



**The ENGINEERING CAREER COACH PODCAST
SESSION #21
How to be a Creative Communicator with Christina Canters**

Show notes at: engineeringcareercoach.com/speakingchecklist

Anthony's Upfront Intro: You are listening to *The Engineering Career Coach Podcast* with Anthony Fasano session #21. In this episode I'm going to interview Christina Canters, an architect from Melbourne, Australia who now focuses on helping technical professionals improve their communication skills. Christina's going to give some tips for improving your public speaking and also walk us through a checklist that she uses to prepare for presentations. Lets do it!

Episode Intro: Welcome to *The Engineering Career Coach Podcast*, where it's all about helping real engineers to overcome real challenges and get real results. And now for your host, who is on a mission to inspire as many engineers as possible, professional engineer and certified career coach, Anthony Fasano.

Hello everyone. This is Anthony Fasano, your engineering career coach and I welcome you to session twenty-one of the podcast here. I'm excited. We've got a great guest today in Christina Canters - she gives so much information about public speaking and improving your communication skills as a technical professional. I want to actually make this intro real short so we can get into the show.

I just have one announcement to make. I'm putting on a very special event for motivated engineers. The event's going to be in sunny San Diego in late September. We're going to focus on how to develop strong communication skills, develop your networking and business development abilities and also develop your leadership skills.

We did a similar type event in Austin, Texas. You can check it on the website, engineeringcareercoach.com/austin for the recap of that but the website for this event in San Diego is iecdfallmeetup.com. And I'm going to do something for podcast listeners because I appreciate you listening to the show. If you register for the San Diego meet-up before the end of June and you've listened to it here on the podcast, just send me an email and just say, "I heard about it on the podcast - I registered for the conference," and I'll give you a complimentary coaching session with me either before or after the meet-up.

So you could either prep for the meet-up - we could talk about what you want to work on, I can give you some tips on it - or after the meet-up if you want to talk to me about digesting the content and implementing it into your career. So again, all you have to do to get that is go to iecdfallmeetup.com,

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register before the end of June and then email me at afasano@powerfulpurpose.com and we'll get you set up with that complimentary session.

Alright, with that I don't want to waste any more time today because we've got an awesome show packed with strategies. Christina's going to go over her checklist for when she does a presentation with us and then also our career changing tip - she's going to stay on with us and she gives an awesome tip for conversational technique that you could use. So with that let's get right into the show.

Coaching Segment:

Anthony: Alright now it's time for our coaching segment of the show, where I try to either give some advice myself or bring on an expert to talk about something that can help you in your engineering career and today I'm really excited. I have with me Christina Canters, who is an architect from Melbourne, Australia who runs the website designdrawspeak.com and she focuses a lot with helping architects with their communication skills and their speaking skills.

I'm going to talk to her today a little bit about how to become confident, creative presenters, improving your communication skills, your speaking skills and we're also going to go through a checklist that she uses in preparation for a speaking engagement or a presentation. So with that I want to just welcome in Christina. Hi Christina.

Christina: Hi Anthony. Thanks so much for having me.

Anthony: Thanks for being on the show. I really appreciate it. It's always nice to find technical experts that are out there trying to help other professionals improve their communication efforts. I guess, to start off Christina why don't you kind of tell the listeners kind of in your own words a little bit about you and how you started doing this?

Christina: Ok, so I am from Melbourne, Australia and I am a former architect. What I'm really passionate about though, Anthony, is helping design students and designers with their presentation skills and their communication skills because it's something that they just don't teach you in design school. When I was a design student I didn't struggle a lot with it but I definitely felt like I could do things better and it wasn't until I did a course on communication skills and professional communication skills I actually learnt that you can actually learn how to be a better communicator and I applied those skills that I learnt to my final year presentations and it just made a huge, huge difference.

Then going into the workplace, working for a large corporate architectural firm I then saw that people don't necessarily get better with experience and there's people out there that are great designers and



they're really talented at what they do but they still struggle to communicate those ideas in a really concise and engaging manner. I saw this and I thought there's something, I want to be able to help people at the student level to then prepare them for the professional environment and to help them become better designers and to help them get their ideas out to the world.

So I started a podcast. It's called **Presentation Skills For Design Students** and that's how I do the majority of my teaching I suppose and I also run workshops and do lectures and one-on-one coaching and things like that.

Anthony: Excellent. That's awesome. Those are the kind of things that I think technical professionals need and it's great to hear that you were able to take a course and improved your skills because that's one of the things that I try to tell my listeners and whenever I get the chance to speak to engineers is that public speaking and presenting is something that you can improve upon. I think a lot of people feel that it's one of those skills that you're either born with or you're not and I try to continue to tell them that that's not true, that's not a fact.

In fact there's many engineers out there that I've helped and I've told to go to **Toastmasters**, join Toastmasters - a wonderful organization that helps people with their speaking and communication skills and they've had great results and they've improved. So it's good to hear someone like you Christina, who has some expertise in this field saying that you took a course and you learned. I think that's awesome.

Christina: Yes, it's definitely something that you can learn. It's just like, I liken it to riding a bike actually. I mean no-one, I've spoke to people before and they're like, "Ah, I'm just not good at presenting. I'm just not good at speaking in front of a group," and they kind of just accept that but really the first time you get on a bike, no-one gets on a bike, falls off and then says, "Oh, I'm just not good at riding a bike." You know, no-one says that.

Everyone knows that you need to practice. You put on your training wheels. You get your mom or dad to help you. And then you gradually build up the confidence and then you build up the skills and then eventually you can take off your training wheels and then you're there and then you build those skills. And then you take it to the next level and then go ride on the roads, without a helmet, like in New York City, which is really scary.

But anyway, a lot of that is to do with confidence and presentation skills, public speaking it's just, it's exactly the same. So that I find like one of the biggest challenges in terms of helping people. People need to believe that they can actually get better because that's the only way that you really will because you know, well it's all in the mind. If you don't think you're going to get better then it's going to be very hard for you to make progress.

Anthony: Great. Alright, so you mentioned the word confidence there so let me ask you a question. For those of you out there, I'm going to ask Christina just a few questions that I often get from engineers and she's going to go through her checklist that she uses for preparing for presentations. So let me ask you the question about confidence. For those people listening that might be, they might be struggling with the confidence to present or speak, what do you recommend that somebody who's trying to get better at speaking do? How can they boost their confidence?

Christina: One thing you can do - and you've probably heard this from other people but it totally works - it's just practicing what you're going to say. Now if you're about to present some technical work or present a project I'm assuming that you know what you're talking about because that's probably the first thing that you do, that's important in terms of being confident.

There's nothing worse than getting up to present something that you don't actually or you're not one hundred percent about the content. So I'm assuming that if you're about to get up and present an idea or project or something like that then you are going to know your content. So knowing your content is key to be confident in presenting.

Anthony: I just want to interject real quick because I, this is something just to kind of add on to what Christina's saying and kind of, I agree a hundred percent but when I do my **Engineering Your Own Success** presentation, I've done it now probably hundreds of times but its like every time you get up there you know the content better, it's more comfortable. I feel like everything slows down for you and you just, it becomes easier and easier.

Christina: Yeah, definitely. I know a lot of people have this fear that they're going to forget something or forget to say something or they'll be asked a question that they don't know the answer to, but if you know your content it comes down to trusting yourself and trusting that you know the answer and that somewhere it's there in your head.

Then in order to retrieve that information you just have to stay calm and if someone asks you a question and you're feeling a little bit panicky, if you can calm your mind down and just trust that, "Okay, I know my stuff. There's no reason to be afraid or nervous because I trust that I know everything that's important," then that's going to help you a lot.

Anthony: Excellent.

Christina: There's nothing wrong with if you don't know the answer to something as well, as long as you are honest and you are able to answer it in a way where you say, "I can find that out for you," or, "This is another way of looking at it," or something like that.

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Anthony: Okay, great. Great. Just to follow up on that question, since you talked about knowing your content, when it comes down to the presentations, do you have like a very specific script that you would follow or do you kind of have like an outline and then you kind of talk around it?

Christina: What I do is I tend to script out the introduction because it's very important that you capture your audience from the very beginning. So having a really strong opening is key and I like to write out exactly what I'm going to say, just in the first thirty seconds and practicing that over and over and over.

I know a lot of people try and memorize their whole presentation, which to me is a waste of time because it takes a really long time and it doesn't allow for any organic conversations that might come from that, where if someone interjects with a question you might feel like it stuffs you up and then you lose your place.

But remembering and memorizing and getting that first thirty seconds down absolutely perfect is a really good way to actually, again going back to confidence, it helps with your confidence because if you can nail that first thirty seconds you already think to yourself, "Yeah, okay great stuff, I'm going really well because I've got that." If you go out there and wing it from the very beginning without any practice and then you stumble a bit in the first sentence and the second sentence that's going to give you just that, it's going to like rattle you a little bit, which might then set the scene for the rest of the presentation.

So script, I mean for me anyways, scripting the first thirty seconds is important as well as scripting maybe the end, having a strong conclusion. In terms of the middle content, just having a, like a dot point structure of what I'm going to talk about, that's what I do but I don't memorize or script the whole presentation because it's a lot of work.

Anthony: Okay, that's great. Yeah, I agree. That's usually, I try to do that too - go with a good intro and a closing but give yourself room to kind of speak a little bit, be creative, engage the listeners, just a story to kind of emphasize that point.

You know I go to church every weekend and there's a couple priests that for their homily they'll come into the center aisle, they'll talk, they'll engage people, they'll ask questions and it's very interesting but then there's another, one of the priests just stays up behind the lector and he just reads his homily and it's just, you can't connect with it. I mean you can't get into it. You can't connect with it because you know that he's just kind of reading it and he's not into it, you can't really kind of engage with it. So it's definitely, I agree, it's a lot of time to prepare like that and to script something and it just doesn't come off as well.

So that's something that you can hopefully incorporate into some of your speaking and presenting. How about as far as being creative? I mean I know that you're big on creativity. I've been on your website. I've listened to your podcasts, which is awesome. Talk about that a little bit. Talk about the importance of being creative and how it's helpful in your communication efforts.

Christina: Well this is something that I've actually just been learning through experimentation really because, like I said, I have a podcast and I interview a lot of experts on there as well and what I've been finding is that you know it's kind of hard to get a response from people just from sending them an email because these days people receive so many emails. I know it's hard to keep up and everyone's super busy and I thought, "You know what, I've got to do something a little bit different in order to get the attention of these people I want to interview."

So I started being creative in the way that I ask people to be interview guests on my podcast. The first one I did was a slide show presentation for a woman called Nadine Hanafi and she teaches people how to design beautiful slide shows. So I thought, "Okay, well this makes sense, I'll make her a slide show." So I made her a slide show and she loved it and she said, "Of course I'd love to be on your podcast." So that was success number one. I've done other things like I've made a flipbook for Bjarke Ingels, an architect and I sent it to him. I made another book for another architect, Matthew Frederick and he loved it.

And then I made a video, a rap video for Pat Flynn, who's a really well known blogger and podcaster. It was just a ninety-second video. It wasn't that difficult to put together. I quite like writing rhymes. It turns out I'm alright at it. I put together these cheesy beat boxing beats from my iPad, made this quick video, sent it to him. He tweets me back within minutes saying, "Yes, lets totally do this," and I got an interview with him that way.

Anthony: Wow.

Christina: Now Pat Flynn receives three to four hundred emails a day - fact. And when I interviewed him he said to me, "You know what, I wasn't going to do any interviews until summer. I decided I wasn't going to do any," because he's a very, very busy man and he goes, "But you know what, when I saw your video I knew I had to do this interview." And he came to the interview already excited. He wanted to be there and that was just so awesome. To be able to stand out and make an impact on someone who is in such high demand and receives so many emails a day - that was awesome and it just shows how far a little bit of creativity can go in your communication.

This can be whether you're trying to get noticed or trying to get the attention of someone, just as I've been doing and that works as well if you're say going for a job interview or applying to jobs, sorry. You can stand out from the hundreds of people who are sending in their resumes. If you can do something a little bit creative like make a video or send them a handmade something or something

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that's, hey you're engineers - why don't you make something. If that's a talent of yours then put that to work and try that.

Anthony: Yeah, absolutely. I mean it's an awesome point and I think as an engineer, just one example that I could give that I've kind of helped a couple of engineers to do is if you're going for an interview, instead of just showing up with your resume, show up with either a book of some of your designs that you've done or some of your drawings that you've done or secondly, show up with a problem that they have that you've solved. So in other words if you know that they're having an issue in their company and they're hiring someone for it you could say, "Well if I came in here I would do 'XYZ' and this is how we can solve this problem," and I think that it kind of speaks a little bit to what Christina's talking about is be creative and stand out.

And if you do those types of things, and the couple of engineers that I helped with that, they both got the job. They went in there with their whole portfolio and whole book of their accomplishments and it means a lot. I mean like Christina said, Pat Flynn, who I know very well and I follow him a lot, he gets a ton of emails. He's big in the online space. For her to be able to get on her podcast - her podcast is relatively new - I mean that's awesome and it's because of creativity. So I think that's awesome and I'm sure Christina, you can do all kinds of creative things in your presentations too, right?

Christina: Yeah, well that's something that I've been practicing with as well. So I gave a presentation before I left Melbourne, at the University of Melbourne, to some architecture students and students they tend to, they're used to lectures that are pretty boring. I know because I was one not too long ago. I thought I've got to make this interesting for them. So I started off with a video from the film Madagascar. That always gets people's attention and it did contain a very valuable lesson on communication so it was relevant.

And I did other things like instead of trying to get people to engage with me directly because there were quite a few people there, instead of saying, "What are your thoughts on this?" - I knew people would be a bit shy to speak up - so what I did was I got everyone to write something down on a piece of paper and then I got them to get their phones out and Instagram it. And then on the screen, I brought up Instagram and I got them all to hashtag it with the same hashtag and then I was able to share what they'd written down with everyone up there on the screen without them having to actually get too much out of their comfort zones and have to speak in front of everyone.

I think that was a really good way to engage the audience and also you're doing things a bit differently. I mean how often are you in, as a student, how often are you in a lecture and the person who's giving a lecture says, "Alright everyone, get your phones out." Like no-one tells you get your phones out. Everyone tells you, "Stop looking at your phones. Put them away. Concentrate."

Anthony: Right.

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Christina: So I think if you can think about what are people used to in a presentation, what are they expecting? And generally they're not expecting to be overwhelmed with creativity. You know they're just expecting your standard, step by step, this is what we're going to do, rah, rah, rah presentation. So if you can just flip that on it's head and go, "How can I make this completely different to anything they've ever seen before?" Then you're winning.

Anthony: Awesome. Awesome. And I just want to say to those of you listening that if you hear like sirens and stuff in the background, Christina's in New York City. So it's not for effect or anything it's just New York City.

Christina: No, that's actually what's happening outside my apartment building right now. There's jackhammering. There's sirens because it's always some sort of emergency in this city. Yes, there's never a quiet moment.

Anthony: Yeah, so anyway but that's great and I think that for those of you out there, be creative whether you're trying to get a job, whether you're trying to get a client. Do something different and I think you'll find it's going to help you tremendously. Alright, one more question for Christina and then we'll let her go through her checklist here. Christina, one of the challenges for engineers and I'm sure architects as well, is a lot of times technical professionals need to present technical information to people that aren't very technical. Like for example if we have to go in front of a board and get a project approved and they're just laypeople of maybe local citizens that aren't necessarily technically savvy. So what recommendations might you have for those engineers that have to present with that circumstance?

Christina: That's a really good question and it's something that architects also struggle with, you know how do you, and it's not so much technical but it's more of a creative idea. How do you convince a client that this is a good idea that should be pursued and that is worth all their precious dollars that they're about to invest?

Something that I have learnt is really effective is to use stories because that's going to really connect, help people to connect with what you're saying. So if you're talking, if you're giving technical knowledge people are going to tune out because they have no idea. They can't relate that to anything. But if you can tell them a story of how they will experience that space or how it's going to affect them once it's built. What is it going to do for the community? What is it going to do for their loved ones, for the people around them?

If you can connect with them on an emotional level like that and then talk about what exactly you're going to be doing then that's going to really help to create that connection, get them engaged and that's what I would say. That's like the most important thing - stories.

Anthony: Okay.

Christina: I recently just went, actually this morning I went to the Metropolitan Museum of Art and I did a tour there with a group called *Museum Hack* and their tagline is 'Making museums fun' and I was like this is a challenge because I find art pretty boring at the best of times. We went in there and the tour guides, they use stories to help explain the artworks and they asked us questions and said, "What do you think about this?" or, "Imagine if someone asked you on a date, what would be your response if they did this or did that or did that? Well that's what happened during the 1800s when blah blah blah blah blah...." And that's how they explained these artifacts and these artworks and it was really fascinating.

So I think if you can connect with people by asking them questions and saying, "How would you feel if blah blah blah....," or, "What are your thoughts on this?" and then get them sort of responding to that and you can see if they're making eye contact and they're nodding along and you can say okay they're kind of getting it. And then give them a story about how their lives are going to be improved by whatever it is that you're proposing. Then you're going to be much more successful with getting them onboard.

Anthony: That's perfect. I mean that's what I've tried to do in the past and I think the stories is a huge help - some analogies, stories. I think the biggest thing you hit on there at the end was the benefits. I mean especially if you're trying to get a project approved or you're trying to get a company to hire you, you want to express to them of course what are the benefits that you're going to get if you hire me, if you hire my company, if this project gets approved.

I think that that's where people sometimes fall short, especially engineers because you're just so fixated on the technical side of it that you want to present all of the technical information to people. How about trying to make them understand how the technical side of this project is going to help them along?

Christina: Yeah, I think focusing on the 'why' of something is just so important. A lot of people when they give a presentation they tend to focus on the 'what'. "So this is what we're going to do," or "This is what we do. These are all the skills that we have. These are all the projects we've done in the past," or you know, "This is how this project will work."

But they often forget to communicate why they do something - why do they believe it's going to be so beneficial, so great. Why it's going to improve the lives of the people - that sort of thing. That's another really important thing to address.



Anthony: Alright, excellent. So now with that being said, why don't we run through your presentation checklists Christina? And you can just kind of give our listeners an idea of some of the things that you do leading up to one of your presentations.

Christina: Sure, of course. Well, okay so this is my presentation checklist that you can download at my website, at designdrawspeak.com and I find that this is a lot of stuff that, well all that I do before every presentation I give. It's just a little checklist that gives you a suggestion of what you can do two weeks before your presentation, one to two days before your presentation and then the day of. So maybe we'll just run through a couple from each of those sections.

Anthony: Perfect.

Christina: So one to two weeks before your presentation -- so this is when you're putting it all together. I would say, so I've got written here 'do I know what my audiences number one takeaway will be?' And this is so important. When you're putting together a presentation it's critical that you have a think about, "Okay, at the end of this presentation what do I want my audience to walk away with? What is the number one takeaway that they are going to have?" Another way to think of it is, "How do I want my audience to feel at the end of this presentation? What's the action I want them to take?" So if you can specify that that's going to help you with your content.

I find a lot of designers they have a lot of information and content that they want to share and they just want to shove it all in there but in reality your audience can only absorb so much. So if you have a clear idea of what you want your audience to get out of your presentation, that's going to help you then select the key bits of content that are going to all work towards achieving that final goal.

Anthony: That's awesome, awesome.

Christina: So I would say, so that's like one of the, that's such an important thing to do as you're preparing your presentation.

Anthony: So that's about a couple of weeks before, you do that, right?

Christina: That's when you're putting it together.

Anthony: Okay.

Christina: So it depends on how organized you are really. And just another quick thing with that also - one to two weeks before your presentation knowing where and when you'll be giving the presentation is very important.

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Wherever I can, I like to go to the lecture theatre beforehand or the room and check it out and just to see what it's going to be like because that again, that's going to build, that's going to help with your confidence because you already know that's one less unknown that you have to deal with.

Anthony: Got it.

Christina: And of course we always fear the unknown so if you know exactly, "Okay, this is how I'm going to get there." Like just practicing getting there or practicing finding the room, it's a real, all these little things just help to have your presentation run smoothly.

Anthony: Awesome. Alright, so now take us through about one, two days before the presentation.

Christina: One to two days before the presentation I would say the most important thing I have here is, "Have I practiced my entire presentation at least three times and timed it?" That's really important if you do have a strict timeframe in which you are given to present because it's very important to respect people's time.

If you're told you've got twenty minutes or an hour, if you can get your presentation down to that time then that's going to be, people are going to really appreciate you for sticking to time because so often people just run over and people start getting anxious and start going, "Ah, I just want lunch." So people are going to tune out anyway so make sure you stick to your time.

And then, like I said earlier, practicing is just the best way to alleviate your nerves and to just, it's just going to help with your confidence because you've heard yourself saying these sentences. Just hearing yourself going through those sentences and repeating those words, it will help you with any little words you might stumble over or if you say something and it comes out and it doesn't quite sound right to you then that's going to allow you to go back and amend that and especially practicing in front of others. They'll be able to tell you, "Ah, I don't know if that, that doesn't really make sense to me," or they'll tell you, "You know I really almost fell asleep in that bit just there - maybe you can jazz it up, doing this."

So practicing really, really helps. I tend to procrastinate, of course, like a lot of good architects and I find that practicing it, I don't intend to practice it until the day before and then on the day and that's the only way I really get that done.

Anthony: Okay. Alright, that's great. Now I think it's one of the things you touched on, which for me has been so important and what people don't realize is that your brain has so much to do and your subconscious has so much to do with speaking and like when you said, when you practice it these words just get memorized and kind of embedded into your memory and then they just come out easier.



There's a great book called **Speak to Win** by Brian Tracy that I've read a bunch of times and he talks a lot about that actually and how you almost, you're almost tricking your brain when you practice to feel like you're an expert at that speech so when you get up there it comes out a lot smoother. So that's something that everyone out there can check out. So let's go on to the day of the presentation now. Christina, give us something about the day of the presentation.

Christina: Okay, I'm going to give a couple of tips here that aren't tips you may have heard before. And the first one is, "Have I done two minutes of power posing?" Now I learned about this from a TED talk. I don't know if you've seen it Anthony but it's by a woman called Amy Cuddy and she talks about how our bodies have, our bodies actually can affect the way our minds are.

So what she talks about is if you are in a very, if you stand in a very powerful stance like Hulk or like Wonderwoman or whatever, with your arms up in the air or on your hips and you make yourself as big as possible, you actually trick your brain into thinking that you are bigger, more confident and more powerful than you actually are.

They did this test with people and they found that people who stood in these power poses, their cortisol levels - so their stress levels - actually went down and then they found the opposite with people who sat in very small and powerless positions. They found that their stress levels actually went up. I found this fascinating and I thought, "Well, that's a pretty quick fix."

Well what she says is all you need to do is do two minutes of it and like stand in front of the mirror and do it. It seems really silly but I actually do this before every presentation. I go into the bathroom and I look at myself in the mirror and I stand there with my arms up in the air, my chin slightly lifted, my legs shoulder width apart in a really.... it sounds ridiculous but I do it and as long as someone doesn't walk in it's really fine. And you just hold it. All you've got to do is just hold it and I love this because it's such a simple thing. Hold it and you will immediately, well hold it for two minutes and you will feel more confident and more powerful. And you can do this when you're sitting down as well. If you sit, sort of lean back, put your arm over the chair next to you. You know, just kind of make yourself a little bit bigger.

All of that really helps to improve your confidence and just trick your brain into thinking that you are more powerful and more confident. It's a really interesting TED talk and I encourage everyone to check it out.

Anthony: That's awesome. I'll put that in the show notes for this show, which we'll have at engineeringcareercoach.com/speakingchecklist, no spaces, no dashes - speakingchecklist.

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But that's awesome. I never heard of that one. That's very interesting. I'll have to try that. I mean I often will listen to like a song before I talk. I'll go out of the room and put my headphones on just to kind of get a little bit, get myself going a bit but that's, I'll have to try the power posing. That sounds interesting.

Christina: Yeah, just pumping yourself up. It really does work. I've just got one last thing, if I may.

Anthony: Okay.

Christina: Just like a simple little trick that you can do. We talked a bit about before about practicing your presentation and getting into that flow of it. One thing that you can do right before your important meeting or presentation or whatever is to actually practice just conversing.

So say you're giving a presentation and there's someone giving a talk before you and it's like an hour and you're sitting there for an hour and you're not saying anything. You're just sitting there, and then you get up and you go to speak and you're kind of like lost for words because you just haven't, you haven't sort of warmed up your voice and just practiced forming sentences and talking.

So one thing that's really important that you should try and do is before your presentation even if you've got no-one to speak to just call someone. Get on the phone and just practice talking and you just get into that flow and warming up just how to speak really.

It sounds a bit silly but it really does help and then by the time you get onto stage or into the meeting and you're about to start giving your important presentation your words will just flow naturally because you've just been doing it.

So if you can, try and get on the phone with someone or just talk to someone before your presentation to warm up. Think of it as a warm up like before you go for a sprint session if you're going for a run or whatever you always do a bit of a warm up so that you don't injure yourself. Think of that. You're avoiding emotional injury.

Anthony: Awesome. Ok, great. Wow. Those are just two tips that I've learned that I'm going to have to try out. That's awesome. Alright, so again, her checklist is available at designdrawspeak.com and I will put the link to her website in the show notes. So basically, just to summarize some of the things we covered:

- We talked about confidence. To be confident make sure you know your content. That will be helpful to kind of boost your confidence before a talk.

- We talked about the importance of being creative. Do something different. Stand out from the crowd. Christina talked about some of the videos she made and I gave some analogies for your engineering career.

- And then lastly she talked about strategies for speaking to people that aren't technically savvy and presenting them technical information. And basically what Christina said was, "Use stories, try to engage people," and I think that that's a wonderful way to do it.

- Then she, of course, just gave us some portions of her checklist, which I found to be very helpful and I think really what stands out is the practice - knowing your presentation, practicing and going through it.

So what we're going to do is just take a quick break and then I'm going to have Christina stay on with us and come back and we'll do our career changing tip to end off the show.

Anthony's Career Changing Tip:

Anthony: Alright, now it's time for our career changing tip and this is the portion of the show where I try to give listeners one action item or one task that they can do to see immediate results in their career.

Since we had Christina on today, I've kept her on and she's going to join us and she's going to give our career changing tip based around communication -- something that you could do to kind of improve your communication efforts. So Christina, go ahead.

Christina: Awesome, okay. Well something that I learnt from my years at a large corporate architectural firm is to be really respectful of people's time. Now especially because I was a graduate and then a young architect and I was working with Directors who were always really, really busy. And I'd often have questions but of course they're very difficult to catch and their time is precious.

So one thing that you can do to be respectful of people's time is to approach them and if you've got a quick question just say, "Hey, do you have sixty seconds? I just have a really quick question." They're much more likely to say, "Oh, yeah sure I've got sixty seconds," than if you just go up and say, "Can I ask you a question?" Because then they'll be like, "Oh, how long is this going to take? I've got to go to a meeting soon."

So give people an indication of how much of their time you're going to need. So it might be, "I just need sixty seconds," or, "I just need two minutes," or, "Do you have five minutes? I just have a couple of quick questions." They will be much more likely to respond in a positive way.

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Now one word of caution - I was doing this once with my Director and I said, "Hi, I've just got two questions to ask you and they're both quick," and he said, "Yeah, sure go for it." I asked him the two questions and he gave me a response and then I said, "Oh and just lastly, one more thing," and he goes, "I thought there were only two," and I was like, "Oohhh."

So you know, people do pay attention so if you're going to say, "I've just got one quick question," or, "I just need sixty seconds of your time, make sure that it only takes sixty seconds. So that would be my career changing tip. They will respect you much more as well for respecting their time.

Anthony: Awesome. Awesome. Well with that I just want to say once again, thank you to Christina Canters from designdrawspeak.com for spending some time with us today and giving us some great, great tips on public speaking and communication. Thanks Christina!

Christina: Thanks so much Anthony. It's been a blast.

Anthony's Closing Remarks:

And for everyone out there listening, thanks for tuning in. I look forward to continuing to help you create an extraordinary engineering career. Be sure to check out all of the information on the website at engineeringcareercoach.com. If you click on the guides tab, I've actually created a couple of very long guides and one of them is focused on helping you to improve your public speaking.

So again, you can check that out at engineeringcareercoach.com and click the guides button. With that I'm going to sign off and I'll catch everyone on the next session of ***The Engineering Career Coach Podcast***.

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