

# speaking to teenagers

By Doug Fields & Duffy Robbins

*Reviewed by Andy Castle*

**Communicating effectively with teenagers is essential for any youth leader and here is a book crammed full of useful tips and ideas to help us develop this skill.**

Written by two youth work veterans who have nearly 50 years of youth experience between them, *'Speaking to teenagers'* guides the reader through a journey to 'uncover the secrets to giving great messages'.

The strapline for the book is 'how to think about, create, and deliver effective messages' and the book is split into three sections, taking each part of the strapline in turn.

The first section looks at 'how to think about effective messages' and explores the reasons why we need to be growing in this skill, and gives many tips to becoming more confident speakers. It considers the strengths and weaknesses of delivering a talk and also addresses some of the fears that leaders have when asked to teach young people.

The second section looks at 'how to create messages that S.T.I.C.K.', the mnemonic standing for Study, Think, Illustrate, Construct and Keep focused, with a chapter dedicated to each. Each chapter

gives simple yet profound thoughts and insights on the topics and also provides questions to consider and reflect on so as to ground the teaching in the reader's reality.

Having looked at the content of the message and how to convey it well, the final section of the book looks at 'how to deliver effective messages'. We can have the best talk in the world written down but it is in the delivery where it either connects and challenges people or fails completely. Again, Fields and Robbins give practical ideas as to how to make the most of the room you are meeting in, as well as looking at how we need to be visual with young people and make the most of images and PowerPoint presentations. There is also a helpful warning that giving a talk is not the same as simply talking!

The book finishes with a reminder that God doesn't need perfect, flawless communicators, just faithful ones and this is a message that comes across clearly throughout the book. Of course it is important that we learn the art of communicating, but the most important part is listening to God and acting on his commands and will.

Doug Fields and Duffy Robbins

have written many books on youth work between them and are widely respected as gifted communicators to young people as well as adult leaders. They write in a very easy-to-read way and yet every chapter is full of wisdom and practical insight. The mixture of theology and theory is balanced well with practical ideas and suggestions to make it simple to put the teaching into practice quickly.

The teaching in this book can easily be applied to communicating with people who are not teenagers as it is a useful handbook on delivering effective messages to all ages.

Give this book to your youth leaders and see your youth meetings transformed!

