



## Proper Care and Use of Speakers

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA • AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE

This checklist is an attempt to provide a quick, easy way to check the use of speakers in the programs of your group. The most important and often overlooked details are included. At the same time an attempt has been made to keep the list brief. Most of the items are appropriate to most occasions where speakers are used.

### I. SELECT A SPEAKER PURPOSEFULLY.

- 1. To what goals or purposes of the group does this program contribute?
- 2. What other methods besides a speaker have you considered to accomplish these goals? Is a speaker the best method?
- 3. Have you chosen the most appropriate speaker available for your purposes?

### II. LET THE AUDIENCE IN ON IT. Try to inform them ahead of time, but in any case a short review of purpose and procedure upon opening the meeting is useful, including:

- 1. The purpose of this program and its relation to the over-all purposes.
- 2. Who the speaker is and what are his qualifications. An absolute minimum introduction should include his name, home, correct position, why he was asked to speak, and the title of his talk. (Refer to Communication Bulletin No. 2 "How to Make Introductions")
- 3. The speaker's part in the program.
- 4. The audience's part in the program. What's expected of them--
  - a. at the meeting
  - b. following the meeting and in subsequent activities.

### III. INFORM THE SPEAKER AHEAD OF TIME. He can serve you best if he knows:

- 1. Why he is to speak. Does he know the major purposes and activities of your group and this particular program?
- 2. To whom he is to speak. What is the composition of your group? Range of age and education, sex, and occupations are usually important.
- 3. Where he is to speak. Give him the exact location in time and place: speaker's place in the program, date, time, exact location and how to get there.
- 4. Conditions of the meeting: size of meeting place, number expected, and seating arrangements. He may also find information useful on the availability of audio-visual equipment. Will he be expected to answer questions?
- 5. Last minute reminders. A letter of verification about 10 days before the meeting will serve as a reminder to him, show that you are on your toes, and may avoid misunderstandings on any necessary change in plans.

IV. REACH A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING WITH THE SPEAKER ON:

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Financial arrangements. Does he normally receive a fee and how much? Is it entirely gratis, a part of his job? Who will pay travel? Will an honorarium suffice and how much are you willing to give?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. What equipment will he bring and what can you supply? Be sure to test yours.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. How much program time he is to have?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Who will meet him, when, and where?

V. PREPARE FOR THE MEETING. It's still your responsibility.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Arrange publicity. News releases, announcements at previous meetings, on the radio, at other organization meetings, and by poster, flyers, or newsletters are all good.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Be sure all necessary facilities are provided and in order. Check heat, lights, ventilation, seating facilities, and platform equipment. A glass and pitcher of water for the speaker will always be welcome.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Designate someone to look after the speaker's needs, make proper introductions, and stay with him or be available until he leaves.

VI. START AND STOP ON TIME. People don't usually come late when they know the meetings start on time. The speaker is probably a busy person. He does not want his time wasted and will understand if you tactfully prevent his imposing on others by suggesting a warning when his time is nearly up.

VII. SHOW YOUR APPRECIATION AND THAT OF YOUR GROUP BY:

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Expressing sincere thanks when he is finished.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Not trying to compete with him or review his speech. (If a summary is called for, make arrangements ahead of time as to how this is to be done.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Prompt and accurate reporting for news releases.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. A follow-up letter of appreciation, possibly enclosing news clippings and comments from members.

REFERENCES:

- Bonaro W. Overstreet; "Speaking of Speakers," THE LEADERS DIGEST, Adult Education Association, 743 N. Wabash Avenue, Chicago. Also see chart, p. 69.
- W. W. Reeder; "Some Methods and Tools to Increase Interest, Participation and Teaching Effectiveness," CORNELL EXTENSION BULLETIN 907.
- Alice V. Myers and Ryerson Johnson; "Speaker or Panel," PLANNING BETTER PROGRAMS, Leadership Pamphlet #2, Adult Education Association, Chicago.
- C. A. Curran; THE PROGRAM ENCYCLOPEDIA, Association Press, New York, 1955, Especially pp. 306-309. (A good source of program ideas of all kinds)
- Bert and Frances Straus; NEW WAYS TO BETTER MEETINGS, The Viking Press, New York, 1953. Especially see Chapter X. (Contains good hints though few direct ideas on speakers)

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