



## So, You Want to Be a Moderator?

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- The moderator serves an essential role at meetings to help ensure that the session is a true success.
- The work of the moderator is not only during the meeting but also in preparation for the session.
- Before the meeting, review all of the speakers' slides well ahead of time to check for the following:
  - Slides are readable from the back of the room.
  - The speaker should NEVER have to say, "I know you cannot read this, but..."
  - The number of slides is appropriate so that the speaker does not run over his/her allotted time or skip through the slides to finish.
  - There is no significant overlap of information between the talks in the session. Audiences will lose interest if they have just heard all of the same talking points!
  - The talks do not contradict each other on basic ideas.
- Feel free to refer the speakers to great resources on how to give a scientific presentation (see one-pager on "How to Give a Great Scientific Presentation")
- Ask each speaker for a brief bio statement that you can use to introduce them and a fun fact that you can share with the audience. It helps to spice up the introductions!
- Let the speakers know how you will signal them with time warnings. This could be a hand signal or standing up and moving towards the podium.
- On the day of the session, show up early and become familiar with the setup of the room and AV equipment.
- Learn the technology that you will be using.
  - Is there an "Ask the Speaker" app that you will need to monitor?
  - Is there a chat stream for the audience to ask questions?
- At the beginning of the session, remind the audience of the title of the session, especially if there are concurrent sessions at the meeting. People may want to be in another session.
- Be sure to introduce yourself too! Express that you are happy to facilitate the session.
- Keep the speaker introductions short. You want to give the speakers as much time as possible for their talks.
- Keep the speakers on time. Give them the warning that you worked out ahead of time. Every speaker should get their allotted time.
- Be prepared with at least one relevant question for each speaker.
- Repeat questions from the audience that everyone may not have been heard.
- Be sure to spread the questions equally between the speakers.
- Definitely finish *on time*, if not 1-2 minutes early. If it seems that conversations will continue, invite people to continue the discussion after the session.
- Thank all the speakers and the audience!!

### References:

1. Lee King, D. Moderating Conference Sessions. From [www.davidleeking.com/moderating-conference-sessions/](http://www.davidleeking.com/moderating-conference-sessions/)
2. Kirsner S. How to Moderate a Panel Like a Pro. From <https://hbr.org/2013/05/how-to-moderate-a-panel-like-a>