

## ACTION PLAN

ADVICE FROM JOY DAVIDSON,  
AUTHOR OF  
*BREAKING SPACE*

### Stamp out Overused Phrases

Those overused catch phrases and anecdotes that have been circulating for years are not only clichés, but sometimes misrepresent reality. Here are a few of my pet peeves—some all-time meaningless clichés that deserve to be canned forever:

We've all heard, "You never get a second chance to make a first impression." Elizabeth Jeffries, CSP, wisely points out that every time we make an impression, it's a first impression.

Then there's the oft-repeated phrase: "The No. 1 fear of adults is speaking before groups." This has been widely misinterpreted since it was first published. The number one social fear of adults is speaking before groups. But given the choice of speaking before a group or trying to scale a 500-foot vertical sheet of solid rock, most adults would find speaking before a group the least frightening option.

I'm also tired of "It's not what you know, it's who you know," and "It's not what you say, it's how you say it."

Likewise, if I see or hear the phrase "Luck is when preparation meets opportunity" one more time, I will scream in a forest whether anyone hears me or not.

It's not that all these statements lack meaning. Overuse, however, frequently leads to misuse and misunderstanding.

To conclude, here are my personal nominations for words and phrases most deserving of banishment: *Empowerment* and *excellence*, *Information Superhighway* and *walk your talk*.

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**PURPOSE:** To provide authoritative, useful, easy-to-understand information that will help our readers reduce stress, be more energetic and balance the demands of home and work.

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