

“And now our Canadian Ambassador from Vancouver, British California...”

"Gulp, why did I agree to do this," I thought as I was being introduced at a recent meeting of the National Speakers Association in Los Angeles, California. (1999) After all, who was I to be speaking to this august gathering of some of North America's top speakers and trainers?

The thunderous applause spurred me on, helping me get past my initial stage fright and I walked on to see 640 cheering speakers (and a few Canadians interspersed throughout the crowd.) Janet Lapp had asked us as Canadian Speakers to host the Saturday night Gala night for this annual gathering and I had somehow been appointed official Canadian Ambassador to the NSA for this event.

And we had done ourselves proud with Canadian flag pins, Canadian Airlines in-flight magazines and snacks at every place, and Canadian Flags (large and small) throughout the room. I stopped and took a deep breath before speaking. "Remember, they are just like you," I told myself. "But I have some of their books and tapes." I pressed on.

I simply shared that we “**Canadian Association of Professional Speakers**” members were glad to be here and to help celebrate our continued friendship and the co-founding of the International Federation for Professional Speakers. I told them of the border crossing at Blaine, where it says, "Children of a common mother" and I asked those Canadians in the audience to stand and be recognized. 14 people from across Canada stood to a thunderous applause that lasted for minutes.

I had my eyes opened that day, as did my 14 fellow Canadians. We often miss the respect and esteem in which we are held outside our country. People look at us and are impressed by the quality we bring to our work and the commitment to our craft across the world. It was nice for that brief moment to share that honor and that sense of appreciation with my fellow Canadians.

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Bob ‘Idea Man’ Hooey, DTM, PRA, CKD-Emeritus, Accredited Speaker, 2011 Spirit of CAPS recipient is an inspirational leader, speaker, and a prolific author whose works include **‘Legacy of Leadership, Strive for significance – lead on purpose!’**, **‘Speaking for Success’** and **‘The Courage to Lead!’** His articles have been featured in a multitude of North American trade and global consumer publications. He is a respected leader who has been honored by CAPS, NSA, Toastmasters, and the United Nations for his leadership contributions. His creative Ideas At Work have allowed him to travel the globe sharing insights, encouragement in 61 countries, so far. With Covid-19 he has been zooming around the globe to share his ideas. His **innovative Ideas At Work!** have been successfully applied by global leaders as well as Canada’s 50 Best Managed Companies.