

EXCERPT



Speaking by the Numbers
Enneagram Wisdom for Teachers, Pastors, and Communicators

May 10, 2022 | \$24, 192 pages, hardcover | 978-0-8308-4166-0

It's not just what you say but how you say it. Combining communication principles with Enneagram wisdom, Sean Palmer instructs leaders, pastors, and teachers how to convey content in ways that both inspires and connects with its audience. Providing real-life examples of speeches, Palmer develops communication strategies that lead to connection, transformation, and mobilization.

Being Both Seen and Heard

The first advice many teachers and students of the Enneagram offer is that the Enneagram teaches us how we see the world, but more than that, it reveals that there are at least nine ways of seeing the world—your way of seeing is just one way of seeing. Knowing this offers us an opportunity to create space for others. The Enneagram reveals to us the faulty ways we've sought to protect ourselves and the flawed ways we've attempted to be loved. Knowing this should create humility—learning that everyone has tried to cover themselves and find love in their own deficient ways should generate compassion. This is how the Enneagram cultivates relational connection. It has changed the way my friends, family, and hearers face one another and connect. In knowing ourselves, we discover the depths of other people by coming to appreciate the differences between people, differences that are crucial for a communicator to explore and know.

A communicator best serves hearers by knowing the nine compulsive personality patterns that hearers adopt in order to feel seen, known, and loved. The Enneagram is often reduced to *only* a personality mapping system, but it is much more than that. In the most basic sense, the Enneagram describes how hearers reach out to the world, in both healthy and unhealthy ways. Knowing one's motivations, fears, compulsive responses, and paths toward growth are crucial for any individual that wants to be whole. It is also critical for any organization or speaker that wants to aid wholeness and fulfill a mission.

No single way of understanding and seeing the world is preferred, right, or paramount to the others. We are multitudes within ourselves, and we live among multitudes who are also complex, which means we must be more intentional about how we communicate, knowing that our way is not the only way even as we hold the microphone. Sometimes our hearers don't connect with what we're saying because it is based on how *we* see the world rather than how *they* see the world. And we mistakenly think we see the world as it is. As has been quoted by many, "We don't see the world as it is, we see it as we are." For years, I've signaled to thousands of people—in churches, at conferences, conventions, retreats, and other gatherings—that my reflexive and compulsive ways of seeing and being in the world are *the* ways to see and be in the world. I did not know I had a myopic perspective and most other speakers don't realize it either, yet we do.

This raises a question. What about people who don't interpret the world the way I do, who don't hear what I hear, who don't see with my lens? Or yours? I'm not merely talking about differing worldviews or competing philosophies; all of which are choppy enough seas to navigate. But what should we do when what foundationally motivates us and the way we process reality are genuinely good yet wildly dissimilar.

It's entirely possible that communicators inadvertently disengage a good portion of their hearers by overlooking the reality that their thought patterns and words are rooted in a particular way of seeing and being in the world. Preparing public proclamations under the assumption that people hear, interpret, and understand the same way we as speakers do, might be the reason some folks drift into sleepiness during our talks and presentations.



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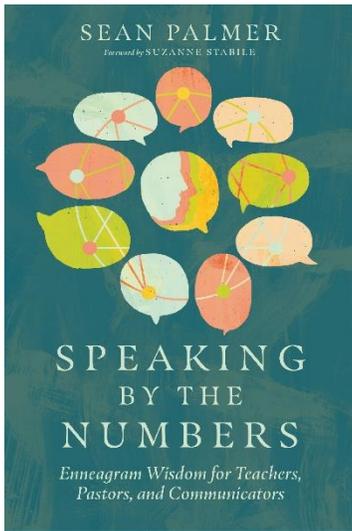
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Sean Palmer is the teaching pastor at Ecclesia Houston, a speaker, and an executive coach. He is the author of *Forty Days on Being a Three*, *Unarmed Empire*, and a contributing writer to *The Voice Bible*. Sean is vice-chair of the Missio Alliance board.

What if the reason that you didn't close that last deal, convince that executive board, or get a yes to your invitation was an understandable naiveté about the difference between the way you see the world and the way your hearer sees the world? What if you were talking only to yourself?

A greater understanding of the gifts of the Enneagram will help you shift boring discourses into life-giving messages that hearers can receive with eagerness, gratitude, and greater self-understanding, which becomes a glide path for transformation.

—Taken from the introduction



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"The Enneagram is about formation and transformation. It's not magic. But it is a tool that thoughtful women and men can deploy to search the depths of who they are, discover the beauty and agony housed within themselves and others, and seek practices and guidance to make the world a better place." —Sean Palmer, author of *Speaking by the Numbers*

A Tool for Meaningful Communication

"As a preacher and pastor of a multiracial, multicultural, and intergenerational church, communicating is often a daunting task when considering the variety of cultures, stories, and realities of the community I regularly serve. *Speaking by the Numbers* presses us to understand why centering the diversity of our hearers is just as significant as the work of knowing ourselves. Utilizing the Enneagram, Palmer offers a practical and timely tool for any public speaker who truly wants to be heard."

—**Gail Song Bantum**, lead pastor of Quest Church, Seattle

"There's a big difference between Enneagram information and Enneagram wisdom. Sean helps us cultivate much-needed wisdom with practical insight on how to effectively engage all nine types and connect with each effectively. This is a great resource for those who speak, teach, or communicate with groups on a regular basis."

—**Drew Moser**, author of *The Enneagram of Discernment* and cohost of *Fathoms: An Enneagram Podcast*

"Sean Palmer combines his unique insights into communication with hard-earned Enneagram knowledge to bring a spectacular primer for anyone who desires to sharpen their skills. By effectively weaving narrative and instruction, *Speaking by the Numbers* equips communicators to tailor their message for the greatest possible understanding of their intended audience. If meaningful communication is your goal, this book is a must-read for you."

—**Rhesa Higgins**, founding director of Eleven:28 Ministries

"I want to put this book in the hands of every speaker in my life, and my only frustration is that it didn't yet exist when I was fumbling my way through my first few years as a very rookie speaker—every audience I stood in front of would have benefited from my reading this wise and helpful book. The brilliance of Sean's mind, the crackling intensity of his personality, and his passion for both the Enneagram and the craft of public speaking leap off every page."

—**Shauna Niequist**, author of *Present Over Perfect*



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