



How to Take Control of Any Conversation & Avoid the Killer Mistake of Improvisation

Nance Rosen



Killer Mistake #9

You Improvise.

You may not think of yourself as a professional improvisational actor, but you are. Actually, you're an amateur with a lifetime of imperfect practice.

You improvise all day long. You've been doing it for years.

Why is it a Killer Mistake to Improvise When You Don't Have To?

You are unclear. Confusing. Disorganized. Inconsistent. Convuluted. There's a mess of disjointed, disorganized stuff coming out of your mouth.

How often do you come away from a conversation and think:

- "Why did I say that?" or
- "Why didn't I just say what I meant?"

That's what happens when you're not prepared to speak up, answer questions or respond to criticism. **Improvising is what defeats you when you communicate.** It's what makes you nervous about speaking in front of groups. It's what irritates your audience when you speak up, but you're not ready to make your point clearly.

Communicating is your chance to sparkle, thrive and succeed. But the killer problem right now is you're freestyling. You are showing us how disorganized your thinking is – even when you know what you want to say, but you can't get it out succinctly and convincingly.

That's the reason people who know you don't hire you, buy from you, recommend you or invest in you.

That's why improvising depletes your wealth of ambition, motivation and success.

What Exactly is Improvisation?

It's the act of making up what you say and do, in the moment you're asked a question or want to make a point. In the entertainment industry, it's called "improv."



You may have seen the famous Groundlings Comedy troop, where many famous comedians started their careers, including some who starred on Saturday Night Live. Maybe you saw Drew Carey's show, Improv-a-ganza on The Game Show Network or YouTube.

These people are talented, quick-witted and extremely intelligent. Not one of these qualities, but all of them are required to be successful improv actors.

During an improv show, someone asks the audience to call out a situation. You hear people shouting out topics like:

- "Sisters planning a surprise party for their dog" or
- "Man gets fired from his company after forgetting to wear pants."

Then, the actors immediately start their scene.

They work in front of a live audience. Nothing has been written or scripted beforehand. There's no rehearsal. They just spontaneously create dialogue, act out a coherent story line, and impress the audience.

Improv may be the single most difficult form of live performance.

Who Can Do It Well?

Most trained actors and even the funniest comedians are often unsuccessful at it. Really, just a few special people like Greg Proops or the late Robin Williams can actually pull it off with success. A few talk show hosts do a little bit of it, but most of their questions and bits are written and rehearsed.

How About You?

I bet you do improv – or attempt it – every single day, all day long. I bet you do improv when you meet strangers, who could have become clients, employers, investors or referral sources.

I bet you do it when you believe you're having "casual conversations." Of course there are no casual conversations, since every thing you says something about YOU.

But that's what you're doing, aren't you? Improv. **Winging it.** Freestyling. You ask and answer questions, respond to other people's comments. Speak your mind, without any preparation.

Improv Is the Fastest Way to Fail

The stress of improv and the abject lack of success most people have doing it – shows up all the time. People fail to get hired. Fail to get promoted. Fail to win new business. Fail to get referrals. Fail to get investments. Fail. Fail. Fail. Fail. Fail.

Most people never even consider why they keep failing! Instead, they have all these weaponized emotions about the world.

– Why people don't "understand" them???

– Why people don't "respect" them???

– Why can't they get ahead???

It's because they are such poor improv actors! As most of us are.

Have You Attempted This?

Here are a few questions you probably improvise answers to.

1. What do you do?
2. How does your company differ from its competitors?
3. Why did you choose this line of work?
4. Why did you start your business?
5. What's your background?
6. Why do you want to transition to a new career?
7. What experience do you have that's relevant?
8. How do you know that you can do this work or project?
9. What are your long-term goals?
10. What would your references say about you, if I called them?
11. What do you like most about your work?
12. What type of client or company do you work best with?
13. What's your greatest success?
14. When have you failed and what did you learn from that??
15. What's the most important thing you learned in school?
16. What's the most important thing you learned after you graduated?
17. What do you do for fun?
18. What's your favorite thing to do?
19. How did you meet your partner?
20. How can I help you achieve your goals?
21. What would be an amazing opportunity for you?

Sickening, Isn't It?

If just hearing these questions makes you sick to your stomach or at least a little queasy: you're in the great majority of people on our planet. You're NOT a **Million Dollar Personal Brand**.

Million Dollar Personal Brands have an unfair advantage. We have really meaningful, well-crafted answers we could deliver even if we are going into surgery while the anesthesia is starting to take effect.

Got FAQs?

We have answers to frequently asked questions ready "on a trigger." We have ways to start conversations "on a trigger."

That's how we can communicate authentically and powerfully, while our brains are relaxed and taking in the audience's response to us. We can make adjustments, or steer the conversation in the right direction for them and our desired outcomes.

What Do You Have?

When you find yourself in a meeting or conversation, what are you ready to deliver? Most people have to search their brain, open their mental file cabinets, fish around for something that seems to be relevant, and put whatever comes to mind into words that stumble out of their mouths.

Arghhh. That's not just hard on you. Think of your audience! They want you to be the right person. They want to trust you. They want to like you. And, care about you. But they have little to no idea what you have to truly offer them.

There's another way. The right way. The successful way.

Million Dollar Personal Brands Have "TRIGGER TALK"

Trigger talk includes phrases you have crafted in advance, that you use over and over. Trigger talk is intentional, outcome-oriented, stress-free speaking that yields reliable, predictable success. That'll make you a **Million Dollar Personal Brand**. FAST.

For example, when I am paid to speak at an event, I often go early to join in the networking time. I like to know more about the people I'm going to address. I like to eavesdrop on conversations to get a flavor of who's in my audience, and what words and phrases are commonly used in their industry or association. I even like to get a sense of how well they know each other and seem to like each other.

So, even though I don't HAVE to go to networking events, I kind of LOVE them.

I know. You're probably like most people and hate networking events.

It's Called Networking and Not Net Playing – for a Reason

Why do **Million Dollar Personal Brands** love networking events? The right events are target rich environments where we can do our best work.

- Our outcomes come to life.
- We sign new clients.
- We get job offers.
- We get asked to do things we want to do.
- We enthrall investors.

What Do You Have On Trigger?

Like most **Million Dollar Personal Brands**, I'm typically one of the very few individuals prepared to speak. I don't mean prepared to just deliver my speech from the stage. I mean prepared to speak in what you believe are "casual conversations," like asking and answering questions about your experience, interests, business and family.

Million Dollar Personal Brands don't stumble, drone on or pontificate on these topics or any other topic. We don't shut down and look like deer in the headlights, either.

Million Dollar Personal Brands speak in crisp, clear and compelling ways. We're self-positive and kind to our audiences. We represent ourselves powerfully and authentically, at the same time.

One of the reasons we are such comfortable and interesting communicators, is our investment in ourselves and what interests us. **Million Dollar Personal Brands** are deeply connected to our brand attributes, our topics, our motivations, and our desired outcomes.

We also are deeply aware of who our best audiences are – the people who will help us move forward. So we are ready to deeply connect with them.

How? We put our messages into coherent, compelling sentences and practice them. We use them with an audience, and then refine them so they make even more sense and are even more sticky (memorable).

Knowing exactly what to say and being prepared to say it? That's what makes a **Million Dollar Personal Brand**.

No IMPROV!

- No sweating it.
- No bad stress.
- No wondering if you are making sense.

- No fumbling for words.
- No freezing.
- No regrets that you forgot to say the one thing that would have prompted your audience to ask you to work with them.

Haven't you gone to enough networking meetings without accomplishing anything?

Haven't you avoided going to meetings because you're too nervous about how to network or even introduce yourself?

Haven't you been embarrassed at least once, because you were so nervous you couldn't even remember your name, title, company, experience, products, or other simple facts about yourself?

Job Interviews: No Surprises!

I've had job candidates in my office who answered "Nance Rosen," when I asked them their name. That's how nervous they were. There are posters of my new book behind my desk, which is what cued them to say my name instead of their own!

It pains me so much that these people struggle with something that is so easy and fun to do – like interviewing. Because it is easy and fun, once you have the right words on trigger. It's like being a magician doing a trick that seems phenomenal to your audience, but it's really easy for you.

You're relaxed and enjoying the "show" as much as your audience is. **It's more like play than work.**

The End of Your Nightmares

Trigger talk – the term I use to define frequently used phrases or information – is the end of mistakes, nervousness, embarrassment, bad stress, and fear of public speaking, or drawing a blank about what to post online.

With your reservoir of trigger talk, you can chime in to any ongoing conversation or online thread. You always have great questions to ask. You know what to say that leads people to ask you about yourself and your goals.

Trigger talk keeps your mind totally relaxed.

What's the Biggest Gain?

Your brain can actually scan the environment, and enjoy being there. You're so calm and well-received. You can easily think of something new to say. Or, ask a pertinent question.

This works in any situation where communication is key, which according to research is 85% of success.

Trigger Talk in Action

For example, I open nearly every lecture, keynote, training or class with this trigger talk.

“Every day you have the opportunity to say the one thing that will change your life.”

I deliver that trigger talk, because it is:

- True
- Reflects one authentic component of my personal brand: Encouraging
- Telegraphs that I am an expert in a specific subject: Communication
- Arouses the audience’s curiosity: a rule of Act One in my Speak Up System (a book I wrote on business communication)
- Allows me to be completely and totally relaxed, whether I’m in front of five people or 35,000 people
- Lets me gauge the audience’s interest on-the-spot, and decide what special information I want to bring into the presentation

In essence, I can focus on the audience and express my authentic delight for being with them. I am authentically delighted because I feel no uncomfortable stress. I can be kind, attentive to my audience’s needs and easily engage with their questions.

Why? Because I feel so relaxed, I’m almost meditating. While most everyone else is sweating, stumbling and stressing.

Which way do you want to feel?

- Stressed from improvising? Or:
- Relaxed, using your trigger talk?

Trigger Talk Does Not Equal Lots of Memorization

I have never memorized a whole presentation. I just have trigger talk phrases to cue my brain for various segments of a presentation. I’ve crafted 50 bits of trigger talk that covers practically everything about me, my work, my clients, teaching, coaching, books, learning programs – even my family, including the dogs. And, my faults and failures!

Trigger Talk Helps You Feel Self-Confident in Everyday Situations

For example: When I stand in line for coffee or sit down next to a stranger, my trigger talk is: "So, how is your day going?"

When a client comes into my office, I ask: "What's new and improved?"

Million Dollar Personal Brands are Prepared to Succeed

We are relaxed. In flow state. In the zone.

Can you imagine? Take my example.

"Every day you have the opportunity to say the one thing that will change your life."

One simple sentence, made up of just 16 words – all of which have only one syllable, except for "opportunity," (which has five syllables).

Wouldn't you like to have your very own 21 syllables (or whatever you need) that instantly relax you?

- And make you feel comfortable with people?
- Help you introduce yourself in a powerful and positive way?
- Let you focus on your audience?
- Absorb how much they are truly interested in you and what you authentically want them to do or have them buy?

Trigger Talk Takes Practice and It's Worth It

If I fell asleep and someone said, "Let's welcome Nance Rosen." I wouldn't even have to open my eyes. I can say my self-introduction – and about fifty other key bits of information without thinking!

This is why I INVENTED TRIGGER TALK. It took away all the nervousness, stumbling, misery and regret I had about public speaking. It stopped my panic attacks.

Keep in mind: I don't memorize everything I'm going to say. I just remember key facts I typically want an audience to know. I have openings and closings for my presentations on trigger so I do those as elegantly, authentically and easily as possible. That's good for me, because I can focus on the audience. And, it's good for the audience, because it's well thought out and organized for their consumption.

Not Just for Presentations

After using this method successfully for a long time, I realized trigger talk is not just wonderful for presentations and big meetings. For example, when I've been in a conversation and someone asks: "What's your background?" These words come out of my mouth on a trigger.

"I'm a former marketing executive with The Coca-Cola Company, the number one most recognized brand in the world. I hosted International Business on public radio for a decade, where I spoke to the world's most important people in business, politics, labor and government. Now I produce learning programs for business owners who need personal branding and communications training. And, I am a job coach – CNBC calls me the America's Job Coach, because I've become famous for helping people find great new careers, launch businesses or move up in the company they are in."

Once again, you could wake me from a deep sleep, and those words will come out of my mouth if you ask me: "What's your background?"

If instead you asked me, "What do you do?" I would deliver only the last two sentences.

"Now I produce learning programs for business owners who need personal branding and communications training. And, I am a job coach – CNBC calls me the America's Job Coach, because I've become famous for helping people find great new careers, launch businesses or move up in the company they are in."

Million Dollar Personal Brands are Sticky

Successful corporate brands like Volvo are consistently sending out the same compelling messages so their audiences know exactly what they mean. **Remember:** You can't make money until you make meaning. That's why you know that Volvo means safety.

That's exactly what **Million Dollar Personal Brands** do. We know what meaning we want to make in the lives of our audiences. We know it takes our being clear, consistent and compelling to attract our audiences. Deciding on how to describe ourselves, our interests, our services and products and our career aspirations is the way to start. The next step is putting those descriptions into engaging statements, so people immediately understand what we do, and how we can help them achieve their goals.

So, we have dozens of trigger talk phrases and sentences. That means we have carefully crafted the words and phrases that define us, so they reflect our personal brand attributes and our desired outcomes.

We want to be memorable. Sticky.

Sticky Has Its Benefits

When you meet a **Million Dollar Personal Brand**: you're likely to remember what we say, because we say it in a memorable way. And, you're likely to become our brand evangelist, without knowing it.

When someone asks, "Hey, did you meet anyone interesting at that event?"

Yes, you did, if you met a **Million Dollar Personal Brand**. That's probably the only person you remember distinctly. Then, you talk about how great we are. You deliver our message to more people who then:

- Seek us out.
- Find us online.
- Reach out for more information.
- Take our call.

That's why **Million Dollar Personal Brands** have so much joy in work and life. It's not that we perform miracles at work or we have superior skills – although it's important to do good work.

It's trigger talk, because that's what gets us the IDEAL work, and the IDEAL of clients and offers. It's how we get what we really want. We spend lots of time thinking about our ideal outcomes, and it's worthwhile to craft phrases and sentences so we can do that as quickly as possible when we meet people.

Trigger talk gives you a head start because people will remember you. Because you are clear, consistent and compelling, people will trust you, care about you and like you. TLC. That's why your trigger talks must be authentic. It's **Million Dollar PERSONAL Branding**.

I Picked The Perfect Big Brand Strategy for YOU

I have curated corporate brand strategy to give you the only those components that are also PERFECT for personal branding. That's why I focus on exactly how big corporate brands make their reputations and their billions of dollars in profits.

Apple, BMW, Nike, Honda, the list is very long. I know because I spent over half of my career in advertising and marketing. To help you become a **Million Dollar Personal Brand**, I reveal the big brands' reputation building techniques in my courses and coaching.

This one is easy to see. Trigger talk is like a slogan used repeatedly by a corporate brand. You know these:

Nike: "Just Do It."

L'Oréal: "Because You're Worth It"

Disneyland: The Happiest Place on Earth

BMW: "The Ultimate Driving Machine."

Apple: "Think Different."

YOUR trigger talk will use clear, crisp and compelling and STICKY words and phrases about you. And in conversation, you can go deeper into describing your interests, your traits, your background or anything that would be juicy for your audiences.

Remember: Your words and phrases need to be authentic – not manufactured – and easy to say in any situation.

Obviously, your trigger talk truly gives you an "unfair" competitive advantage. It is how you easily and reliably build your reputation and visibility. That converts to income.

Of course, you must remember that ETHICS must govern your use of this technique. You must be conscientious about your audience's best interests. You must have good intentions.

I'm going to assume you know that.

Memory Problems?

Are you worrying about your ability to memorize all this trigger talk? Maybe you wonder:

- Could I really memorize 50 facts or phrases, or even whole paragraphs about myself?
- Would my brain really store them and put the right one on the tip of my tongue, whenever I needed it?

After all, you're not a computer. You cannot just buy more memory and snap it into your brain.

The amazing news is that **your brain is infinitely better than a computer** when it comes to intelligence. It won't crash under the weight of your trigger talk, or almost anything else you want to store. How taxing is it to have 50 key facts and phrases memorized about yourself – plus everything else you need to store and access?

According to Paul Reber, professor of psychology at Northwestern University, no worries.

"The human brain consists of about one billion neurons. Each neuron forms about 1,000 connections to other neurons, amounting to more than a trillion connections. If each neuron could only help store a single memory, running out of space would be a problem. You might have only a few gigabytes of storage space, similar to the space in an iPod or a USB flash drive.

Yet neurons combine so that each one helps with many memories at a time, exponentially increasing the brain's memory storage capacity to something closer to around 2.5 petabytes (or a million gigabytes). For comparison, if your brain worked like a digital video recorder, 2.5 petabytes would be enough to hold three million hours of TV shows. You would have to leave the TV running continuously for more than 300 years to use up all that storage."

Now do you feel better about your brain? Are you amazed at spaciousness of its storage capacity? You won't be speaking continuously for more than 300 years, so it won't crash on you!

DO THIS

1. Write down the three most important traits or interests you have.
2. Now give an example of each one, or how you first became aware of it. That example should be two sentences, maximum. Congratulations! You have trigger talk!
3. Say your sentences a loud.
4. Refine and rewrite until you like them.
5. Then, be prepared to work one into your next conversation, presentation or meeting.

Million Dollar Personal Brands are prepared to succeed.