

CONFERENCE SPEAKER VERSION - FIRST PERSON

Hi there! I'm Rob.

I'm a coach, creative director, design studio owner, professor, keynote speaker, and author.

Over the past 30 years, I've carved out a career in the creative industry that's taken me through some pretty diverse experiences working in the corporate world, serving within a government department, and launching two successful agencies of my own. I've also had the privilege of teaching as an adjunct professor at several colleges, where I get to mentor the next generation of creatives.

I've been lucky to collaborate with some major names, including Warner Brothers, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, DC Comics, and the Royal Canadian Mint. One of the highlights of my career was building the Farm Boy brand from the ground up, watching it grow, thrive, and eventually sell for \$800 million. My work has been recognized internationally and featured in publications like *Communication Arts*, *Applied Arts*, and *Azure*, as well as in books from Rockport, Graphis, and North Light Books. Along the way, I've picked up over 100 industry awards for design and branding excellence.

But how did I get here? Honestly, I hated high school. I felt boxed in by a system that didn't understand me, and I didn't understand it. It was rigid, formulaic, and uninspiring, especially for someone with a creative mind. I felt lost, out of place, and uncertain about the future. My mantra back then was, "There has got to be something better." Thankfully, there was. With the support of my parents, a forward-thinking guidance counselor, and a lot of perseverance, I found a path that continues to fulfill me, even three decades later.

In recent years, I've been fortunate to share my story and insights with creative communities around the world in presentations where I've been described as being equal parts stand-up comedian, teacher, and preacher. I've spoken at events like DesignThinkers, RGD In-House Design Conferences, and CreativeMornings, and have led workshops, webinars (including a Top 10 Webinar of 2020 for the RGD!), and multiple podcasts.

In 2017, I published my first book, *The Frankenstein Condition*, which explores self-awareness and self-esteem in the age of social media. My second book, *Stop Looking for Zebras*, followed in 2022, offering practical strategies for creatives chasing meaningful success. In 2025, the companion workbook *Stop Looking for Zebras, and Do the Work!* was published.

I'm not sharing all this to brag, in fact, I feel incredibly uncomfortable writing about myself. I'm sharing it because behind all these highlights is a career built on long nights, creative blocks, frustration, and a whole lot of banging my head against a keyboard. However, through it all one thing has never changed: I absolutely LOVE the communications industry, and I'm incredibly grateful to be part of it.

CONFERENCE SPEAKER VERSION - THIRD PERSON

Meet Rob. He's a coach, creative director, design studio owner, professor, keynote speaker, and author.

Over the past 30 years, Rob has built a career in the creative industry that's anything but ordinary. His journey has taken him through the corporate world, into the heart of government communications, and through the launch of two successful agencies. Along the way, he's also served as an adjunct professor at multiple colleges, where he mentors and encourages the next wave of creative professionals.

Rob has had the opportunity to collaborate with some big names, including Warner Brothers, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, DC Comics, and the Royal Canadian Mint. One of the standout moments of his career was building the Farm Boy brand from scratch and watching it flourish into a company that eventually sold for \$800 million. His work has been recognized internationally and featured in publications such as *Communication Arts*, *Applied Arts*, and *Azure*, as well as in books by Rockport, Graphis, and North Light Books. He's also picked up over 100 industry awards for excellence in design and branding.

But getting here wasn't exactly a straight line. Rob hated high school. He felt trapped in a system that didn't understand him, and truthfully, he didn't understand it either. It felt rigid, predictable, and creatively stifling. Like many others with a creative brain, he often felt lost and unsure of where he fit. His high school mantra was, "There has got to be something better." And thankfully, there was. With the support of his parents, a guidance counselor who saw something in him, and a lot of stubborn persistence, he eventually found a path that still excites him more than three decades later.

In recent years, Rob has enjoyed sharing his story and experience with creative communities around the world. He's been described as being equal parts stand-up comedian, teacher, and preacher. He's spoken at events like DesignThinkers, RGD In-House Design Conferences, and CreativeMornings, and led workshops, webinars (including a Top 10 Webinar of 2020 for the RGD), and podcasts.

In 2017, Rob published his first book, *The Frankenstein Condition*, which explores self-awareness and self-esteem in the age of social media. His second book, *Stop Looking for Zebras*, came out in 2022, offering practical tools and perspective for creatives trying to find their footing and define their own version of success. In 2025, Rob's companion workbook *Stop Looking for Zebras, and Do the Work!* was published.

Rob doesn't share all of this to show off. In fact, writing about himself makes him pretty uncomfortable. But behind the accolades and milestones is a career full of long nights, creative dead ends, and plenty of head-on-desk moments. Despite all of that, one thing has remained constant: he absolutely loves the communications industry and feels incredibly lucky to be part of it.

AUTHOR BIO - FIRST PERSON

Hi there, I'm Rob, a coach, creative director, design studio owner, professor, keynote speaker, and author. For more than three decades my career in the creative industry has been anything but conventional. I've navigated the corporate world, served within a government department, and launched two successful agencies of my own, building a body of work that spans a wide range of sectors and projects. Along the way, I've also had the privilege of mentoring the next generation of creatives as an adjunct professor at multiple colleges.

Over the years, I've collaborated with some of the world's most recognizable brands, including Warner Brothers, DC Comics, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and the Royal Canadian Mint. One of the pinnacles of my career was developing the Farm Boy brand from the ground up, watching it grow, thrive, and ultimately sell for \$800 million. My work has received international recognition and has been featured in publications such as *Communication Arts*, *Applied Arts*, and *Azure*, as well as in books from Rockport, Graphis, and North Light Books. I've also been fortunate to receive more than 100 awards for design and branding excellence.

My journey to this point, however, was far from straightforward. I struggled in high school, feeling constrained by a rigid system that didn't nurture creativity. I often found myself thinking, "There has got to be something better," unsure of what the future might hold. With the encouragement of supportive parents, a forward-thinking guidance counselor, and a lot of determination, I eventually found a path that allowed my creativity to flourish, a path that continues to inspire me today.

In recent years, I've shared my experiences and insights with creative communities around the world, earning a reputation as a speaker who blends humour, teaching, and heartfelt storytelling. I've spoken at events such as DesignThinkers, RGD In-House Design Conferences, and CreativeMornings, and I've led workshops, webinars, including a Top 10 Webinar of 2020 for the RGD!, and multiple podcasts.

I'm also the author of three books focused on creativity, self-awareness, and professional growth. My first book, *The Frankenstein Condition* (2017), explores self-esteem and identity in the age of social media. *Stop Looking for Zebras* (2022) offers practical strategies for creatives seeking meaningful success, followed by the companion workbook, *Stop Looking for Zebras, and Do the Work!* (2025).

Despite these accomplishments, I try to remain candid about the realities of my journey. Behind the awards, brand launches, and speaking engagements are long nights, creative blocks, frustration, and a great deal of trial and error. Through it all, one thing has remained constant: my deep passion for the communications industry and my gratitude for the opportunity to be part of it.

AUTHOR BIO VERSION - THIRD PERSON

Rob is a coach, creative director, design studio owner, professor, keynote speaker, and author whose three-decade career in the creative industry has been anything but conventional. From navigating the corporate world and serving within a government department to launching two successful agencies of his own, Rob has built a portfolio of experience that spans diverse sectors and projects, all while mentoring the next generation of creatives as an adjunct professor at multiple colleges.

Over the years, Rob has collaborated with some of the world's most recognizable brands, including Warner Brothers, DC Comics, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and the Royal Canadian Mint. One of the pinnacles of his career was developing the Farm Boy brand from the ground up, watching it thrive and ultimately sell for \$800 million. His work has garnered international recognition, appearing in publications such as *Communication Arts*, *Applied Arts*, and *Azure*, as well as in books from Rockport, Graphis, and North Light Books. Along the way, Rob has been honored with over 100 awards for design and branding excellence.

Yet, Rob's journey to this point was far from straightforward. In high school, he felt constrained by a rigid, uninspiring system that didn't nurture creativity. "There has got to be something better," he recalls thinking, unsure of what the future might hold. With the encouragement of supportive parents, a forward-thinking guidance counselor, and sheer determination, he discovered a path that would allow his creativity to flourish—a path that continues to inspire him today.

In recent years, Rob has shared his insights and experiences with creative communities around the world, earning a reputation as a speaker who blends humour, teaching, and heartfelt storytelling. He has appeared at events such as DesignThinkers, RGD In-House Design Conferences, and CreativeMornings, leading workshops, webinars (including a Top 10 Webinar of 2020 for the RGD!), and podcasts.

Rob is also the author of three books that explore creativity, self-awareness, and professional growth. His debut, *The Frankenstein Condition* (2017), delves into self-esteem and identity in the age of social media. *Stop Looking for Zebras* (2022) offers practical strategies for creatives seeking meaningful success, with a companion workbook, *Stop Looking for Zebras, and Do the Work!* published in 2025.

Despite these accomplishments, Rob is refreshingly candid about the realities of his journey. Behind the awards, brand launches, and speaking engagements are long nights, creative blocks, frustration, and a lot of trial and error. Through it all, one constant has remained: a deep passion for the communications industry and a profound gratitude for the opportunity to be part of it.

CONFERENCE SPEAKER VERSION - FIRST PERSON

Hi, I'm Rob. I'm a coach, creative director, design studio owner, professor, keynote speaker, and author with over 30 years of experience in the creative industry.

Over the years, I've worked in corporate, government, and agency settings, and led branding and design projects for clients like Warner Brothers, DC Comics, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and the Royal Canadian Mint. I also helped build the Farm Boy brand from scratch, which eventually sold for \$800 million.

I've taught at several colleges, mentored hundreds of creatives, and spoken at events including DesignThinkers, RGD In-House Design Conferences, and CreativeMornings. I've been told I'm part teacher, part preacher, and part stand-up comic, which I'll take as a compliment.

I'm the author of *The Frankenstein Condition* and *Stop Looking for Zebras*, and my latest book *Stop Looking for Zebras, and Do the Work!*.

CONFERENCE SPEAKER VERSION - THIRD PERSON

Robert Smith is a coach, creative director, design studio owner, professor, keynote speaker, and author with over 30 years of experience in the creative industry.

He's worked in corporate, government, and agency environments, and has led branding and design initiatives for major clients including Warner Brothers, DC Comics, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and the Royal Canadian Mint. He also helped build the Farm Boy brand from the ground up, contributing to its \$800 million sale.

Rob has taught at multiple colleges, mentored hundreds of creatives, and spoken at events like DesignThinkers, RGD In-House Design Conferences, and CreativeMornings. Known for blending insight with humour, he's been described as part teacher, part preacher, part stand-up comic and he loathes writing in the third person.

He is the author of *The Frankenstein Condition* and *Stop Looking for Zebras*, and his latest book *Stop Looking for Zebras, and Do the Work!*.

AUTHOR BIO - FIRST PERSON

Hi there, I'm Rob Smith, a creative director, coach, professor, and author with over 30 years of experience in design and branding. I've had the privilege of working with clients like Warner Brothers, DC Comics, and the Royal Canadian Mint, and I played a key role in building the Farm Boy brand.

As a mentor to hundreds of creatives, I've taught at multiple colleges and spoken at events, including *DesignThinkers* and *CreativeMornings*. I'm also the author of three books on creativity and creative practice: *The Frankenstein Condition*, *Stop Looking for Zebras*, and my latest, *Stop Looking for Zebras and Do the Work!*, which encourages readers to discover what fuels their best work and reignites their creative spark.

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Robert Smith is a creative director, coach, professor, and author with over 30 years of experience in design and branding. He's worked with clients like Warner Brothers, DC Comics, and the Royal Canadian Mint, and played a key role in building the Farm Boy brand. Known for blending insight with humour, he's been described as part teacher, part preacher, part stand-up comic and he loathes writing in the third person.

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CONFERENCE SPEAKER VERSION - FIRST PERSON

Hi, I'm Rob, a coach, creative director, professor, author, and speaker with 30+ years in the creative industry. I've led major branding projects, taught at multiple colleges, and mentored hundreds of creatives. I'm the Chief Creative Officer at Greenmelon, the Chief Thinking Officer at Think Smith, and the author of *Stop Looking for Zebras* and *Stop Looking for Zebras, and Do the Work!*

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