**Ryan Avery – World Champion of Public Speaking**

It is 8am. I have trained 8 months for this; competing against more than 30,000 people from 116 countries. I am speaker number 8 during the final round of competition on the 88th anniversary of Toastmasters out of 88 districts around the world and the date is August 18th (8/18). New lucky number…8!

After the final speaker, we sit with the other 2,000 people in the audience and wait 30 minutes to hear the announcement. My heart is pounding, my palms are sweaty and then I hear it…. “*The 2012 World Champion of Public Speaking is… Ryan Avery!”*

The next morning after winning the World Championship, I woke up to 269 emails asking me to speak, coach and train leaders all over the world on how to improve their communication abilities. My world changed overnight!

I wanted to travel the world and start right away but I was still working at Special Olympics and didn’t want to quit, as I loved what I did for a living. However, there is a huge opportunity in this world of training and we need more leaders who can be better speakers.

My wife and I decided one night over dinner to take the risk and start our own business. We quit our jobs, sold everything we owned except what fit in our car, traveled to Texas to move back in with my parents at 26 years old (true Millennial) and start our company out of a corner in their home. Six months later we got on our feet, moved out and headed back to Portland, OR and now we live in Denver, CO (when you want the hour version of this story, let me know and we can grab a drink!).

This has been an incredible adventure. Every day I study, search and submerse myself in the art of communication. The biggest thing I have learned in the past three years doing this full time is this:

***When you improve your communication abilities, you increase your leadership capabilities.***

Now I travel the world, breaking world records with my wife and I get to work with leaders and their teams every week to show them how to utilize the power of storytelling to get others to take action.

I am so glad I get to be here with you today! Let’s have fun, learn a lot and work together on being better communicators so we can be effective leaders! As always…

Dream BIG,

**Ryan Avery**

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