

Me, We and You

At the women's conference I referenced on Monday's post, the organizer was also the emcee. She introduced the keynote speaker like this:

I met [speaker] at a conference, and I think she's so great. I learned a lot from her. I was really impacted by what she said. I learned that...

This is not a verbatim quote but do you notice anything about this "introduction?" It is all about the organizer and not about who she is introducing. It's a "me" speech. Not a "we" speech and certainly not a "you" speech.

I asked Brad Phillips (@mrmediatraining on Twitter), president of Phillips Media Relations, a media training organization, what he thought of a speech that focused on "I." His response was:

Depends on the humility of the speaker, I suppose. Can range from humble self-experience to (more often) grating and ego-filled.

In other words, an "I speech" can seem self-aggrandizing and can potentially turn the audience off, especially if the speaker shows no humility.

It seems to me that emcees at an event should focus more on the we and you than on the me. The event after all, is not about the emcee, it is about the collective audience. It is not about the emcee's ego.

In this case, I think this particular emcee was very self-focused. She was neither humble nor overly egotistical but seemingly clueless as to how she was coming across. She did not seem to care that she should have given the speaker a proper introduction (Ms. so and so is a writer focused on x, and she has been working in this field since x, etc.) and she

also did not seem to be able to connect the dots on how this particular speaker would help us, the audience, why this speaker had been invited to speak.

In marketing communication, the focus should be on the you or the we, and not the me. If you ever go to a website or read a brochure that goes on about me, me, me and does not address how we work together or how this benefits you, you know you are dealing with someone who has not a single clue about audience (or its needs).