



How to Book the Best Speakers for Your Event

Booking the right speaker can make or break your event. This comprehensive guide walks you through the process of selecting, contacting, and finalizing the perfect speaker for your audience. From defining your event goals to leveraging expert resources and promoting your chosen speaker, we'll cover every step to ensure your event's success. Follow this worksheet to streamline your speaker booking process and create a memorable experience for your attendees.

by Tam Lawrence, Publicist

Defining Event Goals and Audience

Event Purpose

Clearly articulate the primary goal of your event. Are you aiming to educate, inspire, or entertain? Consider the overarching message or theme you want to convey. For example, if you're organizing a tech conference, your goal might be to showcase cutting-edge innovations and inspire attendees to embrace new technologies.

Audience Analysis

Conduct a thorough analysis of your target audience. Consider demographics, professional backgrounds, and interests. Understanding your audience's needs and expectations will guide you in selecting a speaker who can connect with them effectively. For instance, a millennial-focused entrepreneurship event would require a different speaker than a corporate leadership seminar.

Alignment

Ensure that your event purpose and audience analysis align. This synergy will help you identify speakers who can deliver content that resonates with your attendees while furthering your event's objectives. Remember, the right speaker should be able to bridge the gap between your goals and your audience's expectations.

Researching Potential Speakers

When researching potential speakers, it's crucial to establish clear criteria that align with your event's goals and audience needs. Consider the level of expertise required, whether you need an industry veteran or an up-and-coming thought leader. Look for qualities that will engage your audience, such as charisma, storytelling ability, or a track record of inspiring change.

Speaker Bureaus

Utilize reputable speaker bureaus that offer a wide range of professionals across various industries. These platforms often provide detailed profiles, speaking samples, and testimonials from previous events.

Industry Conferences

Attend or research major conferences in your field to identify speakers who have made impactful presentations. This can give you firsthand experience of their speaking style and audience engagement.

Professional Networks

Leverage professional networking sites like LinkedIn to discover speakers with relevant expertise. Look for individuals who regularly post insightful content or have a strong following in your industry.

Social Media and Podcasts

Explore social media platforms and popular podcasts in your industry to find speakers with a strong online presence and the ability to communicate complex ideas effectively.

Leveraging Publicist Expertise

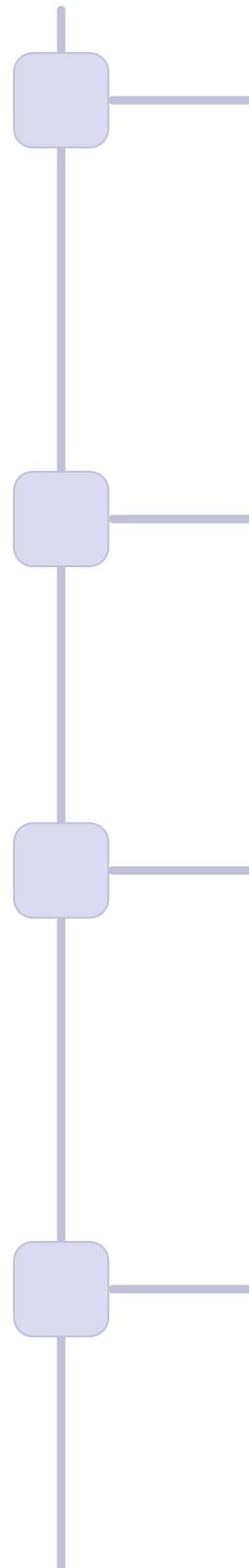
A skilled publicist can be an invaluable asset in the speaker selection process. If you have a publicist on your team, involve them early in the planning stages. They can leverage their industry connections and experience to identify speakers who not only meet your criteria but also bring additional value to your event.

Publicists can assist in several key ways:

- Negotiating speaker fees and contract terms to ensure the best value for your budget
- Managing communication between your organization and potential speakers
- Providing insights on speaker reputation and past performance
- Coordinating promotional efforts to maximize the speaker's impact on event marketing
- Handling logistics such as travel arrangements and on-site requirements

If you don't have a publicist, consider hiring one for larger events or partnering with a speaker bureau that offers similar services. Their expertise can save you time and potentially avoid costly mistakes in the booking process.

Contacting and Evaluating Speakers



Initial Contact

Reach out to potential speakers with a concise yet informative email. Provide key details about your event, including the date, location, expected audience size, and theme. Clearly state why you believe they would be a good fit and what you hope they can bring to your audience.

Information Gathering

Ask for their speaking terms, availability, and any specific requirements they may have. Request samples of previous speeches or presentations to gauge their style and content quality.

Evaluation

Assess each speaker based on criteria such as topic expertise, speaking experience, audience engagement, and alignment with your event goals. Consider conducting video calls to get a better sense of their personality and communication style.

Reference Check

Contact organizers of events where the speaker has previously presented. Ask about their professionalism, ability to meet deadlines, and audience reception. This step can provide valuable insights that aren't apparent from promotional materials.

Finalizing and Promoting Your Speaker

Once you've selected your speaker, it's time to finalize the agreement and begin promotion. The contract should clearly outline all expectations, including the speaking fee, travel arrangements, accommodation requirements, and any additional services such as workshops or meet-and-greets. Be sure to specify the length of the presentation, any content guidelines, and technical requirements.

To effectively promote your speaker and maximize event attendance:

- Create a compelling speaker bio and event description for your website and promotional materials
- Utilize social media platforms to share teasers about the speaker's topics and expertise
- Develop a press release highlighting the speaker's background and the value they'll bring to attendees
- Consider hosting a pre-event webinar or Q&A session to generate buzz
- Collaborate with the speaker to create custom content that can be shared leading up to the event

Remember to coordinate your promotional efforts with the speaker or their team to ensure consistent messaging and leverage their existing audience.

Gathering Feedback and Measuring Success



Post-Event Surveys

Distribute comprehensive surveys to attendees immediately after the event to capture fresh feedback. Include questions about the speaker's content relevance, delivery style, and overall impact.



Analytics Review

Analyze metrics such as attendance rates, social media engagement, and post-event content downloads to gauge the speaker's draw and lasting impact on your audience.



Speaker Debrief

Schedule a follow-up call with the speaker to get their perspective on the event. Discuss what went well and areas for improvement in future collaborations.

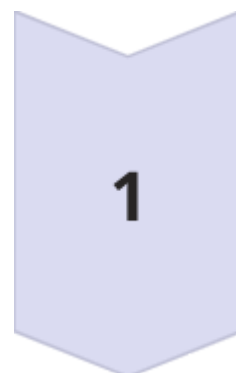


Long-Term Impact

Track long-term indicators such as increased membership, future event registrations, or business partnerships that may have resulted from the speaker's presentation.

Creating Your Action Plan

To ensure a successful speaker booking process, create a detailed action plan with specific steps and timelines. Start by setting a deadline for finalizing your speaker selection, typically 3-6 months before your event date. Work backwards from there to establish milestones for each phase of the process.



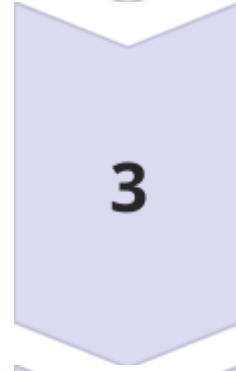
Define Goals and Audience (Week 1-2)

Clarify event objectives and conduct thorough audience analysis to guide your speaker search.



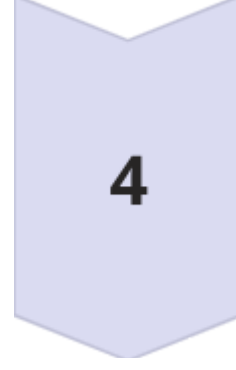
Research and Outreach (Week 3-6)

Identify potential speakers, reach out to top candidates, and begin initial evaluations.



Evaluation and Selection (Week 7-10)

Conduct in-depth assessments, check references, and make your final speaker selection.



Contracting and Promotion (Week 11-16)

Finalize contract details and launch your promotional campaign to build excitement for your event.