

Speaking engagements

In general, a speaking engagement is a one-way presentation that allows you to educate your audience about a specific topic. Think of it as a college classroom. You're the instructor and the audience is your students.

TYPES OF EVENT

Speaking engagements can be informative, instructional, persuasive, and more. Decide on the purpose of your engagement. What would you like to accomplish?

- Provide educational information
- Provide instructional step-by-step information
- Connect and network
- Promote your organization

VENUES

Speaking opportunities and workshops are best held in a neutral environment. Consider using one of the library's conference rooms, or check with your local Chamber of Commerce to find what's available in your community. Some venues are free or low cost. Do not expect the venue to do any advertising on your behalf. If you want people to show up, you need to market the event.

ENTRY FEE

Decide whether you're going to charge an admission fee. If you do, consider online registration vs. paying at the door. If you opt for guests to pay at the door, consider a price that doesn't involve handling lots of change or one dollar bills.

SPEAKING TOPICS

Consider the needs of the community and your families. What information do you want them to know? What are you passionate about sharing? Also consider the audience. Don't be afraid to host a workshop that's never been taught before.

TIPS

- Use lots of powerful language
- Be enthusiastic and enjoyable to watch
- Incorporate stories or real life examples
- Offer supporting facts to reinforce credibility
- Engage the audience. "Raise your hand if you . . ."
- Problem solve
- If using a PowerPoint, purchase a quality template that pairs fonts, colors, and design elements for a polished look that's esthetically pleasing to the audience

PLAN

1. Determine your subject matter.
2. Create a catchy marketing title.
3. Select date and time.
4. Secure a venue of appropriate size.
5. Determine whether to charge an entry or registration fee.
6. Advertise the event:
 - press release
 - social media
 - newsletters
 - email blasts
 - website
7. Find volunteers to help manage the event.
8. Determine a refreshments budget and what refreshments you're going to provide.
9. Determine whether you wish to invite other professionals to co-host or join you.
10. Secure a display screen, projector, mic, sound system, etc
11. Choose a color theme to set the intended mood. Use these colors in your tablecloths, informational material and marketing, refreshment cups, display elements, etc.
12. Determine the delivery method of your information. Consider using a PowerPoint.
13. Determine visual displays and informational material you want to provide. What are the takeaways for your audience?

PREPARE

1. Set up an entry/registration table. Cover it with a tablecloth in one of your theme colors. Solid colored tablecloths work best (patterns compete for visual attention, drawing the eye away from more important tabletop items).
2. Display informational and marketing material (use separate table if needed).
3. Make it warm and welcoming. Consider adding a seasonal floral or holiday display.
4. Pens, dish of hard candies or chocolate kisses, free marketing gadgets
5. Set up refreshments table using matching tablecloth.
6. Set up A/V equipment.

LEAD

- Begin on time. Introduce yourself (5 minutes).
- Share your story (10 minutes).
- Discuss your topic and intended key points (30 minutes). Use PowerPoint if desired.
- Promote your organization (5 minutes).
- Invite audience to ask questions (10 minutes).