

# **PR lessons from “I have a Dream”**

*A celebration of the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Martin*

*Luther King’s speech on 28 August 1963*

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# I HAVE A DREAM

Address by  
Dr Martin Luther King Jr  
to the  
March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom  
on 28 August 1963  
from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial

# Historical Context

- 1776 Declaration of Independence
- 22 September 1862 Signing of the Emancipation Proclamation
- 19 November 1863 Gettysburg Address
- 1957 First Civil Rights Act since reconstruction
- 1964 Civil Rights Act
- 1965 Voting Rights Act

# Historical Context

- 31 October 1954 Dr King appointed Pastor Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, Montgomery Alabama
- 1 December 1955 Rosa Parks refuses to give her bus seat to a white man
- 20 December 1956 Bus services in Montgomery are integrated

## Historical context

- 14 February 1957 Southern Christian Leadership Conference is founded
- May 1961 The Freedom Riders begin travelling the country and are met with beatings, riots and arrests
- September/October 1962 James Meredith attempts to enrol at University of Mississippi requiring a Supreme Court order and Federal Marshals

## Historical Context – Danger

- Bombs at Dr King's house 1956, 1957
- Dr King Stabbed 20 September 1958
- Dr King punched by Nazi sympathiser at SCLC meeting 1962
- Medgar Evers, NAACP leader in Mississippi assassinated 12 June 1963
- Four girls aged 14 killed in church bombing in Birmingham 15 September 1963

# Historical Context 1963

- April - letter from a Birmingham Jail
- May - International telecasts of Birmingham Violence
- June - 125,000 attend freedom walk in Detroit
- June & September – Governor Wallace orders troops to stop court ordered integration
- June – President Kennedy introduces Civil Rights Act
- June - Kennedy “Ich Bin Ein Berliner”
- November - Kennedy assassinated

# Values

- Credibility
- Consistency
- Clarity
- Passion



# Emotion

- Persuasion & influence
- Genuine
- Commitment

# Metaphors & Stories

- Creating feelings and visions
- Providing reality and authenticity
- Go directly to the hearts and minds of the audience

## Dr King's leadership

“King was a preacher who spoke in Biblical cadences ideally suited to leading a stride toward freedom that found its inspiration in the Old Testament story of the Israelites and the New Testament gospel of Jesus Christ.”

Jack E White, *Time 100*, 14 June, 1999

# Four leadership influence arenas

<b>Voice</b>	<b>Behaviour</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Authentic</li><li>➤ Quintessential</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Action</li><li>➤ Communication</li></ul>
<b>Focus</b>	<b>Context</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Vision</li><li>➤ Objectives</li><li>➤ Themes</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Perceptions</li><li>➤ Setting, history</li><li>➤ Systems</li><li>➤ Relationships</li></ul>

# Leadership in the “Dream” speech

- Ideas – fresh thinking
- Authenticity
- Strength and commitment
- Vision
- Emotion – from the heart
- Planned – but flexible

# More on Leadership in the “Dream”

- Context
- Framing
- Call to action