Dr. Gary Genard is a public speaking coach whose technique, *The Genard Method*, provides public speaking training to corporations, government officials, and professionals of all types. His performance-based approach draws on his career as an actor, academic, and communications professor. Dr. Genard has published two books on public speaking success: *How to Give a Speech* and *Fearless Speaking - Beat Your Anxiety, Build Your Confidence, Change Your Life*. He is the author of numerous articles on effective public speaking, as well as the blog, "Speak for Success!"

After receiving an MA in Theatre at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Dr. Genard went on to complete the actor-training program at Webber Douglas in London. Once the training was complete, he worked both in New York at Classic Stage Company and around the country. He left show businesses and began his PhD Program at Tufts University in 1994. There he wrote his dissertation on the evolution of verse delivery as exemplified in three audio recordings of *Hamlet*, under the advisement of Dr. Laurence Senelick. I asked Dr. Genard what led him away from his career in performance and towards a career in academia. Dr. Genard answered, "I came to that crossroads that a lot of actors do. Is this the kind of life I want to live for the rest of my life? Or is it a little too risky? A little too unsettled? Does it lack the kind of control that you would like, to be able to control your own destiny? Which is of course a significant issue for actors, you're always looking for work. I came to that crossroads, and decided I would get out of show business. So I came back to Boston and I decided that I would apply to the PhD Program at Tufts. I was fortunate enough to get a fellowship."

Dr. Genard reflected on the professors, courses, and opportunities that he was able to take advantage of while at Tufts, reflecting a wide variety of interests: "In my program, I took a lot of courses in the classics department. One of my interests has always been Ancient Greek drama...I took a course in the archaic period of Greece, which was amazing. One of the most interesting courses at that time was a course in theatre research, which was done at Harvard. We took courses in the Harvard Theatre Collection. We would indicate what we wanted to study - I did Edwin Booth - and put on our gloves and look at these documents, and you know it was great! I became knowledgeable enough about Booth that I was able to say, 'this is supposed to be his signature on this document and it's not his signature!' Before I got in the program I thought, you know, I've got my undergraduate degree, my master's degree...so in terms of scholarship I think I'm pretty good, pretty knowledgeable...then when I got into the program I realized, wow. I learned so much and there was so much I didn't know. This is an entirely new level of research. That opened my eyes to what a doctoral program really was."

At the end of Dr. Genard's time at Tufts, a unique opportunity presented itself that would open doors later in his career. "As I was nearing the end of my program at Tufts, the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy contacted the department and said 'we have a diplomatic training program where we train diplomats from foreign services in a number of areas. We offer them a customized program and we are looking for someone who will teach..."
communication. Is there someone in your department who could fill that bill? My name was given because I was teaching public speaking. I talked to the Fletcher School and they hired me to teach in this program. This [opportunity] really opened up my thinking; I liked the communication and public speaking components."

Following the completion of his dissertation, Dr. Genard served as adjunct faculty at Tufts, Bentley University, and was hired at Emerson College in the communications department. "That’s the point where I was thinking that I wanted to work in communication because I really liked voice and speech. I’ve always been interested in language and loved Shakespeare. The position opened up at Emerson and they hired me. I was teaching communications courses to all the international students. The experience I had had at the Fletcher School, the foreign diplomats, with the United Nations...gave me the opportunity to work with a lot of international professionals, and that became a specialty of what I was doing as well."

Dr. Genard went on to teach in the English as a Second Language program at Harvard, as well as courses at Simmonds and Tufts. He said, "as it happened I had moved out of teaching theatre to teaching communication. I was perfectly happy doing it; when you're teaching public speaking you’re helping people with their performance, rather than your own. I liked helping people perform well in situations where it mattered that they did: Giving presentations, speeches, keynotes, and appearing in the media. Sometimes they were standard business presentations, but sometimes they were high-stakes situations. I really wanted to work with people on the front lines rather than teaching a university course, which, as rewarding as it is, I liked working with working professionals who were giving presentations, making media appearances, in the world of business, non-profit, politics, government, diplomacy. I was looking to make that the core of what I was doing."

About thirteen years ago, Dr. Genard was able to make a complete transition to that kind of work. He was given the opportunity to fill in for a friend on maternity leave, one who ran a public speaking training company. In 2001, after that experience ended, he established Public Speaking International, which was rebranded in March of 2014 as The Genard Method. Dr. Genard elaborated on the technique he developed: "The tagline is, 'Performance Based Public Speaking Training,' because its based on and informed by theatre based techniques. Everything that I do is grounded in the theatre and theatrical performance in some way." The list of clients with whom Dr. Genard consults with ranges from for-profit and non-profit organizations and government agencies to those in the legal, healthcare, and financial fields.

Dr. Genard is still involved with the Tufts Fletcher School of International Diplomacy. He remarked, "It’s a specialized program, I’m not on the Fletcher staff, but we’ve trained folks from Qatar in the Middle East, Armenia, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Iraq. I went to Iraq in 2009 to train the Kurdistan regional government, which is the semi-autonomous region in the Northeast of the country. I went there with another professor who taught research methodologies and I taught public speaking and media training to their foreign service and the protocol office to the President and the Prime Minister. I’ve also conducted training at the United Nations. I’ve trained at the State Department since 2001."

I asked Dr. Genard what, in particular, he took away from his doctoral program at Tufts that he uses now in professional career as a public speaking consultant: "That's a very interesting question for me. What I'm doing now is at a tangent to what I was doing at Tufts. But of course, what one takes away from a program like that is the rigor of the work that you're doing, the research that you're doing and the absolute need for excellent writing skills.... those skills can be applied in anything you do...There’s a practical consideration, too. That’s the connection that occurred when the Fletcher School contacted the
department. The reason that I started on that path is because I happened to be in the doctoral program at Tufts."

I suggested to Dr. Genard that his current career seemed to be a reflection of his cumulative experiences as an actor and communications educator as well as his time in the academy. He agreed. Although he is not active in the academy, he still feels deeply connected to the theatre: "The techniques I use with my clients come from my work in the theatre. That's an extremely important connection. I didn't envision any of this. You never know."