Part One

First Thing First
YOUR INTRODUCTION

Should I Be Introduced Before Giving a Presentation or Not Introduced at All?
By all means, be introduced—especially if you are talking to more than a couple of people. However, keep the purpose of the introduction in mind: to give people a sense of why they should care about you and what you have to say. The intro should make the audience practically salivate in anticipation of hearing you speak.

**Big tip:** Don't let anyone else write or create your introduction; do it yourself.

So how do you write the ideal introduction for yourself? I think the best approach is to create a Venn diagram. In one large circle, write down every single fact about yourself—everything from your resume to your high school honors and so on. Next, write down everything in a circle that could possibly motivate someone in the audience who doesn't know you to want to listen to you speak on this topic. Finally, list everything in a circle that makes you uniquely qualified to speak on this subject.

Now, look at your Venn diagram and see how many bullet points overlap. Chances are, there's only about 30 seconds' worth of material that is genuinely important to both you and your audience, and makes the case for why you are uniquely qualified to talk about it. Thirty seconds is plenty—maybe a minute if you've won the Nobel Prize.

*Don't* have someone introduce you by listing every award, accomplishment, and degree you've ever earned. No one cares, except for your parents, and they already know because they had to foot the bill for everything.

*Don't* leave the intro up to chance. Type it out in very large font (18 point or bigger) and hand it to the person
introducing you (keep the sentences really short or use bullet points).

If no one is there to introduce you, then do it yourself. Just don't act embarrassed, and don't go on too long. Again, stick to the most relevant 30 seconds’ worth of facts following the above criteria; and then get to the meat of the speech.

Long introductions are hard for you to write, hard for the person introducing you to deliver, and hard for the audience to listen to. This really is one of the times where it pays to be concise; now you'll have more time to talk about what really interests your audience. Chances are that's your topic—not you.