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## 5 Bestselling Books From 2017 That Will Put You Ahead of the Competition In 2018

These bestselling books offer valuable communication and public-speaking tips for entrepreneurs and leaders.



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I've read 75 nonfiction books published this year in a wide range of categories from history to business. Most of the books are bestsellers and offer actionable insights into leadership, entrepreneurship and communication. In this article I've chosen five books that contain valuable communication and public-speaking tips to help drive your career and your company forward in 2018.

1. *Captivate: The Science of Succeeding with People* ([https://www.amazon.com/Captivate-Succeeding-Vanessa-Van-Edwards/dp/0399564489/ref=tmm\\_hrd\\_swatch\\_0?\\_encoding=UTF8&qid=1513217290&sr=1-1](https://www.amazon.com/Captivate-Succeeding-Vanessa-Van-Edwards/dp/0399564489/ref=tmm_hrd_swatch_0?_encoding=UTF8&qid=1513217290&sr=1-1))

By Vanessa Van Edwards (Portfolio/Penguin)

People will decide in the first few seconds of meeting you whether or not they like you. That's the theory that guides *Captivate*. Van Edwards, a behavioral researcher, says the power of a strong first impression is not in *what* we say, but *how* we say it. Van Edwards offers the "Triple Threat" to making a good first impression: 1) Use your hands, 2) Look like a winner by taking up as much space on stage as physically possible and 3) Engage in eye contact. Based on my research into TED talks and persuasion, I can attest that the "Triple Threat" will help you stand out as a speaker.

2). *If I Understood You, Would I Have This Look On My Face?* ([https://www.amazon.com/Understood-Would-Have-This-Look/dp/0812989147/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1513217489&sr=1-1&keywords=alan+alda+if+i+understood+you](https://www.amazon.com/Understood-Would-Have-This-Look/dp/0812989147/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1513217489&sr=1-1&keywords=alan+alda+if+i+understood+you))

By Alan Alda (Random House)

Alan Alda is a seven-time Emmy Award winner for his classic television roles, but Alda's interest in science runs deep. He hosted a PBS series and is a visiting professor at Stony Brook University's Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science. In the absence of effective communication, scientific ideas often go unfunded, says Alda. His tip to becoming a better communicator—study the craft. "Just listening to good communicators doesn't work. It takes training to learn how to do it. I've been listening to good pianists all my life and I still can't play the piano."

3). *How to Think: A Survival Guide For A World at Odds* ([https://www.amazon.com/How-Think-Survival-Guide-World/dp/0451499603/ref=tmm\\_hrd\\_swatch\\_0?\\_encoding=UTF8&qid=1513217592&sr=1-1](https://www.amazon.com/How-Think-Survival-Guide-World/dp/0451499603/ref=tmm_hrd_swatch_0?_encoding=UTF8&qid=1513217592&sr=1-1))

by Alan Jacobs (Currency books)

Part of the inspiration for Jacobs' book comes Nobel prize-winning economist Daniel Kahneman, who spent his career studying the biases that cloud our thinking. Jacob's main point is that relatively few people want to think. Thinking is hard. It takes up a lot of brain energy, and it makes us uncomfortable. It's easier to go with the flow.

According to Jacobs, a humanities professor, we are social beings. That means we surround ourselves--in our physical and digital lives--with people who are like us. And since social bonding exerts such a strong influence on our lives, we take on the group's language, stories, myths and metaphors. Here's the key. Leaders, by definition, can't just go with the flow. They have to be sharper, better thinkers, fair-minded and capable of looking at the problem from various dimensions. One tip that Jacobs offers to break out of the echo chamber: "Seek out the best and fairest-minded people whose views you disagree with. Listen to them for a time without responding. Whatever they say, *think it over*."

4). *Popular: The Power of Likability in a Status-Obsessed World* ([https://www.amazon.com/Popular-Power-Likability-Status-Obsessed-World/dp/0399563733/ref=tmm\\_hrd\\_swatch\\_0?\\_encoding=UTF8&qid=1513217789&sr=1-1](https://www.amazon.com/Popular-Power-Likability-Status-Obsessed-World/dp/0399563733/ref=tmm_hrd_swatch_0?_encoding=UTF8&qid=1513217789&sr=1-1))

by Mitch Prinstein (Viking)

Popularity mattered to our ancestors thousands of years ago. It matters today. According to Dr. Mitch Prinstein, the director of clinical psychology at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, "Popularity dynamics affect our careers, our success in meeting goals, our personal and professional relationships, and ultimately our happiness." Prinstein believes anyone--introverts or extroverts--can learn to be more likable. Likable people have the ability to read the room--any room. Prinstein says that one secret to being more likable is to be interested in the other person. Ask questions. People will want to talk to you if they believe you want to talk to them. According to Prinstein, likable people don't chase status; they show an interest in others and avoid "vying for more attention and power."

5). *The Influential Mind: What the Brain Reveals About our Power to Change Others* ([https://www.amazon.com/Influential-Mind-Reveals-Change-Others/dp/1627792651/ref=tmm\\_hrd\\_swatch\\_0?\\_encoding=UTF8&qid=1513218005&sr=1-1](https://www.amazon.com/Influential-Mind-Reveals-Change-Others/dp/1627792651/ref=tmm_hrd_swatch_0?_encoding=UTF8&qid=1513218005&sr=1-1))

By Tali Sharot

According to Dr. Tali Sharot, a professor of cognitive neuroscience, we all have the ability to change another person's emotional state and, in many cases, their opinions. The key is that data will only take you so far. Emotion is "the conductor" to reach another person's neural pathways and to get them excited about your idea. "Your coworkers, family, friends, and even strangers will rapidly pick up on your state by perceiving changes in your facial expression, tone of voice, posture, and language," she writes. Sharot recommends that we become more aware of our emotional states when communicating our ideas. For example, if you have a message to get across, "transmitting it in a positive light means that people will be more likely to listen and, therefore, more likely to be influenced."

As an entrepreneur or leader, your ability to stand out in 2018 will largely rest on your skill as a communicator. These five books will put you ahead of the competition.

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