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"Jeremy's advice was key to my successful TED talk at TEDMED."

—AMANDA BENNETT, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and Executive Editor/Projects and Investigations for Bloomberg News

**JEREMY DONOVAN** is a TEDx organizer and speaker. He serves as group vice president of marketing at Gartner, Inc., the world's leading information technology research and advisory company with \$1.6 billion in annual revenue.

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ISBN 978-0-07-183159-8

MHID 0-07-183159-2



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# HOW TO DELIVER A TED TALK

*Secrets of the World's Most Inspiring Presentations*



## JEREMY DONOVAN

Foreword by **RICHARD ST. JOHN**, author of *The 8 Traits Successful People Have in Common*

Afterword by **SIMON SINEK**, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Start with Why*

# HOW TO DELIVER A TED TALK

*Secrets of the World's  
Most Inspiring Presentations*

## JEREMY DONOVAN

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13 14 15 16 17 18 QVS 23 22 21 20 19

ISBN 978-0-07-183159-8  
MHID 0-07-183159-2

e-ISBN 978-0-07-182957-1  
e-MHID 0-07-182957-1

**Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**  
Donovan, Jeremy.

How to deliver a TED talk : secrets of the world's most inspiring presentations, revised and expanded new edition, with a foreword by Richard St. John and an afterword by Simon Sinek / Jeremy Donovan.

pages cm

ISBN 978-0-07-183159-8 (pbk. : alk. paper) — ISBN 0-07-183159-2 (alk. paper)

1. Business presentations. 2. Public speaking. 3. Business communication. I. Title.

HF5718.22.D66 2013

658.4'52—dc23

2013025278

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## FOREWORD

Most forewords are dedicated to singing the praises of authors and their books. Jeremy and his book certainly deserve it! However, he felt that you would be better served if I shared with you the story behind my first TED Talk.<sup>1</sup> My passion is helping people succeed, so I am thrilled to oblige.

I have attended 20 TED Conferences, starting in 1994. It became my annual pilgrimage to see fascinating speakers and to be immersed in ideas worth spreading. For years I was strictly a listener, far too shy to talk to any of the big names. Back then, few people even knew the conference existed. When I said I was going to TED, the usual response was, “Ted who?”

Then in 1998 I’m on a plane on my way to TED, and in the seat next to me is a teenage girl. She came from a poor family, but she wanted to get somewhere in life, and she asked me, “What really leads to success?” Even though I had achieved a degree of success, I couldn’t answer her question. I got off the plane, went to TED, and found myself standing in a room full of successful people in many different fields. Then it hit me. Why don’t I ask them what helped them succeed and find out what really leads to success?

I got excited. I wanted to interview people. But then the self-doubt and shyness set in; why would these people want to talk to me? I’m not a famous journalist. I froze up, sweating, butterflies in my stomach, and slumped back against the wall. I was ready to stop the project before it even began, when who comes walking toward me but Ben Cohen, cofounder of Ben & Jerry’s Ice Cream. I figured it was now or never, so I jumped out in front of him and blurted out,