



Sound Support Virtual Assistance

Supporting Your Business IS My Business

6 Basic Mistakes Speakers Make with Their Audiences and How to Avoid Them

Mistake #1:

Unfocused and unprepared.

If you haven't done your research and you don't know who your audience is, what they are expecting to learn from you, what their interests are, what their common bond is and why they are in your audience, you basically don't know anything about them and you will be unable to connect with them.

Be proactive – do a survey or a pre-program questionnaire beforehand so you know what your audience's values, views, and commonalities are, why they are bringing you to their group and what they are expecting from you. Then deliver your speech with style and grace, confident that you understand your audience so well that you absolutely know that what you are speaking about fits them, teaches them and will meet and exceed all their expectations about you. Exceeding your audience's expectations is a sure-fire way to ensure repeat business. Why wouldn't they want you back?

By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail.

– Benjamin Franklin

Your speaker's assistant can help with that time consuming research, list the salient points to help you get going and prepare, deliver and collect your survey or pre-program questionnaire for you.



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Mistake #2:

Speaking too long.

This also includes giving too much information. A good rule of thumb, if you are speaking for an hour, is to prepare **three** basic points to share. That's it. Support your points by telling stories and involving the audience. Studies show that most people in the audience will retain 90% more of the information you share if you involve them.

Great speakers make their ideas simple enough so that people walk out of the meeting and apply them and get immediate results.

— Brian Tracy

Your speaker's assistant can collaborate with you as a partner that you can bounce ideas off of as you prepare your speech, providing feedback and brainstorming ideas and can help you see other paradigms.

Mistake #3:

Repetition.

If you are not the first presenter at a conference, don't bore your audience with yet another greeting, or what a pleasure it is to be here today. At the end of your talk, don't say "in conclusion". Get more creative with the beginning and ending of your speech.

Perhaps the world's second worst crime is boredom. The first is being a bore.

—Jean Baudrillard



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Your speaker's assistant can research resources to help you with ideas, free or low cost training and webinars that will prepare you to add creativity and interest to your speech.

Mistake #4:

Standing behind the podium for the entire speech.

You need to be familiar enough with your material that you won't need to stand behind the podium (because you need to read your notes) or worse yet, read your whole speech, word for word.

Practice until you are able to speak your speech from the heart – but don't memorize it. You may, however, use a large index card with your bullet points listed that you want to cover.

*** Marketing Hint: On the other side of that card, put your name and your business name on it. That's the side the audience sees as you speak.*

You **must** know your material backward and forward to be relaxed and comfortable speaking. You must have a strong passion for the material that you share. True and authentic passion for the subject you are speaking on will always come across to your audience and will excite and interest them. When you know what you want to say and you share it with passion, your audience will be naturally drawn to you. They may ask questions and your presentation may turn into an interactive experience. Remember that involvement statistic mentioned previously? If you become a speaker that consistently captures your audience's attention, you will have as many opportunities to speak as you can manage.

Don't memorize your speech – become it.

– Anthony Robbins



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Your speaker's assistant can help you research techniques and ideas to deliver your speech that will be comfortable and that will work for you and for who you are as a speaker.

Mistake #5:

What marketing materials?
I'm not sure what I need.

Here are your *Must Haves*:

- ✓ A four color one sheet.
This is a 2-sided document which contains an overview to share with meeting planners. It includes a snapshot of your expertise, your services, a sample list of your clients, testimonials you have gathered and your background. The one sheet is directed to meeting planners, training directors, event planners or anyone that hires speakers. This is your calling card and you need it to be professional.
- ✓ A demo video.
Remember, your prospects have never seen you before. If you want to get hired for speaking, they need to see you in action and how the audience reacts to you.
- ✓ Information products.
You will need to develop information products that can be sold at your speaking engagements and on your website. This is a great source of residual income.
- ✓ A website.
This is a place to showcase your demo video(s), information products and for meeting planners to download your one sheet. You should also include a link to your speaking topics, your blog and your contact information.



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✓ A speaking and/or a marketing coach.

You will need to work with someone who knows more than you know. You will also learn from each other.

Here is your one *Must Do*:

✓ Attend conferences. That's where connections are made.

The aim of marketing is to know and understand the customer so well the product or service fits him and sells itself.

— Peter F. Drucker

Your speaker's assistant can help you develop these marketing items, find a coach and locate appropriate conferences for your speaking business as well as locating conferences for your business networking and marketing.

Mistake #6:

Expect to be paid every time you speak.

Particularly if you are just starting out speaking, consider speaking for free. Think about the connections you can make and the exposure you will have for your future paid speaking engagements. Be sure to have a compelling free offer for your audience in exchange for their contact information. Distribute a "rating form" to everyone in your audience. This form should have a place for each person to fill out their name, email, phone number and a checklist of what they are interested in – your (forthcoming or already published) book, teleclass series, upcoming symposium, etc.

*****Marketing Hint: A good portion of the money you will make as a speaker is in the upsell – your book, teleclass series and etc.***



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More additions to your checklist might be:

Are you interested in receiving my monthly newsletter? Would you be interested in a 30 minute private consultation at no charge?

You may want to ask some open-ended questions on your rating form such as: What was the most important concept you got from my talk today? What did you hear that you could use right away? Would you give me a one or two line testimonial about what you heard today? Do you have a recommendation of someone you would like me to call that could use my services?

Now, you'll need to convince your audience to return these forms before they leave. These are your future leads and as such, you'll want to get as many returned as possible. You may want to offer an *ethical bribe*: Tell your audience that you will be raffling off your [book, another type of freebie, an hour of free coaching, a Starbucks gift card, a goodie basket, etc.] Whatever it is, everyone wants to be a winner. So you or an assistant will collect the rating sheets, perform your raffle, make someone's day with your free gift and you'll have all those leads. For the sake of efficiency, you may want to offer a free numbered raffle ticket to each person in exchange for their completed form. The twin numbered ticket goes into a hat or a goldfish bowl and someone from the audience may help you draw out the winning raffle ticket.

The difficult part for most people is - following up! You must **follow up** in the next 2-3 days or you may lose these leads. These are voluntary, warm leads and . . . you thought you wouldn't get paid! Isn't business building and networking sometimes more valuable than money?

You don't get paid for the hour. You get paid for the value you bring to the hour.

— Jim Rohn



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Your speaker's assistant can help you with timely follow up as well as sending thank you notes to meeting planners or the folks who invited you to speak.

When time is of the essence and you wish you had more of it, consider working with a speaker's assistant. I can help you in many ways to get your business moving forward and help clear those tasks from your plate that eat up the time you'd rather spend speaking, writing and doing the creative work that you love most. If you'd like to know more about how I help speakers, you can contact me at:

Karen@SoundSupportVA.com

I'll be glad to schedule a free strategy call with you. I promise to get back with you in one to two business days. I look forward to connecting with you!



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Karen Brockman

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360-969-0143

Karen@SoundSupportVA.com

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