

How to Provide On-site Support to Conference Speakers



Step 1: Before you leave for the conference, make sure you have the following items packed:

- Conference and hotel (if applicable) information, including addresses, directions, confirmation numbers, etc.
- A spreadsheet with all of your speakers' contact information, emergency contact information, and pertinent health information.
- A copy of everyone's speech for a showcase style presentation, the list of questions and answers for a panel presentation, or scripts for any speaking-based portions of a workshop. Even if your speakers are confident they have everything memorized, it's good to have a back up plan.
- Any promotional or organizational contact information you may want to share with the conference attendees. This may include brochures, postcards, business cards, mailing list sign-up sheets, or a poster or banner.
- Audience feedback forms. Some conferences provide their own evaluation form for attendees of your presentation, but it's usually a good idea to bring your own, especially since you may want to collect different information about your presentation than the conference. An example is included at the end of this guide.
- Laptop and/or multimedia files you may use during your presentation on a thumb drive. Most conferences are able to provide projection equipment, but in the rare case they are not, you will need to bring this equipment with you.
- Any microphone, stand, or PA equipment that the conference is not able to provide your speakers.
- Any props or other materials (flip charts, markers, pens, writing pads, handouts, etc.) that may be required for interactive activities, if you are doing a workshop.

Step 2: When you arrive at the conference, go to the conference registration desk to receive your speaker/presenter packet and any other relevant information for your presentation. Ask if it may be possible for you to take a look at your presentation room before your presentation. If it is possible and you have time, check out the room assigned for your presentation to survey the accessibility and how much time you may need to re-arrange the room, if necessary, for your presentation.

Step 3: If it is the day of your presentation, go to the meeting place determined in the first prep session and meet your speakers. If you arrive at the conference location or hotel the night before your presentation, you can use this time to rest, rehearse, or finish any last-minute prep. Before separating at bedtime, remind the speakers when and where they need to meet you before your presentation. It is advisable to meet your speakers at least 30-45 minutes before your presentation. If you are not going to meet them for breakfast, you may also want to remind them to limit their caffeine intake in the morning if possible and drink plenty of water.

Step 4: Your speakers may be a little nervous when you meet before your presentation, so this is a good time to spread some positive energy and lead the group in a few relaxation and breathing exercises. (See the *Presentation Warm-Ups* handout at the end of Session 3 in the OMOD Facilitator Guide for suggested warm-ups.) If you have time, you may also want to briefly review important public speaking tips, including: take time to pause and breathe, project your voice, be confident, give eye contact, speak clearly, and have fun. Remind the speakers they know their stories, and they will do a great job. In short, be their cheerleader!

Step 5: Begin setting up your presentation room as soon as you can access it. Usually you will be able to request how you want the room to be set up prior to the conference, but you may want to prepare yourself for a little re-arranging, just in case. If the room is set up exactly as you requested, use this time to set up your organizational materials on a table at the back of the room or near the exit.

Step 6: Test the microphones and any other A/V equipment. Practice screening any multimedia files you intend to use.

Step 7: Ask your speakers to silence their phones just before the presentation.

- **Tip!** If your presentation room remains empty in the minutes leading up to your presentation, send one or two of your more outgoing speakers just outside of the room to encourage the other conference attendees to come in and see your presentation.

Audience Feedback Form



Thank you again for attending our session!
Please let us know how we did.

Rate the overall quality of the session.

Fair Average Good Outstanding

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Rate the content or educational value of the session.

Fair Average Good Outstanding

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Rate the quality of the interactive activities (if applicable).

Fair Average Good Outstanding

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comments:

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