# Sample Serious Personal Speech

It was just before my 18th birthday when I signed with first agency. I had to go for one of the top ten because if it wasn't the best, it wasn't worth it to me. I knew it would tough, harsh, competitive, even cruel at times—all the things I heard it would be. And it didn't disappoint. It being "the industry"—the fashion industry, that is.

I walked the shows during fashion week and met the designers, the photographers, and the celebrities. I didn't earn tons of money, and I wasn't Gisele Bundchen, but it made up for its lack of monetary wealth by providing a wealth of amazing experiences. I saw Paris, Milan, Rome, Tokyo, Madrid, Moscow. Months turned into years, and I made good friends, went to amazing parties, and wore outfits that were more art than clothing. I stayed away from drugs and alcohol and kept myself healthy. All was well until just before my 23rd birthday.

"Dahling, what is going on?" My agent asked me. She was French. "Look at you. How will you fit in anything?"
I'd always been a late bloomer, the last of my friends to hit puberty. But, finally, at nearly 23, I had a butt of my own and a decent bust line. I'd say I was a size 4 max and was filling out quite nicely, if I do say so myself. I jogged and ate a balanced diet that consisted of very little junk food. An occasional croissant maybe, but mostly salmon on toast, bananas, crunchy cereal with fruit...things like that. I wasn't sure what to cut out.

"Ten pounds have to go, my dear. At least," she said to me. She said it like it was so normal, like it would be so easy.
It *was* my job, I guess, so I'd have to do it. I started lifting weights, which made me hungrier, but I cut down on food too. I was exhausted all the time. Still not thin enough. I was down to a little fruit a day with just enough energy to walk quickly on the treadmill. Still not thin enough. I kept it up until, at 5'10" and 23 years old, I was a scary 115 lbs. Thin enough.

"Perfect! This is the look these days. The sort of gaunt, waify look is in vogue," my agent beamed. Did she just say 'gaunt' is in vogue? I guess so.

I was exhausted all the time. Keeping up the androgynous look wasn't easy. I wasn't a busty Brazilian babe and never would be, so I was told the only look I could rock and make money with was a boyish one. Nothing made me happy anymore. I was constantly in a bad mood, my breath smelled, my skin became lackluster, my hair became limp and brittle, but they were telling me I looked perfect. How?

It wasn't until I collapsed in a crosswalk on a busy street that I saw the light. A stranger got out of his car and helped me up and to the sidewalk. He didn't even know me, but he knew what was wrong. He gave me a pitiful look to go along with the breakfast sandwich he offered and ran back to his car before the light turned green.

See, you can't use Photoshop when you're on the runway. You truly need to be that small in real life. They can paint your face to give you a healthy complexion and erase the dark circles under your eyes. They can smooth your hair out with serum to make that look healthy too. But the 23-inch waist and 17-inch thighs, that's real. You've got 16- and 17-year-olds who think they're getting fat and starving, but, really, they're just growing. They're becoming women. And what is the fashion industry saying about women when they get rid of models as soon as they begin to develop into women.

That's when I left the industry to advocate for healthier standards. That's why I'm here today sharing my story as an insider. There was no one there to educate me, and I learned the hard way. Sure, I was an adult and probably should have known better, but it's easy to get caught up in this little bubble of a world in the fashion industry. Sometimes it's hard to see the big picture.

Having an alliance for models will create a comprehensive source of information so young girls aren't led astray and foreign models aren't taken advantage of. Models can be unionized like any other career. No more getting paid in

clothing. No more starving 20-year-olds trying to look like they are 15. We can create a space where models can ask questions and get answers. Older models can take younger models under their wings, which is what I wish I could have had growing up in the industry.

I'm 30 now, which is ancient in the fashion world. I'm still 5'10", but a healthy 130 lbs. I'm hoping our hard work can steer the industry in a direction that pushes for healthy instead of gaunt and celebrates real women, regardless of their size. I want to do this for girls and women everywhere, and I need your help. Thank you.

Time:_____

# Sample Funny Personal Speech

I never thought there would be a retirement party for me here. Not because I think you folks are too lazy to throw one, because I know you're not. Mostly I just thought I'd die here. After 30 years, it's hard to picture yourself doing anything else. I started out here as a rookie before some of you interns were even born.

In 1972, my first article was a story on flat hot dogs. I'm not even kidding. Some company said they were trying to reduce the number of incidents where kids had choked on your average, run-of-the-mill, cylindrical hot dog. Independence Day was coming up, so they ran my story on the flat hot dog.

My first big blunder came a decade later when I ran a story on that aircraft that broke the sound barrier. Somehow, I didn't even notice that the headline writer had printed "Craft Faster Than Speed of Light." Yeah, the competition loved that one. It was an inexcusable mistake for someone with my experience.

And then, just about 5 years ago, I made the mistake of asking the Governor on camera how his wife was—conveniently forgetting about the debacle a month earlier where the wife met the mistress and the majority of Governor Thompson's clothes ended up on fire in his front lawn. That interview certainly could have gone better.

It was a month ago, though, when I wrote the straw that broke the camel's back. I printed "their going to get it," spelled 'T-H-E-I-R.' That's when I knew I was really losing my marbles and it was time to call it quits. I'm leaving the paper in the hands of you slightly less senile folks, in whom I have complete trust. You've gathered such a talented group of editors and reporters here that I know that you'll continue to take care of this town's news and make the paper even better than it is today.

This has been an extraordinary three decades, and I can't imagine having spent it anywhere else. This truly is a special place. But not as special as Bora Bora, which is where Oliver and I are headed tomorrow. Thank you for an amazing party! I'll see you suckers in the summer when it's warm enough to visit again. Cheers to you all.

Time:_____

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