

Avoid the The Perfect Storm - Select the Right Professional Speaker

Have you ever labored for weeks or even months on a meeting event only to have it unravel into THE PERFECT STORM. Maybe your ship didn't perish at sea, but there were those clearly identifiable moments when it looked as though everything was about to capsize. While the winds of misfortune sometimes cause disaster, the wrong speaker can certainly finish the job and completely scuttle your event. How can calamity be avoided?

The best preventative is to make a well informed choice when choosing a speaker. To begin with, carefully examine his or her *modus operandi*. Otherwise, you may realize all too late that the wrong criteria has been employed in selecting the speaker. Sometimes only two questions will be asked after viewing the speaker's video: availability and cost. Not a good plan. If you want to sleep easier, I suggest you proceed with caution.

Is the speaker a prima donna? This is definitely a red flag. Whether a well known professional or a beginner, there is no excuse for anyone to be arrogant and difficult to work with. As speakers, the goal must always be to serve the best interests of our clients and audiences.

How well does the speaker prepare? Is he willing to go the extra mile? More and more, meeting planners today are requesting that presentations be designed for a specific audience. To accomplish this effectively, the speaker must make the necessary inquiries to research the issues paramount to that organization. The executive team needs to ensure the speaker has sufficient opportunity to interview key individuals.

Is the content current? This is a frequent problem with some professional speakers, who the same speech is delivered over and over. It soon loses impact. Success today depends on continual adaptation and innovation to keep pace with a fast-shifting marketplace. Timely keynotes track the economic impact of global events. Although change may be disruptive, it can often create fleeting opportunities. Cutting-edge information and strategies allow organizations to identify optimal innovations and marketing initiatives.

Does the content deliver a resounding ROI? Or is it just "Hoopla!" Of course, he or she must be able to inspire, motivate and captivate your audience's attention. But now more than ever, relevant and useful content is the critical component demanded of keynotes.

Speakers' professional expertise must substantiate the advice they proffer. Too often, speakers are guilty of becoming an authority on a subject in which, aside from reading a couple of books, they have no personal experience. Authenticity is imperative, if your people are to benefit from genuine insights and receive actionable knowledge. So, take time to investigate the speaker's website and look at his credentials.

By exercising a little foresight, you can minimize the odds for THE PERFECT STORM. What your people hear, take away and put into practice will ultimately determine the success of your event. High ROI speakers deliver real world VALUE.

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