

Giving Speeches to Attract Clients

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In the early days of civilization, speechmakers used outdoor forums to communicate ideas and inspire action. In our Internet Age, technology enables speakers to make presentations online, as well as indoors and out. Whichever setting you choose, speeches will help you build your reputation and client base. Read on for speechmaking tips and resources for using speeches to attract new clients and connect with old ones.

Choosing Your Topics. Focus on providing information that your audience can use in their daily life. Let participants know they can contact you for an initial consultation to discuss their individual case and learn how you can help them. Select topics that will attract a broad audience like legislative updates and estate planning.

Finding a Gig. Consider holding an in-house seminar in your firm's conference room or pursuing speaking opportunities with bar associations and nonprofit organizations. Carefully word your speechmaking proposals to explain how the audience will benefit from your presentation. Search for hosts that will archive your presentation online for replay by those unable to attend.

Attracting an Audience. Send invitations to clients and invite them to bring their friends and colleagues. Mention speaking engagements at your website and in your tweets and correspondence. Send a press release to newspapers, bloggers, and webmasters with a cover letter requesting that they mention the program.

Rehearsing the Script. Rehearse your speech out loud at least one time so you can determine the time needed to present it. Use presentation software like PowerPoint to avoid reading from a script. Ask a friend to watch your rehearsal and offer feedback about your content, style, and audibility.

Presenting Your Material. The most effective speeches provide valuable information using non-legal jargon and a conversational tone. Select an example and tell stories to illustrate your points and make your presentation more interesting. Consider props that can demonstrate ideas and bring your presentation to life. Bring copies of articles and memos to handout at the conclusion of your speech. Leave your firm brochure and business card on the handout table.

Recording for Playback. Take advantage of technology to enhance your speeches. Use recording devices so that your speeches can be replayed at your firm's website and on YouTube. Submit an audio recording to [podcast places](#) like iTunes, Spotify, and the [Legal Talk Network](#).

Books, Articles, and Websites. To improve your speechmaking, read ABA books on [marketing with public speaking](#), [using PowerPoint](#), [presentation skills](#), and [storytelling techniques](#). Also see the lawyer's guide to [speaking outside the courtroom](#) published by Carolina Press. Read the SBA's concise article on [marketing with public speaking](#) and the ABA's articles about using [speaking for client development](#), [talking tips](#), and [speaking style](#). Also see the article and resources at websites created by the [National Speakers Association](#), the [Public Speaking Project](#) and [Toastmasters](#).

Conclusion. Speaking engagements are a powerful tool for marketing your professional services. Speechmaking provides an opportunity to showcase your knowledge, skills and abilities. Speeches enable prospective clients to assess your expertise, demeanor and personality. Start giving speeches to establish your reputation as an expert and network with individuals and organizations.

Mr. Goldblatt has authored numerous books and articles about marketing for lawyers.