line for those web designers and app designers where the customers are unable to figure out what to do. They're clicking the stuff that's not clickable. They're not finding the buy now button, and the designers are just going on about how stupid people are that they can't see what's obvious in front of them. That they're clueless. Pointing their finger in the wrong direction.

Michael Port: Exactly. My favorite book on user experience is the book Don't Make Me Think.

Roger Dooley: Yeah, Steve Krug. Yeah, that's awesome. I constantly recommend. The great thing about that book, Michael, is that even if you don't read or buy the book, although I do recommend that people do that, it's out in at least a second edition now if not a-

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Michael Port: Oh, I think it's probably... It's got a number of more editions than that.

Roger Dooley: Yeah, so it's been reprinted and updated. But even if you don't buy it, if you just think about the title and internalize that as your basic operating system when you're designing stuff, that's almost good enough. Just do it. I mean, he's got great, amusing examples in there. But it just internalize the title of the book and you're going to be way ahead of the game.

Michael Port: Yeah. Now, when serving audiences either in-person or virtually, I wouldn't necessarily follow that approach entirely. Meaning if you give out marketing and you want people to take a particular action on a website, you don't want to make them work too hard. You don't want to make them have to think. You want to be able to lay out the process so that they follow it really quite easily. When you're giving speeches, presentations of any kind, whether you're a professional or an entrepreneur or someone who is just advancing a cause or a mission of some kind. If you take that don't make them think approach, then sometimes they sit back and it just washes over them and they don't engage.

So Andrew Stanton who's one of the principals at Pixar explained the way that they think about a perfect film, and he said it's an equation. He said the goal is a perfect film is a four. Let's just say a perfect film is a four. Our job is to give the audience two, and then their job is to give us two. And if we meet there in the middle, then we've got a great film. But if we give them zero or one, they're often a little confused. I'm not sure what... They have to work too hard to keep up. But if they give them three or four, then they

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just sit back, shovel popcorn in their face, and don't actually engage intellectually or emotionally with the film.

So when we're doing any kind of presentation, we can use that concept in a way that's similar because we want to challenge often the status quo, and if we're challenging the status quo, it's going to require that we actually make people think. But if we challenge the status quo in such a way that it's too much work to consume and process, then they'll turn out. They'll tune out or turn off. So we just got to be careful about that.

So the way that we like to think about communication in any medium, one-on-one with a person in a room or a large audience in a room or one-on-one virtually or with a large audience virtually, is to first make sure we're 100% clear on what our objective is. Because if we know what our objective is, then we can choose tactics that will hopefully achieve that objective. So if we don't have an objective in mind, then we're just either just sharing information randomly, which is not particularly helpful, or the whole thing is just messy.

But once we know what our objective is, then we start to look at our tactics. And the first tactic we want to consider is safety. How do we make sure that the people we're serving feel safe? Because if we want to change what people do, we need to change how they think. And if we want to change how they think, we need to change how they feel. And if we don't focus on safety first, then we may not be intentional about how they feel. If we can focus first on how they feel, then on how they think, and then on what they do, we can move progressively through that process to get them to take different actions. And

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safety is such an incredibly important part of any negotiation process, any pitch process, any engagement with other human beings where you're trying to change the outcome or get them to think or do something different. So safety first is always paramount.

For example, let's say you were having an issue with your teenage daughter. She starts dating this guy who you feel is—

Roger Dooley: I had one of those once, Michael.

Michael Port: You had one of those once?

Roger Dooley: I had one of those once. Yes.

Michael Port: Yeah. Teenage daughters.

Roger Dooley: Yes, yes. She's still around, but no longer a teenager.

Michael Port: Right, exactly. It goes quite quickly fortunately because those years can be a little rough sometimes. But let's say she starts dating a guy who's maybe one or two bad decisions away from reform school or worse. And you're just not happy about this. You're not happy about it because she's not playing the piano anymore, which is one of her great loves. She's not hanging out with the friend group that she's had for a long, long time and that you feel are really, really solid human beings and contribute positively to her life. She's not spending as much time with your family, which you feel is a really positive influence, and she's always loved doing so. So there's all sorts of changes that are taking place as a result.

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Now if you go to her and say, "Hey, listen." What's your daughter's name?

Roger Dooley: Alicia.

Michael Port: Alicia. You say, "Listen, Alicia. The guy's a bum. I think he's got no future. He's going in the wrong direction. You're not hanging out with him. That's it. Done, end of story." How well do you think that's going to go?

Roger Dooley: Probably not very well.

Michael Port: Probably not very well. Why? Because-

Roger Dooley: We haven't had that exact discussion, but generally those kinds of approaches never work.

Michael Port: They don't work because she feels that you are taking something from her, and as a result, she feels unsafe. Something she wants is being taken from her. She's being constrained, and as a result, she feels unsafe. But if you can go into that conversation and say, "Listen, obviously I'm a little concerned about this guy. You know who I am and what I want for you. So it's not... You get that, right?" She'll say, "Yeah, I do. I get it." You say, "Listen, my goal is not to take him away from you. I do not have any intention of controlling you or limiting you in any way, shape or form. My only intention is to support you in staying engaged with the things that I know are important to you and that you've always loved doing. You like playing the piano and spending time with your close friends and your family, et cetera. I don't want to take anything away from you." Then all of a sudden she says, "Oh, well, okay. All right. I'm willing to have this conversation now."

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You made her feel safe that you weren't going to take something from her, and as a result, you might be able to get her staying engaged with her friends, with the family, and with her other activities, which is safer for you and your goals for her, even if she stays dating this guy who you're not crazy about because she doesn't lose all of the other things that are foundational in her life.

So this is just one example, but you can extrapolate this example out to 1000 different situations when you're trying to change somebody's behavior or change how somebody thinks about something. So we like to start with safety, and if it's in the room, start with safety. If it's online, start with safety. And one of the ways that you can start with safety is by demonstrating that you understand the way the world looks to the people in the room, to the people that you're talking to. So in the case of the daughter, you may say, "I really understand this guy has opened up social circles to you. He seems really fun. He's exciting, and it probably feels really good to be with him." And she starts going, "Yeah, that's right. You get me. You understand me." Because very often when we're trying to change the way somebody feels, thinks or acts, it can be quite provocative.

Let's say you've got a boardroom of executives who have been working in a particular way for decades. They've been running this board in the same way for a long, long time, but you're trying to change the way that they operate. Well, if you just go and say, "Listen, what's happening now doesn't work. Doesn't work. May have worked in the past, doesn't work now. We're changing everything." Well, that's going to make people really, really nervous because they don't know if they can

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operate in another way, even if they were open to it. If you've been behaving in a particular way for decades, you may feel pretty comfortable with that way of being, but if all of a sudden you've got to try a totally different way of being, it maybe very scary for you. You may act tough about it, but underneath all that toughness, most people are scared of change. There's an expression, "The only person that likes a change is a baby with a wet diaper." Most adults, once they get set in their ways, they're not comfortable with it even if they're open to it.

So if we can first focus on safety, then we often have the ability to come in with bigger ideas, with philosophies or ways of being that maybe more impactful, and people might say, "Okay. I'll pay attention. I'll listen," because this is very provocative to ask people to change the way they've been behaving or thinking for a long, long time. It's why of course we've got such turmoil in our political world because if somebody voted in a particular way four years ago and now you tell them that they're an absolute idiot for having done that, do you think that's going to encourage them to change the way they are voting? Probably not because you usually dig in and entrench your positions when other people challenge them very, very aggressively.

Roger Dooley: So one thing this pandemic has done, Michael, is really accelerated change in a lot of industries where you had a lot of that reactance going on where people did. "Yeah, we're going to have to do that some day, but that's not job one," or, "Probably won't work." Suddenly, "Wow. We've got to do that today."

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So speaking about safety, I got to interject something here. For our audio listeners, they can't see you, Michael. But you are seated and there's a table, and people can see your hands. Just a couple weeks ago, I had Vanessa Van Edwards on, and she also talked about safety in presenting and persuading. And one of her maxims was let people see your hands because there is a bias toward that. It shows that you, at least going back to our earlier days, that you don't have some kind of a weapon in your hand and also an open posture shows that you aren't being threatening, that you're exposing yourself to the other person, which is a friendly gesture, smiling and so on. But it's a unique setup that you've got for your video conference here. I think it's effective because also you can use your hands to emphasize what you're saying where all too often we see sort of a glowing face in front of a screen from somebody's basement or family room or something. So that's good. I like that.

For our audio listeners, I encourage them to turn in to the video on YouTube. And they can get it from the show notes page as well.

Michael Port: Well, it is true. I mean, when you see the... Right now for those who are listening, I'm holding up my hands. I can stretch out my hands almost all the way straight and you can still pretty much see them. So that's how wide the frame is on my camera. And I just looked down now to look at the computer screen, but for those who are watching on video, you probably noticed that it looks like I'm looking directly at you because I've been looking into the lens of the camera rather than down at the screen, which would have you just looking at my brow, you wouldn't actually really see my eyes. It'd be a little

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strange. Now certainly the camera can be moved up, but I don't actually need to because what I do while I'm listening to you is I react as if I'm seeing you. But I'm only hearing you. I'm not actually seeing you as we're speaking. I just hear you.

And the fact of the matter is, especially when you have video communication, there's often a lag, even if it's a very, very short lag that you can't perceive. Sometimes the lag is very long and you're waiting, and you're going, "I know they're saying... What? Saying something. Okay, there they are. Right. Okay, good." But even when the audio is in sync, there is still a little bit of a lag. So you're not able to pick up micro expressions in the way that you can if you're actually sitting across the table from somebody. This is one of the issues that people don't realize exists in this video communication. As good as it is, it still takes thousands and thousands of coding processes to get the video across the country or the world.

And so I know you had our friend Mick Morgan on the show, and I'm sure he discussed this. This is one of his areas of specialty. But we're actually better at picking up emotion in a sound of someone's voice than we are at picking up emotion through the video screen during these web conferences. So sometimes it's actually quite a good idea to turn off the camera and just listen rather than watch, and that's why I don't actually worry about watching you during this. I can still stay looking right at the camera, the very, very focused attention on whoever is watching. So they're seeing my eyes fully, but I'm listening to you and allowing myself to have an emotional response to you so you can see that on my face as well.

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Roger Dooley: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Yeah, I've pretty much trained myself to look at the camera too, but I know that I in the past have been guilty of looking at the person talking because that's natural. In a conversation, you look at the other person's face. It's such a natural thing to do, but you see the effect when you're on a Zoom call where everyone's looking, focused down, looking down.

Michael Port: Yeah.

Roger Dooley: Not good.

Michael Port: I just want to say something for everybody who's watching and listening right now. If you don't enjoy staring into a tiny little webcam like we're doing right now and you would rather actually engage with people face-to-face, good for you. You probably have a lot of communication "experts" who will try to make it sound like this world of virtual communication is a panacea of connection and idealism and it's just not for me personally. I'm only speaking for myself. So if you feel that it's less than ideal, that you don't love it either, and that you're fatigued after sitting in front of the camera for hours and hours, that is perfectly normal, perfectly reasonable, and it's why I'm so excited for the events to come back because I think people are going to clammer for them. They're going to want to be in the room.

Yes, they'll be some things in virtual communication that will stay. Yes, we may not go into the office quite as much as we did before. But people want to engage with each other. We're human beings who are social, and we're going to want that. So those events are going to come back. And I'm excited for it, and if you don't love the

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virtual presentation world, that's perfectly fine. I don't think you're obligated to because it's actually not innately human.

Roger Dooley: No. Well, while we're on that topic, one of the maxims I've heard lightly from conference people and such is that in a virtual world, you want your presentations to be shorter because people's attention span, their ability to sit in place and watch a speaker is shorter. So instead of a 40 minute keynote, you may be able to do a 20 or 25 minute keynote. Do you think this is true, or again, is this more reflection of the quality of the speaker, the content, the delivery and so on?

Michael Port: Yeah. I'm going to go out on a limb here and say I think it's more a reflection of the quality of the presentations. There's probably a number of different factors that influence. Certainly if you're on Zoom on day long, you've got so much fatigue that you're inclined to say that you want shorter experiences. Do you know Andrew Davis?

Roger Dooley: Yes, vaguely. Not particularly well. Via Facebook I think.

Michael Port: Okay. Great. So I think you and Andrew should meet, and maybe he'd be a great guest for your show. He's a marketing expert. He's a great-

Roger Dooley: Episode number 197. I forgotten completely too.

Michael Port: Could be. He's a great friend of mine, and we're writing a book together called The Referable Speaker. And the question that we answer in the book is what makes a speaker referable so that they get gig after gig after gig because people see their speeches and tell other people that they have to see the speech. So we've been

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working on this book for quite some time, and the reason I mention Andrew now is because he has a bit in one of the speeches that he gives, and I worked on the speech with him, that really digs into this concept. Because the question that he poses is, well, look... And this is not just around virtual presentations but marketers have been saying this for a number of years, which is audiences want snackable content. Short, little bites. They don't want long form content.

He says, "Well, if that's actually true that everything should be snackable and bite size, why does somebody binge watch Stranger Things in a weekend?" We'll sit down and we'll watch 12 hours of film programming or TV programming over a short period of time. Why? Because it's really gosh darn good. You can't turn it off it's so good. So I think focus less on the length and more on the quality. And so it's been the same way with sales letters for decades. Video sales pitches, speeches in the room, virtual presentations. If we're first focusing on well, how long should it be before we've actually conceived of the material and worked on a script and rehearsed it and tweaked it, how on Earth do we know how long it's supposed to be?

So for example, this two-day live stream event that we've got coming up. There is not one session that is the same length as any other session. It's a two-day event, and we run it from noon Eastern to I think around six o'clock Eastern each day. And we have, gosh, there must be probably 16 different sessions over those two days, and they're all different lengths. Why? Because they don't need to be the same length. They're as long as they need to be to teach that particular concept.

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So instead of thinking about how long it should be, first focus on well, what's my objective? How am I going to deliver it? I don't need any more time than it takes to deliver on this objective or on this promise, and I'm going to take as much time as is necessary to deliver on this objective and this promise. Because if it's really, really compelling, people would stay for hours. We'd get feedback from people that'd say, "Look, I was just going to pop in for an hour, but after the first hour, I realized it was so good. I canceled everything for the next two days, and I watched every single minute." Or people say, "I stayed up. I'm in China, and I watched it from China. So it's two o'clock in the morning for me, and I'm not going to bed. This is too good."

Roger Dooley: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Yeah. Well, I think that's one advantage that virtual events have over in-person events because if you're a conference organizer, you've got a pretty rigid schedule template to follow. You've got so much space and time for the keynote, for the panel discussions, for the breakouts, lunches and breakfasts, and everything else in there. And you can't really have a speaker say, "Well, instead of 25 minutes, I can really use 37." It's like, find something—

Michael Port: Well, yes. I mean, yes and no. I say yes. I think that meeting planners are in a particularly difficult situation because if they're hiring experienced speakers, those experienced speakers can certainly adjust their speech to fit the length of time allotted. But if the meeting planner's not working with that speaker on the speech, which they don't, and they really probably should be, they would be randomly just saying, "Well, I'll give you 37 minutes." Then the speaker has to figure out how to fit to 37

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minutes, which is not what we're suggesting is effective here. But when you're putting on your own conferences, and say when we put on conferences, whether they're in-person or virtual, the same thing applies.

We'll have sessions that will end 22 minutes after the hour. And then we just make the break such that it comes back on an easy... We don't come back from the break at 9:52. We come back from the break at 10:00 and make it easy when you come from those breaks. But because we're in control of all the programming and the people that are speaking are our faculty, we're going to be able to do that. So it is a little bit harder for meeting planners to do that.

But I think speakers think that they have to fill every single second of the time allotted. So for example, let's say you're given 60 minutes, but you actually don't need 60 minutes. You don't pad in extra material just to fill the time. Nobody ever got fired for delivering a 10 out of 10 presentation in five minutes less time than was allotted. Nobody ever got fired because they say, "Well, listen. We paid for 60, you only did 55. I mean, I know everybody said it was a 10 out of 10 best thing they've ever seen, but we're very unhappy." It never happens like that. What happens is when you deliver a mediocre presentation that runs over time, then you don't get hired back again.

And look, audiences because they're so busy and there's often so much packed into an event, either virtual or in-person, they love a little extra free time. So if you end a little bit early and say, "Listen, I got a gift for you. I got a little extra seven minutes here for you. Go enjoy." Their break just got longer. Now of course you have to

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coordinate these things with the meeting planner because if the team is not aware that you're going to end seven minutes early, then it can be a scramble because the coffee isn't ready or their hanging out and all of a sudden the doors open and people flood out of the room. Then of course that becomes problematic for them. But—

Roger Dooley: Another good reason to rehearse because that way you'll know exactly how long it's going to take, and I've seen even experienced speakers screw up the full day conference schedule because they were the first one out of the gate and ran an extra 20 minutes or something.

Michael Port: Oh yeah. I've been speaking at events where they had to cut a speaker because multiple speakers went over.

Roger Dooley: Yeah, that's really brutal, especially for the person who got cut for the duration of the conference. That speakers never going to come back to that conference ever. So yeah—

Michael Port: Yeah, they'll probably be given the keynote for next year, but they'll get to go first.

Roger Dooley: Maybe. That would have to be the promise anyway. Then they can take their revenge on the organizer by going over by 30 minutes. But anyway, why don't you tell everybody, Michael, where people can find out about the virtual event that you're having, as well as other information, like the free download that I grabbed.

Michael Port: Sure. I'd love to, and then if I may, I'd also love to just introduce one more concept that I think is important, especially for those of your listeners who are

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entrepreneurs or in the business space. They're not professional speakers necessarily.

Roger Dooley: I said this was going to be steal my show, but not grand larceny. But go ahead, Michael. That's okay.

Michael Port: Okay. So in terms of this two-day event that we mentioned, if you go to heroicpublicspeaking.com/stream, S-T-R-E-A-M. [Heroicpublicspeaking.com/stream](https://heroicpublicspeaking.com/stream). You can see that it's free to register there, and you can come watch as much or as little of those two days as you would like. Although if you do watch it, you're going to want to stay. So open up your calendar. And at heroicpublicspeaking.com there is a download that is a primer on how to be very effective in virtual presentations. So you can see that at heroicpublicspeaking.com. And if you've got a question for me, just shoot me an email at questions@heroicpublicspeaking.com.

Now, one thing that I think is really important for folks who give presentations to consider is how they want to be seen because very often entrepreneurs, business professionals, they go into speaking thinking of themselves as an expert. And I think there was a time when that made sense, and certainly if you are a service professional of any kind, you want to be hired, it's very important to be seen as an expert, especially if you do work for people. If you're in marketing and you have a consulting firm and you want people to hire your firm to do the marketing, you better have a whole bunch of experts in best practices at that firm for sure.

But if you want to be a speaker or even an author that is in high demand in that they're given the key spots at a

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virtual or in-person event. Rather than being relegated to the breakout rooms, you want to consider thinking of yourself and the work that you do, the content that you bring as visionary content rather than expert content. And there's an important distinction between those two schools of thought. Experts bring best practices. There's nothing wrong with being an expert. But experts bring best practices, and especially over the last decade with the rise of YouTube and the broader internet, expertise has become commoditized. There are hundreds, if not thousands of other people who can deliver the best practices in your industry. Those people are often given speaking spots, but they are usually given breakout spots. And they're generally not paid very well. They're given how-to advice.

But if you look at a conference agenda and you study the agenda, you'll notice that the people who are given the keynote spots, the people whose pictures are much bigger and bios are more prominently featured and get the best time slots with the general audiences. Those are the people who are delivering visionary content. Visionary content that challenges the status quo and often offers new ways of thinking. And so you can move from that expert space into that visionary space with small tweaks. You don't even need massive changes very often.

Sometimes it's just in the way that you position yourself and the content that you are teaching. Because again best practices, I can learn best practices for home page usability by spending a few days, if not a few hours studying a few books online. No problem. But if you do want to be featured more prominently, if you do want to be seen as somebody who is a thought leader or an

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industry change agent, then think about being a visionary in terms of the kind of content that you're bringing to the people that you serve. And one of the ways of doing that is by being able to ask and answer questions that Google cannot.

This is something that Andrew and I are focusing on in the Referable Speaker, which will be out next year. Because if the questions that you're answering in a presentation that you give are questions that the audience can find out by searching Google, you're a commodity. But if you're raising bigger questions. Like for example, at Heroic Public Speaking, we asking speakers to stop speaking and start performing. How do you become a better performer as a human being in a way that's authentic and effective? That's not a question that Google can answer. We can. If you just want to learn tips for how to make sure that you keep eye contact and have a well structured speech, those are all pretty basic best practices. But the visionary content is what really creates your name in an industry so that you carve out a whole new space in that industry where you essentially become a category of one simply because you're challenging the status quo. You're bringing big, new ideas that people who in the C Suite, et cetera really, really need because they need unconventional thinking to break out of the challenges or problems that they're having. They don't need more best practices. That's more for front line folks. They need the big, visionary thinking.

So what question can you answer that Google cannot, and how do you build your brand around that question?

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Roger Dooley: Great. Well, that is really good advice. I'm glad we paused for that moment after your info. I'll remind our listeners and viewers that we will link to the places that you mentioned for the various free content and other information on the show notes page at [RogerDooley.com/Podcast](https://www.RogerDooley.com/Podcast). And we'll have the audio, video, and text versions of our conversation there too.

Michael, thanks so much for being on the show.

Michael Port: You're welcome. It's my pleasure. Thank you for having me.

Thank you for tuning into this episode of Brainfluence. To find more episodes like this one, and to access all of Roger's online writing and resources, the best starting point is [RogerDooley.com](https://www.RogerDooley.com).

And remember, Roger's new book, *Friction*, is now available at Amazon, Barnes and Noble, and book sellers everywhere. Bestselling author Dan Pink calls it, "An important read," and Wharton Professor Dr. Joana Berger said, "You'll understand Friction's power and how to harness it."

For more information or for links to Amazon and other sellers, go to [RogerDooley.com/Friction](https://www.RogerDooley.com/Friction).

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