

"Gina is a maestro of public speaking! She coached me for my TED talk."

—SUSAN CAIN, BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF QUIET



PLAY THE PART



**MASTER BODY SIGNALS TO CONNECT
AND COMMUNICATE FOR BUSINESS SUCCESS**



GINA BARNETT

PRAISE FOR *PLAY THE PART*

“Gina is a maestro of public speaking! She coached me for my TED talk, and I am forever grateful to her for giving me the technical and emotional training I needed to take the stage.”

—Susan Cain, bestselling author of *Quiet*

“In my field of design and innovation, it’s the human connections that build momentum for great ideas. Gina Barnett teaches us how to bring our full selves into every conversation, from connecting with our friends and colleagues to telling one’s most personal story at TED.”

—David Kelly, founder and chair of IDEO
and the Donald W. Whittier Professor in
Mechanical Engineering at Stanford University

“Gina is an incredible coach who’ll increase your impact when presenting in an executive setting—or any professional interaction. But she can’t be everywhere, so this book is the next best thing! A must-read.”

—Greg Behar, CEO of Nestlé Health Science

“*Play the Part* is an essential guide for anyone who is interested in elevating their communication style to achieve maximum effectiveness. It teaches how crucial every part of your body is to your communication effectiveness, and all the ways that your intended message can unconsciously be hampered. *Play the Part* armed me with career-propelling tools that helped me become more self-aware and, more important, bodily aware. I now feel that I am not only heard but seen as authentically and powerfully as I hope to be.”

—Lucinda Martinez, SVP of Multicultural Marketing at HBO

“Gina is the best in the business when it comes to training leaders in ‘omni-present communication,’ and I’m a master of my newly discovered messaging channel, my body, because of her. *Play the Part* is a jewel for those of us who dare call ourselves great communicators.”

—James Andrews, founder of True Story Agency

“Bringing her considerable warmth, sense of humor, and passion to the task, Gina teaches us how to unlock our innate ability to connect with other people. *Play the Part* is a must-read not just for business but for all communication success.”

—Alexander Saint-Amand, CEO of GLG (Gerson Lehrman Group)

“Gina has a supreme knack for distilling the key essence and getting to the heart of the matter!”

—Kareem Yusuf, SVP of Development of Smarter Commerce at IBM

“Gina Barnett is a master teacher of the art of connection. Every page of this book offers valuable lessons gleaned from her rich experience with every kind of senior leader. There are lessons here for us all.”

—Richard Socarides, former White House
senior advisor to President Bill Clinton

“Gina taught me how to connect to the power of my truth and convey it through storytelling. When I step onstage to share my message, the intimacy and courage I feel is all because of Gina—her generosity, her knowledge. *Play the Part* is an invaluable gift for anyone with a message to convey.”

—Geena Rocero, LGBT activist and model

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AND COMMUNICATE FOR BUSINESS SUCCESS

GINA BARNETT



New York Chicago San Francisco Athens London Madrid
Mexico City Milan New Delhi Singapore Sydney Toronto



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INTRODUCTION

Why Play the Part?

“Only connect!”

—E. M. FORESTER

I received a call one day from an HR manager at a global financial services organization. The manager wanted to discuss a high potential whom I’ll call Clair. Despite Clair’s remarkable intelligence and deep subject knowledge, she was unable to advance in her career; there was something in the way she presented herself that kept sabotaging all her efforts to be seen as a leader. Could I possibly help?

I met Clair in my office about three weeks later. At our first meeting I scribbled down words that popped instantly to mind: “kind, genuine, super smart, apologetic, neck, soft, scared, throat.” Where did those words come from? Why did I make such rapid word choices? Based on what? How quickly do we make assessments, and do they have value? Can they be revised? What assessments are being made about us and by whom? How much control do we have over the instantaneous decisions being made about us?

Everyone’s body is unique. Each has its own shape, motor skills, assets, limitations, perceptual skills, history, and memory. Every body tells a story. Also, it is through the body that life is experienced, integrated, understood, and conceptualized. Over the past two decades there has been significant inquiry into the field of embodiment, the notion that the body and how it experiences and interacts with the world is deeply integral to thought and cognition. The cognitivist point of view—which held that thought was a product of mental abstraction, symbols, and language—was the dominant perspective well before Descartes

declared, “I think therefore I am.” The more recent shift toward embodiment as a *source* of thought opens entirely new ways of understanding how we affect one another, how our bodies give rise to ideas, and how movement itself can be the seed of new thoughts. “I think therefore I am” might well be revised to “I walk therefore I think!”

The awareness that aspects of mind may arise *from* the body has tremendous ramifications for all aspects of communication. For what is a body but a constantly sensing instrument pulling data from other bodies and the surrounding environment? As the pendulum swings from a cognitive to an embodiment perspective, there is bound to be a middle ground that emerges. How do our bodies influence our thinking? What are the physical blocks that prevent our own self-understanding? How do those blocks prevent us from connecting with others?

The chief culprit that most often prevents connection is tension. Tension can be physical, vocal, emotional, psychological, or spiritual. No matter its source, tension creates a wall within the self and between that self and others. Quite simply, tension blocks the flow of exchange. It limits creative impulses, prevents risk taking, and literally seizes parts of the body. It can cause you to second-guess yourself, impede clear thought, and strike you dumb.

Where does tension come from? Why is it such a potent force? How is it manifest? Most importantly, what can be done to release it, control it—even exploit it? For Clair, the tension manifested in her throat. Her voice was thin, flat, and lifeless; her jaw locked tight. She ate her own sound. Why? Why was she carrying so much tension in that part of her body? Did her self-opinion shape her tension, or did her body tension impact her self-perception?

Humans evolved to send and receive countless communicative signals. A dismissive hand wave, a raised eyebrow, a habitually tucked chin, a warm smile, bewildered eyes—these all have profound, unspoken effects. Ignoring such signals vastly diminishes our ability to connect and communicate. These signals are subtextual, i.e., beneath spoken language. To navigate the innumerable bits of subtextual communication zooming by seems an impossible task, but the fact is we take in these moments. They have enormous impact on how we connect,

or don't, if an exchange succeeds or fails. For the most part, this level of communication is unconscious, but it results in instantaneous decisions about how trustworthy, credible, reliable, or genuine someone is. We've survived because of these instinctive lifesaving skills. However, in our increasingly complex, competitive global marketplace—where professionals from different countries and cultures interact—it's no longer sufficient to rely solely on what's instinctive or unconscious. Success today demands a profound awareness of the signals one sends and the acute and *accurate* interpretation of those received. To survive is one thing, but to *thrive*, it is essential that we go beyond the instinctive and develop conscious mastery.

This is not a “body language” book; there are countless other titles that cover that subject. This is a “body-as-an-instrument” book. I hope to give you a deeper appreciation of how the body influences yourself and others. As a communications coach to executives, leaders, entrepreneurs, and high potentials around the world, my process is to locate and unravel the source of whatever is blocking expression, self-realization, and connection with oneself and others. Following that, my goal is to provide tools that encourage improvisation and risk *in* the present moment. Those tools are then supported by design and thinking skills that enhance and incorporate the newly learned behaviors. Fundamentally, my goal is to help my clients genuinely “live” the role each is “playing”—or “play” the role each is “living.” On the surface, this may seem contradictory, but we all play numerous roles all day long: manager, mother, employee, father, customer, child; the list goes on and on. Most people shift styles organically, with little awareness of the demands of each part. But for some, the challenges are fierce.

My focus as a coach is never to make my clients “actors” or “pretenders,” but rather to *remove the blocks that prevent connection*. This is a vital distinction. Removing blocks is very different from being false or faking it. Our bodies and minds house deeply ingrained habits and patterns that once discovered can be redirected or even shed to allow for new pathways, new self-images, new thoughts. Different ways to connect emerge. To identify and unravel habitual blocks that prevent connection is always my goal. Imagine a musical instru-

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ment. A tuba is not a flute is not a trombone. Each has a unique shape that results in a distinctive sound or timbre. Each has its own story or tune to play. However, if the tuba has a broken valve, or the trombone a dented slide—no matter how gifted the musician who plays that instrument—the outcome will always be influenced by the damaged part. A talented player can work around a damaged part, but the instrument will never play as richly as possible as long as the damage itself isn't addressed. It's the same with us. It is always my intention to identify where a particular client's block to connection resides and to offer ways to remedy that block and open up new channels.

The challenge is habit. We are all incredibly habit-driven, moving in the same patterns year after year, experiencing life through bodies confined by routine. Many of those routines act as filters that limit our perception and our thinking. The good news is, despite our habits, we are all “works in progress,” and that's where potential lies. The body is fluid, and the brain is plastic (not “fixed”) and constantly evolving. Knowing this, it's important to routinely refine and retune how we listen, move, think, and connect. Ultimately, the goal is to play the instrument in which you live robustly and joyously. As the cellist Fredrik Sjölin put it, “People who play the instrument also form the instrument.” As you play the instrument that is your body, that contains your thoughts, you can remake how it experiences the world around you. Keep in mind that who you are, your personality, is well established. Personalities don't change, but *behaviors* can. Who we are is solid, but *what we do can be modified*. I'm not suggesting for a minute that making changes is easy. Old habits die hard, as the saying goes. As one CEO of a Fortune 500 company said to me, “The hardest thing for me is to remember to remember.” True enough. But it is truly astonishing what can manifest when drive, focus, and will are aligned with aspirations.

Whether you are the sole proprietor or the head of a team within a corporation, the skills needed to influence, inspire, motivate, and persuade are all dependent on the efficacy, clarity, and power of your expression. Exceptional ideas cannot move people if they are not well communicated. I've seen many terrific ideas die on the vine precisely because they were poorly communicated. And we've all seen rather insubstantial ones get traction because they were so well

packaged! Nonetheless, *all* communication originates and must move through and be expressed via the instrument of the body.

Increasingly, no matter the profession or business, professionals of all sorts are expected to present their ideas before varied audiences: internal stakeholders, teams, boards, clients. These audiences can be small or global. My goal is to help speakers manage a new and recent dual challenge: how to be truly present and in the moment with a live audience while at the same time appreciating that random comments, or even a well-rehearsed speech, may wind up online and quickly go global. With the ubiquity of the web and video, even seemingly private communications can be sent throughout the world in mere minutes. Presentational derailers that can prevent the clarity of connection are vast: tension that blocks the voice, unconscious habits that result in distracting hand gestures, eyes that shift around a room but never really see, to name just a few. In our wired world these need to be identified and addressed *before* any damage is done.

From years of coaching many professionals, I've come to the realization that contrary to the well-worn phrase "practice makes perfect," what practice really does is make imperfection livable. Being able to roll with the unexpected, breathe through it, accept mess-ups versus trying to hide them, be in the moment, these are the skills that practice, and *only* practice, can instill. And yet! Clients constantly tell me that they simply do not have time to practice. Make the time. Make. The. Time. There's commuting time, and lacking that, there's the shower. (Remember bathrooms have great acoustics!) A solid 10 minutes bathing and drying off are perfect for out-loud run-throughs of important upcoming messages. Speaking out loud is essential because only by saying and hearing how your words work together can you identify the places that need to be reworked, are repetitive or unclear. When we know our content inside out, feel completely comfortable with the architecture of our design, have not necessarily memorized it word for word but have a strong hold on structure, key points, and point of view, we can, as they say in the theater, throw the script in the air and truly be present.

My approach with each client is completely idiosyncratic, as no two people experience communication, managing, stage fright, or even stage panic, the same way. Nervous excitement is normal, to be expected, and can energize a

talk. No matter what the platform is, whether the TED Stage or boardroom, hardly anyone speaks without some degree of stress. But audiences are generous, eager to hear new ideas or solutions to challenges. Audiences want speakers to succeed. Yet, even knowing that, the most accomplished speakers can still struggle with fears about forgetting text, losing the thread of their talk, or messing up one way or another. Since no audience can bear to watch a speaker fail, it is crucial that with all my clients, no matter what the forum, I find a way to help each to connect with ease and joy, to be centered and calm and as conversational as possible.

Whether in the boardroom or on Broadway, context is everything. (Even the most seasoned professional actor can be thrown off by knowing that someone special is in the audience.) There will always be high-stakes situations during which our bodies and emotions are hijacked by the stress response. But living in that state day in and day out—unless you *love* it—serves little purpose other than shortening your life span! Given the reality that many of us are under unremitting stress at work, must communicate constantly and present quite frequently, building the skill set to mitigate these challenges is essential. Calm authenticity is not secondary but primary. It will affect you as much as it will impact your audience.



I spent most of my professional life in the theater. Like many aspiring actors, I caught the bug early. I began studying at the age of nine and continued through and beyond college. I took years of classes in voice, speech, singing, modern dance, ballet, Alexander Technique, improvisation, character work, audition technique, scene study, and directing. Acting and the teaching of acting, which I did for 30 years, are a “practice” in that they cannot be learned from books, only from experience. Great acting teachers spend their lives observing human beings and behaviors to impart to their students the tools to truthfully portray them. The techniques actors use to usher audiences into imaginary worlds evolved for a primary purpose: to emotionally move those audiences. The secondary aim, to make them think, is the result of those stirred emotions. (As

much as we may like to believe that we are rational creatures, emotional engagement is often the driving force behind our decisions.)

How do actors do what they do? How do they connect with each other onstage and with an audience? What are the techniques and tools they use? And can such skills be employed by all professionals not to “act” but to increase their ability to connect, inspire, motivate, and lead? My lifelong devotion to the craft of acting is what inspired me to bring those skills to those not conversant in the language of theater technique and stagecraft. I first made the transition by working with medical students. I would “act” the patient and observe how the student performed an intake interview or delivered difficult news. Then I would provide feedback. Eventually I began to work with global corporations, nonprofits, midsize companies, and arts institutions. These opportunities allowed me to work all over the world, interacting with professionals from vastly different cultures—bankers from Yemen, technical operations managers from Bangladesh, drug developers from Thailand, and finance managers from Russia, to name just a few! For many, the results have been life changing. I thought, why not write a book for nonactors that introduces them to the profoundly amazing techniques that actors master in order to connect?

In Part I, I discuss the body according to separate “centers.” The head is followed by the chest and heart, the belly, the hips, the legs, and the feet. By tackling each of these body centers, my goal is to help you experience how deeply interconnected they are. Very few people realize the impact the feet have on the upper body and overall posture. The architecture of the body, when well aligned and supported by correct muscle engagement, effortlessly expresses intention. But most of us, due to either injury, habits, stress, or trauma, have interrupted or distressed that elegant structure and flow of energy. As a result, we unconsciously send mixed or unclear signals. For example, what I call a “collapsed middle”—the lower back is curved outward and the abdomen is crunched in on itself—can make a person *appear* tired or bored, while that may not be the case at all. Additionally, the effects of such a “stuck” body position, or interruption of the flow of energy, can impact a person’s voice, mood, movement, receptivity, and even thoughts. Each chapter on the body’s centers focuses on both the phys-

ical aspects that can impinge upon or improve connection and the metaphoric and emotional impact of a given center.

Part II addresses “Presence.” Many think of presence as charisma, an innate gift, something you’re either born with or not. But having spent decades training actors how to achieve presence, I know that it is both a skill and the outcome of a series of actions. Those actions, available to all of us, involve listening keenly, being fully engaged with what’s happening “right now,” trusting not only your knowledge and expertise but also your gut. Presence, or full engagement in *this* moment combined with a preawareness of situational demands and expectations, is not innate. All these actions are performed by the body in concert with the mind. They are skills, not mysteries.

To be most effective, one’s “presence” needs to be aligned with clear communication. The skills needed to design clear and effective communication are introduced via key messaging. This is an organization tool with wide application. Beyond the needs of presenting ideas, key messaging is terrific for problem solving, negotiations, strategy design, managing, and even self-exploration. It is a tool that, if used routinely, becomes second nature. The result? Increased presence. Why? Because the alignment of body awareness with well-designed thinking processes improves communication efficiency. Clarity and efficiency impact how we are perceived. How we are perceived in turn influences our presence, because presence is not a one-way street. It’s a combination of our thoughts and behaviors and our audiences’ reactions to those behaviors in a constant flow back and forth. Moment-by-moment presence is a dynamic in constant flux.

What happens when, increasingly, we are not communicating in the same space but only virtually? What is the impact of presence and communication when it is increasingly mediated by technology? While there is no doubt that the ability to hold meetings in real time with large numbers of people who are physically scattered across the globe has great benefit, the risks of such interactions must be appreciated as well. Relationships, listening, and understanding can all be unexpectedly and instantaneously derailed. Social media, texts, e-mails, avatar meetings, all these will no doubt look quite primitive one day. For now, their implications are great. While it seems an extreme schism might exist between

those who grew up pre-Internet and those born well after its development, given the rapid and ever-evolving nature of these technologies, such difficulties will most likely be a constant. I examine how to keep creating new and better ways to connect in light of increasing and rapid technological changes.

In his book *The Code of the Executive*, Don Schmincke takes 47 ancient samurai principles and applies them to leadership success in the twenty-first century. In his introduction, he asks the reader who may choose to skip around the text to, if nothing else, read the first and most controversial chapter. If the reader feels resistance to some of the ideas, he suggests giving oneself “permission to suspend avoidance of discomfort.” (What a great combination of words! In the theater it’s called “the willing suspension of disbelief.”) Mr. Schmincke is asking the reader to take in the words no matter what they evoke. And how does that first and most important chapter open?

“One who is an executive must before all things keep constantly in mind, by day and by night, the fact that he has to die.”

What an opening! Deep down we all know this to be true, but hardly any of us do the daily reminder that forces us to believe it. It is precisely the reminder of our mortality that opens the portal to presence in this very moment. Presence—the courage to be fully alive in every moment in time, to take risks, to align one’s work with one’s values, to imagine, and to play—is available to all but accessed by few.

To that end, throughout the book, I suggest exercises to explore and experience under the heading “Try This.” The tools and tips are not “instructions”; rather, they are practices and experiences that can help to identify and modify habits that prevent connecting with the present moment. Whether you are a leader, team player, or sole entrepreneur, the tools are designed to increase communication efficacies, identify where your body instrument might need repair, and offer fun and challenging ways to do so. It’s my hope that by giving them a try, you’ll play your part in this awesome singular life you now, but so briefly, possess. Be forewarned: many of the exercises will be challenging and quite foreign to your experience. I ask only that you give yourself “permission to suspend avoidance of discomfort.” There is an appendix (Appendix B) where you

can easily find the exercises that will be most beneficial to you. For example, vocal challenges and exercises are in various chapters throughout the book. But in Appendix B, they are all found in one section under “Vocal Mastery—Volume, Resonance, Tone, Enunciation.” Treat this text as you would a workbook. Should you commit to any long-term efforts, you can keep track of your progress using worksheets provided at the end of each chapter and at the end of the book. You may use the worksheets to keep track of:

- The exercises you choose to do
- How often you intend to do them
- How often you actually do them
- The results you observe
- Any self-generated next steps you plan to take

The goal is to enable you not only to monitor your progress but to note any subtle changes that result. (For instance, a client recently told me that an exercise I gave her to slow down her rate of speaking had improved how she expressed herself, as well as her overall executive presence.) I encourage you to make up your own variations on both the exercises and the worksheet templates.

The biggest challenge for all of us is time. People think that to incorporate new behaviors and break old habits requires not only the resolve to change but lots of time. But the good news is that you already have the time; you just don’t know it. We all have daily rituals that we do with little or no thought. I remember when my mother quit smoking, she joined an organization called Smoke Enders. The first thing Smoke Enders instructed her to do was write down her smoking rituals and then find alternatives. So, for example, if she always carried her lighter tucked in her pack of cigarettes, she should keep the lighter in the freezer or somewhere totally inconvenient. This delay would give her time to ask herself, “Do I really need this cigarette right now?” The goal was to interrupt ritual and replace it with intention. That is my recommendation to you as well.

Observe one of your daily rituals: waking up, making coffee, getting dressed, starting your car. Once you’ve broken down the steps, take a moment

to insert one of the tips you wish to practice right in the middle of an already established ritual. Many of the tips suggested take a very short amount of time to do—but they must become routine to result in the desired changes.



Returning to Clair, what was it about her style and voice that made me jolt down “scared”? She had come to see me at my office a couple of times, but for our third meeting, I went to hers. I entered and was immediately struck by the sweeping views she had of Manhattan, south toward Radio City and the Empire State Building, west toward the glorious Hudson River.

“Wowie,” I gushed with awe and delight. “This city, it still takes my breath away. And seeing this view out your window every day, that’s so amazing. How fabulous for you.”

“I don’t deserve it,” she mumbled. I was dumbstruck, mystified. I looked at her and I waited. “I’m from this little tiny town in Wyoming. I’m a small-town girl. What am I doing here? This shouldn’t be mine.”

“But you’ve earned it. It *is* yours. You did earn it, did you not?”

A reluctant nod was all I got back. How could she speak up with energy, intelligence, and confidence if deep down she doubted her right to her very own well-earned position?

I turned to Clair and, with an imaginary royal sword, I solemnly declared, “I dub you queen.” She laughed. “Seriously. You are queen, and this—all of this—is yours. You’ve earned it. Look around you. You own it: this room, this view, that river, every building. It *all* belongs to you.” She had no idea what to do. “Play with me,” I winked. “Be the queen. What’s the harm? Let’s explore how it will feel for you to actually give yourself permission to own what you have earned.”

She said nothing. Carefully, but with total conviction, I added an imaginary jewel-encrusted crown, red velvet cape, and gold staff. “Your Highness,” I whispered and bowed. Clair grew three inches before my eyes. “I beseech you to make fruitful all these lands within your domain.”

A voice deep and sonorous emerged from her body. “I shall grant your wish.”

“Your Highness, might you walk with me and show me all that you possess?”

And with that, Clair took me on a royal constitutional around her office, elaborating on all her accomplishments and acquisitions.

“And those buildings below?”

“Mine! All mine!” she bellowed.

“Done!” I said, snapping my fingers and ending the magic. I looked at her. “Clair, up until now, you’ve been a small-town girl. But from this moment on, you are a queen.”

“My goodness,” Clair was beaming. “How did that happen? How did you do that?”

“Play?” I responded. “We all can play, if we just give ourselves permission.” (I’m still amazed by how quickly my clients, no matter how senior, will jump into an imaginary on-the-spot improvisation with me. As if by magic anyone—CEO or SVP—can be five again!)

Clair replied, “But I can’t walk around like that all the time. It’s not me. It’s too showy and grand and not truly who I am.”

“Being a small-town girl isn’t truly who you are either. Not anymore. Your truth is an outdated construct of who you’ve become, and it’s keeping you stuck. I’m not asking you to walk around all the time as the royal ‘we.’ I’m suggesting you give yourself permission to own what you have earned. Only then will you be able to confidently share your knowledge, skills, experience.”

“But!”

“No buts, Your Highness! Now, let us again take another royal walk.” And we did. Or rather she walked, and I followed obsequiously behind.

“This feels amazing,” she sang. But resistance is fierce. “But, still . . . *it’s not me.*”

“Really?” I asked. “How do you know? Who says?”

Who are any of us? We are often so much more than we allow ourselves to be. We imagine, we dream, we fantasize, and then we slip back into our concept of reality, rarely questioning if that concept has *any relation to the truth*. Furthermore, that concept, like Clair’s, lives in the body, becomes ingrained as muscle memory and habitual, limited patterns of movement. Despite her success, Clair’s self-conceptualization was stuck in a true but antiquated idea of

herself. The body she presented, with its small voice and tight throat, was that of her self-conception as a small-town girl. Playing queen, even for a few short moments, allowed her to feel different, see things with a new perspective, and break the bonds of outdated physical and mental constructs.

Play the Part is a business book on communication. But the title's first word is "Play," and it is so for an important reason. Play is seriously missing from our lives. Why do children play? Because by playing teacher, or mommy, or astronaut, children let curiosity open the portal to their imagined selves. They try on an "other" to find themselves. As our world becomes increasingly stressed on so many levels, each of us must seek ways to bring back play. While the drive to make babies is clearly first and foremost to propagate the species, it has been my long-term suspicion that the second reason is to give our serious adult selves permission to freely indulge in joyous play. Why? Because play is powerful. Rooted in imagination and curiosity, it is available to each and every one of us. We don't need to ask anyone but our own rigid selves for permission to play. Once embraced, its impact is stunning.

Within the next 18 months Clair, who'd been stuck in the same role for years, got two promotions. Did her evolution happen overnight? Absolutely not. It required profound shifts in self-conception, point of view, carriage, and imagination. Play is serious.

In that spirit, I ask only that you think of *Play the Part* not as an instruction manual but as a conversation with yourself. Think of this book not as a "how-to" but a "why-not?" Oh, and have fun!

About the Author

Gina Barnett founded Barnett International, Inc., an executive communications consulting firm, after decades working in the professional theater. Coaching thought leaders in science, healthcare, finance, the arts, and technology, she consults around the globe with such organizations as Novartis, GSK, HSBC, the Guggenheim Foundation, the mainstage TED Conference, and the TED Fellows and Institute. Working with individuals from over 30 countries and cultures (Bangladesh, Japan, Brazil, Jordan, China, India, Argentina, Russia, and Thailand to name a few), bringing knowledge of the profound effects of presentational style and presence on oneself and on others. Her travels have only deepened her belief that communication excellence in today's global economy is essential for success and that leadership presence is a craft not a mystery that can be mastered.

She works, writes, plays—as well as *writes plays*—in New York City, where she and her husband live.

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