

Planning Your Public Speaking Event

Checklist

BEFORE THE EVENT

Event Specifics

- Name of event
- Date: when, time, length.
- Coordinator: name, title. Phone/email contact.
- Where: Know location of program. Directions. Address, Room, Parking
- Purpose of this event?
- Audience
- Fee

Environment:

- Room: size, layout, lectern, microphone, height of microphone. Practice raising and lowering it beforehand. Be ready to adjust it for you and the speaker. Who is the room technician?
- Audiovisuals
- Seating
- Lighting, temperature
- Refreshments

(This next part is geared to you as the moderator. Adjust as necessary)

Environment:

1. Where will you and speaker be sitting before intro? After you introduce? After speaker is done?
2. Sit near front and at end of aisle. As you go up to give intro. Enter stage area on negative or left side. People are trained to look left to right. Keep slightly towards audience. Carry note cards in left hand, close to clothing/pants leg.
3. If this is a meal meeting, always know where your napkin is and that your napkin is your napkin, not the tablecloth. Know etiquette rules.
4. If on dais, turn chair to face lectern.
5. Do not lean on podium or lectern. If you have a tendency to do this, move two steps back away from it.

Who will introduce you? Give them 2 sentences to say about you. Type it in larger print on a card. Mail it to your introducer and bring a copy on the day of. They may lose theirs/there may be a substitute at the last minute. If you are keynote, your intro should be no more than 1 page double-spaced info, name, title of program, your credentials, and 2 benefits of program. Bring 2 copies—one for your introducer and one when they misplace it.

Questions and answer period after?

Are you responsible for moderating this? If there is, have 2 questions ready to fill any embarrassing silence if no one has a question from the audience. If you are responsible—does speaker want you to call on people or will she? Know allotted time for questions. Give clue to end. “We have time for 2 more questions.” Then “Thank you” and lead applause.

If you are introducing:

Call the speaker before the date. Tell her you will be doing the intro. Ask what she would like said in the intro. Does she know where the meeting is? Have transportation? Tell when you will be there meeting her. “I will be wearing... I will look for you....”

What is happening after the speech? Let the speaker know if there is a reception, meeting, etc.

Get ideas for the intro. If you do not know the speaker, call someone who does and ask if there are any phrases or points that describe the speaker’s best qualities. Or ask the speaker to e you a BRIEF intro.

PLAN YOUR INTRODUCTION

1-2 minutes

Intro. Start with a question or “We’re here to learn... Our speaker is...”

Parts of an Introduction

1. Why this speaker
2. Why this subject
3. Why this audience
4. Why at this time
5. & Formal introduction: “Ladies and gentlemen, the... Mr. ... ”

You: be smooth, friendly, upbeat about the speaker. Your job is to get the audience excited to hear this speaker. Use the speaker's name several times in your intro. Don't give the speaker's speech. Don't forget the speaker's name. Write it bold on the 5x7 card.

PRACTICE! PRACTICE! PRACTICE!

TIMELINE

Each day before event

1. Practice your program
2. Memorize absolutely the beginning three sentences and the last two. You will have eye and body language connection with the audience. Capture them in the beginning; leave with a connection at the end.
3. Write notes for your program. Then outline or bullet it. Then write it down on 5x7 cards. (Use this card the day of the event)
4. Tape your piece. Listen to it in the car to help memorize.
5. Practice in front of a mirror. Practice! Practice! Practice!
6. Practice in front of real people.

Don't count on someone else to check details!!

DAY OF THE EVENT

- Get there at least 20 minutes early.
- Read over your card 7 times. Visualize standing at the lectern. Keep the card with you at all times. Bring doubles of intros or speech notes. Keep in two different places.
- Warm-ups, exercises: breathe, hum, yawn, stretch.
- Check room. Check seating. If people sit in the back move near them. Don't ask people to move up front—this can cause hostility.
- Check the microphone. Do not tap. Just ask, "Will the people in back raise your hand if you can hear me?" Know who the technician is if 'mic howling' starts—it usually doesn't just happen once.
- Check audios.
- Check water pitcher and glass
- Check with emcee or moderator. Is the plan still the same?

- Know where the speaker is if you are not sitting with her. Nod when you welcome her up to the podium.
- Lead applause. Stay at podium until she is there. Shake hands. Step aside and sit.

Posture: You are "on" from the minute you walk in the room.

Feet shoulder width apart.

Don't lock knees.

Spine straight. Shoulders following natural line so not stiffly straight. Head up. Glasses?

Face: pleasant

Attitude: Positive, professional, personal

Take note card with you when you are done.

Keep hands out of pockets. Rest tips of hands gently on lectern or at sides.

When not speaking: Active Listening. Listen attentively throughout the speech. Lead applause when she is done. If question and answer, be ready to repeat question.

Lead applause as speaker sits.

What are your responsibilities after speaker sits? Do you have to wind it up? Find out what's next.

Thank the speaker after the event is over.

Good luck! Have fun!

AFTER THE EVENT: Within 48 hours, however "better late than never.

1. Write a business stationary thank you or personal hand written note to the coordinator. Email thank-you if pressed for time. Suggestion: If you have been the keynote speaker, include copies of feedback about your or quote some feedbacks. (Which are sure to be most positive)
2. Send out any brochures, printed materials you have promised to attendees, committee.

Relax—and on to the next!