Uplevel Speaking Academy

What This Program Is

Uplevel Speaking Academy is a personalized communication coaching program designed for professionals who want to speak with clarity, confidence, and executive presence in high-stakes moments.

This is not a lecture course. Results come from guided coaching, structured practice, and real-time feedback applied to your actual work.

Who This Is For

- Professionals and leaders who speak in meetings, presentations, interviews, or client settings
- High performers preparing for promotion, visibility, or leadership expansion
- Individuals who want measurable improvement, not motivational content

Core Outcomes

Participants typically experience:

- Increased confidence and composure when speaking
- Clearer, more structured messaging in meetings and presentations
- Stronger executive presence and vocal authority
- Improved performance in interviews, negotiations, and leadership conversations
- A repeatable system for ongoing communication growth

What's Included (Summary)

- Orientation session
- Speak With No Fear audiobook and a digital companion workbook
- Online training platform (170+ lessons)
- App for messaging and quick access to coaching
- 12 private 1:1 coaching sessions, including your Awareness Assessment
- Weekly office hours and small group coaching with your coaching team
- Customized practice assignments
- Session recordings
- Certificate of Completion

The Academy is offered through two coaching tracks, Performance and Executive, so you can choose the level of access that fits you. See "Choose Your Coaching Track" below.

MIKE ACKER
mike.acker@uplevelcommunication.com | 512-877-1040

Choose Your Coaching Track

Everything above is included either way. Here's what's different:

Performance Track

Coached live by our certified Uplevel coaches — currently Andres Soto, actor and speaking coach at the Vancouver School of Acting — with full access to Mike Acker through weekly office hours and small group sessions.

- 12 1:1 coaching sessions with your dedicated coach, including your Awareness Assessment
- Weekly office hours with both your coach and Mike
- Weekly small group coaching with both your coach and Mike
- Coach-led accountability check-ins

Executive Track

Work 1:1 with Mike Acker directly, with concierge-level support around every session.

- 12 1:1 coaching sessions, 1:1 with Mike, including your Awareness Assessment
- Weekly office hours with both your coach and Mike
- Weekly small group coaching with both your coach and Mike
- Concierge accountability — a dedicated team member between sessions
- One in-person intensive each year, chosen from four dates — a Friday night dinner, a comedy club night out, and a full day of coaching together on Saturday with a small, elite group
- Bonus: How to Land Big Stages Training

Your Guarantee

Yes, we have a guarantee. We stand behind the Academy.

Performance Track

Complete all 12 milestones, attend your coaching sessions, and show up to at least one office hour or small group per month. If you've done the work and we don't see measurable improvement between your first and final session recordings, we'll keep coaching you free until we do.

Executive Track

Complete all 12 milestones and stay engaged in your sessions. If you've done the work and we don't see measurable improvement, we'll keep working with you (including additional quarterly intensives) at no additional cost, until you do.

Think of it like joining a gym. Simply signing up won't produce results. But when you show up, do the work, and apply what you learn, we are 100% confident that you will dramatically improve.

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Time Commitment & Program Pace

This is a coaching-led program, so results come from consistent practice, not binge-watching content. Think of it like a training plan. The structure provides a clear path, but the pace and emphasis are customized during your initial assessment.

No two participants follow the program in exactly the same way. Below are two common rhythms clients choose.

Steady Pace

Best for busy professionals balancing demanding schedules.

Coaching cadence

- Private 1:1 coaching: every other week (30 minutes)
- Group support (office hours or small group): every other week

Typical weekly time

- Training videos: 20–40 minutes
- Personal practice: 8–15 minutes per day, 4 days per week (30–60 minutes total)
- Group support (optional but recommended): 30–60 minutes
- Private coaching (averaged): 15 minutes per week

Typical total per week: .5 to 2 hours. Estimated completion: 5 to 6 months.

Accelerated Pace

Best for faster promotions, interviews, leadership visibility, or high-stakes seasons.

Coaching cadence

- Private 1:1 coaching: weekly (30 minutes)
- Group support: weekly

Typical weekly time

- Training videos: 45–75 minutes
- Personal practice: 5–15 minutes per day, 5 days per week (25–75 minutes total)
- Group support: 60–90 minutes
- Private coaching: 30 minutes

Typical total per week: 2 to 4 hours. Estimated completion: 2 to 4 months.

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Program Structure & Curriculum Overview

Orientation

- Program expectations and setup
- Scheduling, pacing, and use of resources
- The AKPF growth framework (Awareness, Knowledge, Practice, Feedback)

Milestone One: Establish Your Starting Point

Executive presence foundations, speaker identity, early wins, habit formation, assessment preparation.

Milestone Two: Vocal Strength & Authority

Clarity, projection, pacing, pause, fillers, resonance, emphasis.

Milestone Three: Presence & Connection

Eye contact, gestures, posture, movement, responsiveness, confidence under pressure.

Milestone Four: Context Mastery

Virtual, hybrid, and in-person communication, slides, stage movement, facilitation.

Milestone Five: Messaging Systems

Meetings, executive messaging, persuasion, tension management, structured communication.

Milestone Six: Impromptu & Storytelling

Quick-response frameworks, introductions, interviews, pocket stories, tough questions.

Milestone Seven: Presentations with Impact

Audience clarity, structure, openings, closings, flow, practice systems.

Milestone Eight: Speaker Identity & Confidence

Authenticity, values, mission, fear frameworks, Speak With No Fear integration.

Milestone Nine: Mental Performance

Limiting beliefs, language shifts, confidence anchors, resilience training.

Milestone Ten: Strategic Workplace Communication

Visibility, promotions, negotiation, conflict, emotional intelligence.

Milestone Eleven: Messaging Frameworks

BLUF, SCQA, PAS, story arcs, throughlines, executive brief systems.

Milestone Twelve: Capstone & Next Steps

Capstone presentation, review process, long-term growth plan.

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Learning Outcomes & Business Impact

Participants who complete the Uplevel Speaking Academy develop practical communication skills that improve effectiveness, confidence, and clarity in daily job performance, meetings, and leadership interactions.

Executive Presence & Confidence at Work

- Communicate with calm, clarity, and confidence in meetings and presentations
- Reduce anxiety, overthinking, and rambling under pressure
- Maintain composure when speaking with leaders, clients, and stakeholders
- Show consistency and professionalism across high-visibility moments

Clear & Structured Communication

- Organize thoughts quickly using proven communication frameworks
- Speak concisely without overexplaining or backtracking
- Match message structure to the purpose of the conversation
- Deliver updates, recommendations, and decisions with clarity

Influence, Authority & Engagement

- Use voice, tone, pacing, and body language intentionally
- Eliminate distracting speaking habits that reduce credibility
- Increase engagement and buy-in without sounding forced or aggressive

Thinking on the Spot & High-Stakes Conversations

- Respond clearly to unexpected questions or feedback
- Navigate tension, resistance, and disagreement professionally
- Recover smoothly from interruptions or mistakes

Business Impact Summary

- More effective meetings and faster decision-making
- Clearer communication across teams and stakeholders
- Increased confidence observed by supervisors and peers
- Stronger leadership readiness within the organization

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About the Founder & Program Philosophy

Mike Acker is an executive communication coach, speaker at TEDx Warrenton and TEDx Sawmill Lake, and top-rated author on overcoming the fear of public speaking whose work focuses on practical, repeatable communication systems that create confidence, clarity, and real-world professional impact.

Mike was not a natural speaker. As a child, he had a speech impediment and later moved outside the United States, navigating language differences and cultural communication barriers that often made speaking uncomfortable and, at times, embarrassing. Early experiences included frequent missteps, misunderstandings, and moments of self-consciousness. As a result, communication became something he had to learn deliberately, not something he could rely on instinctively.

During his early undergraduate studies, Mike took a public speaking course taught by one of the top debate coaches in the United States. That experience led him to join the debate team and train in competitive speaking. Through this process, he developed structured thinking, message clarity, and the ability to perform under pressure—skills that fundamentally changed the trajectory of his academic and professional path.

Following graduation, Mike continued deepening his communication skills through advanced, graduate-level coursework and practical application. He began working in the nonprofit sector, where he regularly spoke, facilitated discussions, and trained others, before entering the corporate world in territory management at a Fortune 500 company.

During this period, Mike engaged in informal coaching alongside his full-time role. What began as one-off sessions steadily grew. In 2019, this work led to the publication of Speak With No Fear, which quickly gained traction and generated a surge of coaching requests from around the world.

Mike has since authored multiple books on communication, including Speak With Confidence, Write to Speak, and Speak and Meet Virtually. Speak With No Fear has earned nearly 2,000 reviews across print and audio editions, has been translated into 10 languages, and is regularly recognized among the top public speaking books worldwide.

Today, Mike works with professionals and organizations through executive communication coaching, corporate training, and the Uplevel Speaking Academy, helping people upgrade how they communicate in meetings, presentations, and leadership conversations.

Program Philosophy

Communication is a skill you build, not a personality trait you inherit.

Like investing, progress in communication compounds with consistent, intentional practice built on the right knowledge.

There's a saying that the best time to invest was years ago. The second best time is now.

When it comes to investing, few voices carry more weight than Warren Buffett. He has often said that one of the most valuable investments he ever made was improving his ability to speak, because it multiplied the value of everything else he knew. The same principle applies here.

To end with his words:

"The best investment you can make is in yourself."

Trusted By Leading Organizations

Mike has coached professionals across a widespread net of companies and trained at organizations including General Electric, Edwards Lifesciences, Adobe, Microsoft, Restaurant365, Washington State University, University of Massachusetts, Piedmont Hospital, and the International Monetary Fund, along with many more.

Format & Delivery

- Coaching is delivered virtually, so you can participate from anywhere in the world
- Austin-based clients also have access to live local events and workshops
- Executive Track members receive an annual in-person intensive
- Corporate and team engagements are available — contact us to discuss group or organization-wide training

Payment Options

Flexible payment plans are available for both individuals and organizations. Schedule a consultation and we'll walk you through current options and help you choose what fits your goals and budget.

Ready to Get Started

The first step is a short consultation. We'll discuss your goals, answer your questions, and determine whether the Uplevel Speaking Academy, and which track, is the right fit. If it is, we'll build a personalized plan to help you become the communicator you want to be.

Schedule your consultation at uplevelcommunication.com, or reach out directly below.

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