



TIPS FOR CONDUCTING A SUCCESSFUL MODERATED PANEL

AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

- Communicate early and often with your panelists.
 - First Contact (thank you, introduction information, outline of your contact with them)
 - Second Contact (questions for feedback, outline the session)
 - Third Contact (final questions, confirm room information)

FOUR TO SIX WEEKS PRIOR TO CONFERENCE

- Become an “expert” on the topic of your panel. Do your research and be prepared!
 - Pros of the topic
 - Cons of the topic
 - Experts on the topic
- Create and distribute meaningful questions to your panelists.
 - Have a pool of 20-25 questions
 - Have more questions than you need
 - Prioritize the questions
 - Make sure you have enough questions for an equal number to be asked of each panelist
 - Prepare and ASK appropriate follow up questions
 - Allow time to solicit feedback and comments from the panelists
- Work with your panelists to have well-written, thoughtful introductions.
 - Name, position, background and why they were chosen for the panel
- Introduce your panelists to each other through email or a conference call. Share their bios with the other panelists.
- Ensure audiovisual needs are addressed.
 - Locate and provide a single device to be used for the presentation during the session
 - Gather and organize all audiovisual presentations into a consolidated document
- Conduct a practice session with your panelists.

DURING THE PROGRAM

- Focus on the audience. Look at the audience while introducing the panelists and during the panel to watch for audience's responses and reactions to panelists' answers. Only look at the panelist when addressing them directly.
- Engage the audience. Ask them questions, too!
- Keep the conversation moving! Do not allow one panelist to dominate the discussion.
- Also know when to allow the panelists to "go with the flow" and allow them time to discuss thoroughly when appropriate.
- Engage each panelists at different times throughout the session.
- Do not address the panelists in the same order each time.
- Do not have every panelist answer every question every time.
- Have a way indicate to the panelist to wrap up their thought due to time constraints.
- Do not ask for closing remarks or final thoughts. They will either repeat a synopsis of everything they have already said or come up with something entirely new and off topic.
- Encourage audience members if they would like to further the conversation they may do so in the Collaboration Space.

SUGGESTED READING

- Toastmasters International. "How to Moderate a Panel Discussion."
<https://www.toastmasters.org/Magazine/Articles/How-to-Moderate-a-Panel-Discussion>