ELECTRONICS AND TECHNOLOGY

SPEECH FOR

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We think it’s odd when we hear that back in the fifteenth century, before “Columbus sailed the ocean blue,” people truly believed that the world was flat. We know differently because of advances in science and technology and we have been able to see through space travel that the earth is actually very round. People were astounded back in 1877 when Thomas A. Edison proved that he could record sounds on a “phonograph.” His first words were “Mary had a little lamb.” There was no turning back from the advancement of science, technology, and electronics. And here we are in 2015. Most young people barely know what a record or a phonograph is, nor do they know what an 8-track tape, CD or 45-rpm record is. Thousands of songs are now saved in their Smartphones. Progress in technology is a wonderful thing. What I have just mentioned are simple examples of how time and technology have influenced civilization. In every area of life from medicine to manufacturing, from sports to education, innovations in the way we do business, learn our lessons, and live our lives are essential to the advancement of our society.

While many people still resist the importance of being familiar with the hardware and software that seems to be ruling our lives, as the expression goes, “**resistance is futile.”** Every day new updates and innovations are introduced and it is our responsibility to at least be aware of what is available to support each one of us in the professional and social arenas of this modern world. It’s not necessary to know EVERYTHING, in fact it’s almost impossible, but it is critical to have a working knowledge of what is going on in the world of electronics and tech if you want to survive in this increasingly competitive world. According to an article on the website, [www.internetworldstats.com](http://www.internetworldstats.com), the growth in popularity of the Internet is astounding. Just ten years ago, in November of 2005, it was estimated that approximately 972 million people throughout the world, or 15.2% of the population, were Internet users. In June of 2015, the estimated number of users grew to over 3.27 BILLION people or 45% of the world population, and usage is growing more rapidly every day. When we consider that Facebook, which was launched in 2004, has a current worldwide user count of 1.44 BILLION users, we can see that potential to connect is enormous. While some may think that statistic is unimportant because Facebook is mostly a “social” site where friends gather, think again. There is a lot of business being conducted on the site. From ads to games to promotion of cultural events, new entrepreneurs are born every day thanks to the Facebook connection. What is even more important and exciting is that thanks to the growth of the use of this technology and connection, Mark Zuckerberg and his wife, Priscilla, upon the recent birth of their baby daughter, have pledged to donate 99% of their Facebook shares, currently worth 45 BILLION dollars, to support various organizations dedicated to the advancement of world health, the well being of the planet’s children, the eradication of hunger, and the commitment to a healthier environment for all of us. None of this would be possible without electronics and technology.

Electronics, or “hardware” can be anything from desktop computers, laptops, smart phones, tablets, calculators, cameras, and the like. The simplified dictionary definition of electronics is, “circuits or devices using transistors, microchips, and other components.” I discovered this definition when I used the “software” in my computer and searched for the meaning on Google, a search engine. Within ¼ of a second I had over 114 million responses to choose from. The amount of information available to us today is mind-boggling. While some may fear the unknown, being involved in technology supports the way we live our lives. News travels faster. Information is shared more freely. We have the potential to learn, educate, heal, cure, survive, and sustain our selves and our civilization thanks to the availability of so many exciting and important bits and bytes of information that are within our reach.

Because of the importance of electronics and technology in modern life, it is essential that we have a working knowledge of the basics of technology. More than ever it is crucial for all of us to be curious, open-minded, adaptable, and willing to learn. The use of technology affects every single aspect of life, and whether you need to find out information for work, health, education, every day life- whatever you can think of, a foundation in the ways to navigate tech is extremely important. It is the most vital tool one can have to find a job, communicate information, earn an education, manage health, support those in need, and resolve many global issues.

Modern problems demand modern solutions and those solutions involve being familiar with technology and electronics. Because we all have greater potential to be connected, there is much more competition in professional fields. We are no longer competing with local neighbors for the same jobs. We may also be in the running with people in far off places. The ability and reality of working in a “remote” office environment is a very viable option today. Thanks to technology we are no longer limited by location, but that means we must be even more informed and prepared to compete. Our laptops and tablets are becoming the new remote workspace. In an article on [www.globalworkplaceanalytics.com](http://www.globalworkplaceanalytics.com), updated in September 2015, we learn the following about telecommuting:

* 3.7 million employees or 1.8% of the workforce work from home at least half the time they work.
* 50% of the US workforce has jobs that are compatible with telecommuting.
* While the US workforce increased by 1.8% from 2013-2014, the percentage of workers telecommuting grew by 6.5%.

These kinds of statistics would not be possible without modern electronics and technology. Opportunities for online education, jobs, and solutions to other issues we face in life are available thanks to advances we have witnessed. It is so essential to be familiar with what is available to help you sustain the professional, personal, social and healthful lives we all wish for. It is urgent that we keep open minds, eager hearts, and willing hands to accept and access the current and inevitably the future of our civilization. There is so much more to say and to describe that I urge you all to think of what questions you might have so that you can join the conversation…. the world is waiting for you!

Thank you all!