American Public Transportation Association

2018 Rail Conference

Moderator & Speaker Guidelines

Your reference for effectively facilitating and presenting educational sessions

Moderator Roles & Responsibilities

The moderators at APTA's technical conferences and meetings have a major influence on the overall success of educational sessions.

As a moderator, you have an opportunity to shine in front of your peers and apply your knowledge, experience and skills to create a memorable educational experience.

The following information is designed to provide you with all the information you need to help manage our education sessions and describe your responsibilities.

Pre-Session Development
Maintain communication with your APTA Staff Advisor & Speakers
- Your APTA staff session advisor will be the primary contact regarding your session and will arrange for a conference call with you and your fellow session participants. Use this time to establish speaker talking points, format, AV needs etc.   - Know your speakers. Be familiar with your speakers' bio(s). Be able to articulate their titles, accomplishments and point of views. Your session staff advisor will e-mail you the introductions written by each speaker well in advance of the conference.   - Prepare your opening comments for the session   - Schedule a "dry run/rehearsal" of your session onsite in APTA's designated A/V preview room
During the Session
- Arrive early to your session. Get to know the room and build rapport with your audience and meet APTA staff.   - Deliver your opening comments (**3 minutes max**).   - Introduce each speaker   - Explain how Q&A will be incorporated   - Moderators can address audience questions after each speaker (**5 minutes of Q &A**) and at the end of the session (**15-20 minutes**).   - Turn the session over to the first speaker   - Monitor the speakers' timing   - Coordinate with your speaker before the session saying that when you stand, that is their two-minute warning for the speaker to wrap-up their presentation.   - Thank each speaker as he or she finishes their presentation.   - Deliver your closing remarks

Housekeeping Tips/Helpful Hints

As the moderator, we ask that you make several housekeeping announcements at the beginning of your session.

Housekeeping Tips
- Encourage attendees to fill in the empty seats.   - Remind attendees to turn off cell phones and electronic devices.   - Remind attendees to complete the evaluation when it is emailed to them on the last day of the conference.   - Solicit feedback from session speakers. For example you may want your first conversation with each speaker or your session advisor to discuss what the topic means to them and how they feel they will cover the topic.   - During the session you may wish to speak or comment as a moderator, but remember your primary focus is to highlight the speakers and their various points of view. Your comments, either in between speakers or as a wrap, should add to the overall quality and theme of the session.

Hints for Moderators
1. Be prepared Know the session topic at least as well as most of the panelists. **2. Be able to think about more than two things at once** Moderators multitask a great deal during sessions. Typically those tasks are listening to the current discussion, discussion length and next steps. **3. Be clear** Good moderators, like good interviewers, ask short questions and make clear statements. Ask questions starting with Who? What? Why? What about? These types of questions will put issues on the table and drive conversations. **4. Be timely** This is so important. Get the panel started on time, keep it moving, and end the session on time. **5. Have fun** If you don't have fun, your panel won't have fun, and your audience won't have fun.

Speaker Roles & Responsibilities

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the American Public Transportation Association's (APTA) 2018 Rail Conference.

As a presenter, this is your opportunity to share your experiences and skills, learn from others, and ensure session attendees return home knowing that your presentation was worthwhile and well-received.

The following information will help you prepare for your presentation, provide you with the information needed to make your presentation happen and run smoothly, and give you a good idea of what to expect.

Before the Conference

Now that you have agreed to participate in the educational session, we need a few things from you:

1. A short (three - four sentences, no more than one paragraph) biographical statement about you. It should mention your present professional responsibilities, previous experience relevant to the topic of your presentation, and educational background.

2. Your audio/visual needs: APTA will supply a power point projector, podium/mic and screen.

Should you require additional audio/visual equipment, APTA will try to accommodate your needs the best we can, however, please send this information to your APTA staff session advisor as soon as possible

3. E-mail your presentation to your APTA staff session advisor in advance and bring a version on your own jump drive or laptop as a backup.

4. If you plan to provide hand-outs for use during your presentation, please bring copies to the conference with you. **APTA will not be able to make copies on site**.

5. Fax or e-mail the **REPRINT AND DISTRIBUTION PERMISSION NOTICE to** sbrewington@apta.com.

Speaker Roles & Responsibilities

Pre-session Development

Maintain communication with your APTA Staff Advisor & Speakers

- Talk with your APTA staff session advisor to discuss what is expected in terms of content, presentation length, session format and other speakers. Also talk with the other speakers from your session (if there are any) as you plan your presentation and to coordinate laptops for PowerPoint presentations. APTA staff session advisors will arrange a conference call with all speakers before the conference.

- Please do a trial run of your presentation to make sure you do not exceed the time frame allotted. (If you are not sure how much time you have for your presentation, please call your APTA staff session advisor, moderator or talk with your co-presenters to determine timing.)

During the Session

- Plan to meet your session moderator and co-presenters at least 15 minutes prior to the start of your session to test A/V equipment and make sure the room is set-up appropriately.

- An APTA staff person will be on hand during the session to assist with handouts, A/V operation, finding more seats (if needed), lighting and other things that may arise.

- Please follow the cue from the moderator regarding timing… It is important that sessions start and end o time and that all speakers are able to make their presentations.

- All session should have adequate time for questions and answers with the audience.

- Remind participants to fill out the evaluations sheet at the end of the session so that their educational needs will be served in the future.

- Avoid reading straight from a script or slides. By just reading PowerPoint slides aloud, attendees won't benefit from your depth of knowledge on the topic.

- Make your presentation interactive! A lively, interactive session will be memorable for attendees.

PowerPoint Presentation Tips

For easy-to-understand slides the following are important guidelines to follow when utilizing any visual aid:

Always keep the message Simple, Bold, Clear

- **Simple** – Use only key elements or words per slide. Never use an complete sentence. Keep lines and shapes understandable and to the point
- **Bold** – PowerPoint text must be large (**24-point size font**) enough to be easily seen by every member of the audience. Please be careful in selecting colors, lettering style, size and layout.
- **Clear** – Is the PowerPoint easy to understand? Does it exactly reflect the message you're tying to get across? Is it logically arranged, well spaced, and not crowded? Do the main points stand out?

• *Guidelines for PowerPoint*

- **Your APTA staff session advisor will provide you with the APTA PowerPoint slide template.**

There is an area on the lower right for your organization's logo. Overall PowerPoint slide file should be no larger than 10MB.

- The background and font colors should be contrasting colors for ease of readability. The ideal color combination is a white background with dark blue or black font.

- Slides should be attractive and include text talking points as well as some graphic images if possible. Try to maintain a balance between white space and text. Think about ways to illustrate your talking points with images versus strictly text. All images should be embedded into the PowerPoint file (using insert picture functions) NOT copy/pasted from another application.

- All text should be Windows standard font without serifs (such as Arial) for readability. Choosing standard fonts will ensure all online event attendees will see the same presentation format. (Use of unusual fonts will prompt computers programs to substitute those fonts for their software internal fonts.) Front sizes utilized should not be smaller than 18.

- If you are using timing animation sequences in PowerPoint presentations keep slide at one slide per minute. (e.g., 12 slides for a 12 minute presentation).

PowerPoint Pitfalls/Helpful Hints

PITFALLS TO AVOID

Review your presentation before your arrival to the conference so you are familiar with the slides.

Do not read the slides word for word; use them as a guide for your talking points.

Make sure they can be read easily at the back of a room (50 to 75 feet from the screen).

Quick tip: A 3 inch letter on your screen can be seen clearly 30 feet away.

Make sure the font is readable from 30 plus feet away from the screen. Fonts without the serif are easiest to read. Arial and Helvetica are the best. Do not use all CAPS.

Try to use less than 6 words per line and 6 lines per slide.

Do not use dark fonts on dark backgrounds or light fonts on light backgrounds

Visit these web sites for more helpful tips:

1. www.Microsoft.com (enter PowerPoint in the search box) for a host of free templates, tutorials and tips on using PowerPoint software.

2. http://norvig.com/Gettysburg/ for an illuminating example of how PowerPoint can harm a presentation -- "What if Abraham Lincoln gave the Gettysburg Address on PowerPoint?"

3. http://www.bitbetter.com/powertips.htm for more tips

PowerPoint Pitfalls/Helpful Hints

Speaker Tips
Keep your audience engaged • Remember that the audience may be very diverse in terms of experience, level of interest, reason for attending and perspective. Achieve a balance of being the entertainer and the educator. Prepare your presentation so that you will leave the attendees with five to 10 "things" they can take back with them - tips, steps for accomplishing a new initiative, etc. **Provide Key Information** • APTA's educational sessions aim to provide "best practice" and "how to" examples, so plan your remarks accordingly. Most attendees are there to learn how they can replicate a program or projects in their agencies or business. Tell attendees what you learned and what to avoid. Try to avoid inundating your audience with details and information - since you have a limited amount of time to talk, you will need to prepare a presentation that is short and to the point. **Project your voice** • There's no need to yell, but speak in a clear, concise tone everyone can hear. Make sure that your voice does not trail off at the end of the sentence or point.

After the Conference

APTA is always trying to improve our process for planning and conducting educational sessions and offer training that is relevant and timely, we encourage you to provide us with your feedback about the conference via the conference survey.

Your comments and suggestions are encouraged and we want you to know that we will take them into full consideration as we plan future educational sessions.