

Great talks move mountains

By [Ithateng Mokgoro](#)

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Since 2007, members of the [Gamatong](#) team have attended twelve [TED](#) events, in eleven cities, in eight countries, on five continents. It's been a thrilling journey, as you might imagine. We've taken it all in, with eyes wide open, and pen in hand.

In that time, we've seen over five-hundred talks delivered live on the TED stage. We've seen first-hand what goes into preparing TED speakers. We've even had the privilege of working directly with the TED team on talks that have made it onto [TED.com](#). As of now, the collective view count of these talks is a whopping seven-and-a-half-million and counting.

We were in the room when little-known [William Kamkwamba](#) delivered his hugely inspirational story of how, as a fourteen year-old living in a remote village deep in Malawi, he built a windmill out of found scraps, and managed to generate much needed electricity for his family home. Now aged twenty-nine, William is recognised around the world as an innovator, engineer and author.



[William Kamkwamba via flickr](#)

We were also there when neuroscientist [Jill Bolte Taylor](#) held a human brain in her hands, and mesmerised the TED audience. Her jaw-dropping account of how she had a massive stroke, and how she watched as her brain functions—motion, speech, self-awareness—shut down one by one, was a truly astonishing story, and an unforgettable highlight of TED2008.



[TED 08 via flickr](#)

On Freedom Day, on 27 April 2010, in the year that the FIFA World Cup came to South Africa, members of the Gamatong team played a leading role in staging the first [TEDxSoweto](#) event. And in 2013, we added the [TEDxJohannesburg](#) event to our portfolio. Today, with more than thirty events behind us, we've prepared close to three-hundred speakers for the TEDx stage.

In the process, we've learnt what it takes to work with speakers considered to be giants of South African society, across disciplines. We've helped many of them do the necessary work of coming down to human scale, to connect with the hearts and minds of audiences.

On the flip-side, we've seen speakers who might have been perceived as dust, turn into glittering gold, as a direct result of our speaker coaching work. We know with some certainty that there's a great talk in everyone, if they are willing to do the work that needs to be done to get that talk out.

In addition, our team has accumulated a collective experience of over forty-five years in brand communication. Members of our team have judged at industry award shows, and our work has been recognised at the Loeries, at the New York Festivals, and at Cannes. That time has yielded solid skills in brand strategy, concept development, creative direction, design, and copywriting.

Everyone knows that a great story, delivered as a passionate, compelling talk, can illuminate, persuade, and transform an audience. What is rarely mentioned is how, as a result of that, a leader's vision, or a business' strategy, or a brand's essence, can be so effectively captured and canonised in something as simple, cost effective, and easily transmittable as

the humble talk.

Conceived and delivered well, a talk can improve understanding; it can make complex ideas more accessible; it can help us feel emotions that move us into action; and it can help us conceptualise the future like few other means of communication are capable of.

In the hands of leaders, great stories, delivered as talks, become inspirational guides that help us navigate the future.

Gamatong has taken this epiphany to its logical end. We've combined our considerable speaker coaching abilities with our brand development expertise to help leaders, businesses, and brands, tell strategy-aligned, memorable stories that strike meaningful connections with their audiences, in a course named Walk Your Talk™.

Walk Your Talk™ blends the theoretical understanding of the art of effective public speaking, with the practical skills needed to put together, and deliver, talks that tick all the boxes—including, of course, moving those proverbial mountains.

Want to know learn more? Request your Walk Your Talk™ course overview [here](#).

ABOUT ITHATENG MOKGORO

Formerly with TEDxSoweto, Ithateng is co-organiser and curator for TEDxJohannesburg, and was an attendee at TED, in Monterey, California.

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