



**GREEN HOPE**

***A leader is a dealer in hope.***

***Napoléon Bonaparte***

***Perhaps the beginning is just to say nice things are going to happen until you make them happen.***

***Frances Hodgson Burnett – The Secret Garden***

## **GREEN HOPE**

Successful communicators plant seeds in their audience's mind: the seed of growth and a better future. They plant the seed of Green Hope. The seed may be small but when planted intentionally it will always connect. This seed is one of the main reasons for communicating. A message of hope promises a better future for your audience. It could be the promise of eternal afterlife in heaven, or a better job, car, or a new and improved toothpaste. It could be more wealth, more freedom or more self-control in your diet. The key is the same – Green Hope.

Hope is created first by using words of inclusion: you, your, we, us, our, let's. Our tribal minds know that banding together fortifies the group and messages of inclusion reassure. Hope lets us believe that life will prevail over darkness and despair. It strengthens the fortress of our convictions that tomorrow will be better than today.

Hope is tied to the survival of our DNA and our legacy left to others through children and grandchildren. Hope also reinforces our belief in the endurance of our family, tribe, company, or our country whereas exclusion from the group isolates and weakens our capacity for survival. Thus messages with “we” and “you” always connect us back to Hope.

Barack Obama's "Yes, we can" is a classic example of this key. It expresses three powerful words of hope. First the positive affirmation "yes" which influences the other two words with its uplifting energy. Then, the word "we", the ultimate democratic word, where everyone is united into one. And then the word "can" which is full of promise, permission, and capacity to act. Three words which plant the green seed that the future can be better.

It is no surprise that Barack Obama found this slogan for his historic campaign as his first book, written before he ran for President, was an autobiography called "The Audacity of Hope".

Whether you are running for President, speaking to an audience, or writing an email to a client or friend, the words "you", "we" and "can" will color your message with hope. Another way to create Green Hope is the use of the future tense through "shall, will, going to". Affirmations like "You will win", "We are going to achieve these results" are not just vain pep talk. They plant the seed of hope in your communication. Green is the color for teaching, managing, coaching, and sales.

Likewise, phrases like "Let's play", "let's dance", or "let's go to the beach" offer the idea of fun together in the immediate future and inspire hope. Put "let's" in front of Donald Trump's slogan "Make America Great Again" and you have Ronald Reagan's winning slogan from the 1980 Presidential election. Both Presidents used the power of hope to connect with their audience and it worked.

Images of marriages, babies, and children are all symbols of hope. Comedy films and books end with the "happy ending scene" with dances, weddings, or group dinners which are all-inclusive scenes that show a society or group has healed the divisions that appeared in the story and is now united. The age-old message "Happily ever after" offers hope that the couple will produce babies and thus ensure the continuity of their DNA for eternity. Children are symbols that the society will continue and prevail.

Even the darkest of Shakespeare's tragedies end with a message of hope: audiences see that the tragic death of the villain has cleared the foul air of ego and division fostered by the whims of the reckless individual, and the group/nation has once again united under a new king. Churchill's "We shall never surrender" offered hope in the darkest days of the London Blitz and these words when transmitted to a nation by radio infused the British people with enough courage and energy to change the face of European history.

Churchill's message echoes the great gospel spiritual "We shall overcome" which has uplifted oppressed people in need of hope since the days of slavery when it was first sung. In Nazi Germany people chanted "We will follow" at huge rallies which were organized to inspire hope in victory for the Third Reich. Hitler was a precursor in modern communications and he orchestrated these rallies knowing that Green Hope is inherently political and drives nations and people forward.

Managers, salesmen, coaches, leaders, priests, and presidents all speak with Green Hope. It is keystone of great speeches and, unfortunately, bad propaganda, false

hopes and real holocausts. If there is one takeaway from all the wars and killing waged on the words of hope, it is to use "Green Hope" generously **and judiciously**.

One famous example appears in Elon Musk's speech to Tesla employees on the day the first Tesla arrived. He said to his staff, "What really matters is that what we are doing changes the world." This type of sentence became the standard pitch line in the Silicon Valley and is now so cliché that it is repeatedly mocked in the excellent HBO series Silicon Valley. We know every new start up states its mission is to change the world with the same phrase. Certainly it is cliché and overused yet who controls our communication today? The very companies that used these simple messages of hope to attract investors. Proof that Green Hope is very effective.

Advertising companies slide this green message of hope into slogans like "Just do it!", "Think Different", and "Save money, live better". Add the words "you can" or "let's" in front of any of these slogans and you will see these messages use the color of Green Hope. Today this model of using active verbs without the "you can" is increasingly common because marketers know audiences are self-centered, and as such we understand that the message is directed at us and add the implied words without even thinking about it.

Here's a list you might recognize:

Get legal help here.

End late payments by signing up here.

Try the world's best ribs.

Go global and pay less.

Start investing today.

Get Brexit done (Boris Johnson's slogan for 2019 election victory in UK)

Think and Get Rich (title of Napoleon Hill's 1937 classic book)

Look around, everywhere people are selling you hope and that is a good thing when their messages lead to real growth and benefits for you. You can also make the choice to consciously use Green Hope in all your communication to motivate change and drive your audience forward. When you use this color well you speak optimistically, **genuinely** giving people faith in their future in this world or the next one.

## Your keys to using Green Hope:

The key words of Green Hope: optimism, faith, positive change, growth, goals, learning, planting seeds, educating, mentoring, "Yes we can" attitude.

- 1) Use Green Hope to plant the seed of future benefits in the mind of your audience
- 2) Green is created with **the future tense** by using "will", "going to", "shall", and words like "can" "may" "will be able to", "we", "us", "our", "ours" "you", "yours", "let's", "tomorrow", "next year", "the future".
- 3) Green Hope can be conveyed by images of bonding with others: marriage, babies, children, dancing, community or group activities such as dinners, as well as new beginnings and growth symbolized by flourishing healthy plants and trees, rainbows, and sunrises.
- 4) Hope is reinforced by comparatives which suggest that the future for your audience will be better, faster, cleaner, less complicated, more successful etc.
- 5) Your audience **always** wants to know "what happens next?" and will expect and anticipate a takeaway of hope.
- 6) Generously use "we" when your message is group-centric or company-centric. Use "you" to address your audience in all other cases.
- 7) Using the second person and active verbs like "get", "give", "go", "start", "try" will encourage your audience to act in a positive manner. This is common on websites e.g. Get help here.



NB: Green Hope is just one of **The 7 Keys to Colorful Communication** which is part of my Speak the Rainbow™ method for powerful presentations and public speaking. Green Hope and the other 6 keys all connect in a different way and you should combine, mix, and balance the 7 Keys to connect colorfully with your audience.

I would love to help you learn how **The 7 Keys to Colorful Communication** can work for you.

You can contact me through my website and sign up to receive my blog posts [www.speaktherainbow.com](http://www.speaktherainbow.com) or by sending me an email at [davidm-arts@outlook.com](mailto:davidm-arts@outlook.com)

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