

Strategic Advice from Radio's Premiere Talent Coach

# Planet Reynolds

## We Create Personality Radio



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### What Jimmy Fallon Learned from Morning Radio

The people at NBC are really smart. They might not have the nation's #1 TV network, but they've always been brilliant at introducing a new show. It's only been two weeks, but despite being on the network for fourteen years (between SNL and Late Night), and only moving one hour in their schedule when he took over The Tonight Show, they've spent the last few weeks reintroducing Jimmy Fallon to the audience. Like a great radio morning show, they're both defining his sense of humor and asking the audience to give him a shot. This is exactly what morning shows, specifically new ones, need to do to set the table for a win. Take Jimmy's first few shows. He's explained how the show will work to the audience thus reassuring Leno fans who hate change (which is all of them!) and he introduced his entire cast, not assuming anyone knows who they are and walked viewers through what kind of show he will do. Fallon's first order of business was "to do no harm" to the people used to Leno, who want to give him a shot. Don't do anything which fuels this discomfort with change. Walk them thru what will happen carefully and endear yourself to these people lest they leave in droves because it's not what they're comfortable with (something Conan O'Brien did not understand). Leno left, after 22 years, an old comfortable shoe. Jimmy has to (present tense) do the same. Which is why he spotlighted his parents, talked about growing up in a town whose population is 19,482, noted he'll make fun of everyone, and that his announcer is from Iowa. None of it phony, all in an effort to position himself as accessible, likable, genuine and damnit...just like you! These are the exact same qualities your personality-driven shows must communicate every day, and in every break, to start and fuel a relationship with the audience. Watch Jimmy Fallon and see he's becoming friends with Leno's audience; just the right thing to do. Read a great Time review of Jimmy's first two week's [here](#).

### Two No's and One Yes

I must listen to 50 hours of morning radio each week, checking up on clients and also hearing what our competitors are up to. I've heard two breaks in the last week which made me wonder what those shows were trying to accomplish in positioning themselves as just like the audience so they can connect (an imperative). Neither of these are clients, and I won't name names, but doing a few breaks, with phones, on why they should fly first class is so off-point it isn't funny. Their audience works all week to afford their home. Flying first class is a major disconnect. The other head scratcher was a chat about buying a Mercedes S550. Um, nope. The one

bright spot came from the show where the female talked about her struggles impressing her mother-in-law with her cooking. If the audience is nodding up and down ostensibly saying, "yea, that's my life", you've got your win in the effort to connect with listeners.



Each Sunday we publish the Hot List your talent can use to stay on the topics that make you accessible to the biggest audience. Sign up for (it's free): email [steve@reynoldsgroupradio.com](mailto:steve@reynoldsgroupradio.com)

Issue #40 March, 2014

### Saying Thank You in Just Forty-Five Seconds

A cultural mainstay that most reflects PPM execution is the winning Oscar speech. Winners are given a scant 45-seconds before the music starts and must get a lot done to make it valuable and a terrific viewer experience (verses reading a laundry list of names we don't care about or doing inside stuff that is meaningless to us). The two stand-out winners were Jared Leto (Dallas Buyer's Club) and Lupita Nyong'o (12 Years a Slave). The New York Times did an article just prior to the awards show saying the winners had to accomplish the following things in their limited time to make it memorable:

- Be prepared (there's no way you can do this without prep).
- Be personal (mentioning family or adversity brings you closer to the audience). This is where you tell a story that humanizes you.
- Be grateful, especially to those closest to you (it shows humility).
- Be apolitical.
- Be sincere. Being overcome with emotion draws people in to the message.

PPM is the same way. We must get done, in a shorter period of time, these same things when doing breaks, to connect with the audience. Now that you know the list, see how terrific Leto's speech was [here](#) and how brilliant Lupita's was [here](#). And read the full New York Times article [here](#). It's not rocket science to connect with an audience. You just can't wing it, which is the most salient point of all.

The Reynolds Group coaches morning shows to better connect with their audience. Focusing on the demo and challenging them to develop fun, relevant content and entertaining ideas makes more people want to tune in!

Steve Reynolds