

# Speakers Briefing Sheet (v1.1)

## The Hall, The Stage and The Lights

- Familiarise yourself with the Hall and Stage well before you are going to be on it. Preferably the night before so you can get a real feel for the venue.
- Understand the seating arrangements and check the view of the stage from all angles in the room – this is what the audience sees and you need to know how to adjust your speech and gestures etc. to enhance their view of you.
- Walk on the stage – Test for Cracks / Joints , Weak spots and Creaking spots. Also Cuts/tears in the Floor Tiles and or Carpets – Tape them up with Duct Tape if necessary.
- Check the Lighting and discuss lighting requirements with Lighting Engineer
- Mark your speaking spots on the stage for the place to be and the lighting effects you want at specific times in your speech. Best with either coloured or name identified masking tape.
- Be aware that other speakers may be doing the same so there could be multiple markers on the stage.
- Test the stairs on and off the stage – they are often rickety and need special negotiation skills. – Handrails are often not secure so don't rely on them.
- Check where you will be sitting before and after you speak.
- Check where the Miking-up will happen in relation to where you will be sitting.
- Check who will be doing the Miking-up – do you need to get from another speaker and do you need to pass on to another speaker etc.

## Dress

- Whatever you wear make sure it is comfortable and not too tight etc
- Remember as you walk onto the stage you are already making the first impression to your audience and they will judge you from that moment onwards.
- Remember to remove all name tags and conference lanyards etc before you go up on stage – you don't want to look like a Xmas tree up there
- Also remove all keys – cell phones – heavy objects – pens from all pockets
- Ladies – Beware of Scarves, Necklaces and Broaches etc. that may get tangled or effect the microphone.
- Ladies beware of wearing a dress / blouse that has a high neck / polar neck and no belt - this gives you zero place to hook microphones to and more importantly a place to clip the microphone transmitter to. If you choose to wear a dress – try wearing a belt for the microphone transmitter.
- Ladies if it suits the occasion and speech a jacket helps to hide and store microphone stuff.
- Men best if you have a Jacket and Tie – This allows for multiple options for clipping on or hiding microphone transmitters in pockets etc
- Note – Do Not wear Silk (men and woman) it creates static electricity and can interfere with microphones. This includes silk ties.
- Men (and Women) – ensure that your shoes are clean and shining – the audience sees these and it's a major let down if your shoes are dusty/dirty.
- If there are going to be Video cameras and you are going to be shown on big screens – avoid Striped Clothing/Shirts etc as they strobe. The same goes for Checked clothing and shirts.

## Microphones and Sound

- First thing – Know the venue and test it for sound without the mike – just in case you have to rely on your own voice if the PA system fails for whatever reason
- Second – remember that it is always better to use a mike as it gives you much more versatility and sound control.
- Thirdly – remember that you choose to use the mike and PA system or not – if it fails for whatever reason you have to have a plan B as you cannot cry that it failed afterwards.
- Fourth – Because of the above you need to familiarise yourself with this technology, be comfortable with it and master the techniques for its use.
- Fifth – Test the equipment you will be using – get the Sound Engineer there and do sound level (volume/base/treble etc) and equipment tests.
- Finally Microphones and Sound Systems are your friend and ally and weapon if you know how to use it to your advantage. Best you get to know how best to use them.
- The following microphones may be available at the venue:

Lectern - Corded Mike	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe – less chance of failing</li> <li>• Ties you to the Lectern area</li> </ul>
Handheld – Corded Mike	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe – less chance of failing</li> <li>• Cord can get in the way</li> <li>• One hand always occupied with holding the mike</li> <li>• Great if you are going to be using it for sound effects etc (Comedians friend)</li> </ul>
Handheld – Wireless Mike	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One hand always occupied with holding the mike</li> <li>• Great if you are going to be using it for sound effects etc (Comedians friend)</li> </ul>
Wireless - Lapel Mike	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need correct clothing (see above)</li> <li>• Clothing can get in the way of sound</li> <li>• If not Omni-directional or very good quality mike the sound can be lost when you move your head</li> <li>• Can come loose if you are going to be very active</li> <li>• Clip mike in Centre of your chest</li> <li>• Clip Mike a hands distance (about 15cm) from your chin when you are looking forward. This allows for maximum pick up of your voice</li> <li>• Make sure mike has a shield over it ( i.e. a small foam cap) as this reduces popping and heavy breathing sounds you may make</li> </ul>
Wireless - Headphone Mike	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advantage of always picking up sound no matter where you turn your head to</li> <li>• Need to understand how it clips on</li> <li>• Mike to be just below level your chin but not underneath it.</li> <li>• Can look a bit odd if it's a big mike</li> </ul>
Wireless - Earpiece Mike	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advantage of always picking up sound no matter where you turn your head to</li> <li>• Need to understand how it clips on</li> <li>• Mike to be in centre front of your cheek</li> </ul>

- Check how many of each microphone there is - 1 or 2 or more – this has a direct effect on who mikes-up who or having a disruption between speeches etc
- Check who will be doing the Miking-up – do you need to get from another speaker and do you need to pass on to another speaker etc.
- NOTE – Please ensure that there are at least 2 extra sets of batteries (Duracell) for Every Piece of Wireless equipment as these things chew batteries.

### ***Your Own Microphone***

- The best and safest option is to carry your own microphone equipments with you. Then you are assured that you know it and that it works
- Make sure it is UHF – Multichannel equipment
- Ensure that you have the correct connections for all type of PA Sound decks
- Make sure you have enough back up batteries
- Test the equipment with the PA system and the Sound Engineer before the event and again before your speaking slot.
- Remember proper testing requires at least 30 minutes so give yourself enough time.

### **Other Equipment and Props**

- Are you going to use your PC?
- If using "their" PC – Does it have the correct software (and versions) and sound and graphics cards to handle your presentation?
- Do you need a Data Projector?
- If using a data projector – do you need a Screen?
- Do you need PC Speakers Sound?
- Do you need PA \System Speaker sound for the PC?
- Are you going to be using Video, DVD, or similar equipment?
- Are you going to be using props?
- Do you need Special Stage set-ups for Chairs, Tables, Lecterns, Table cloths etc?
- Do you need Prop tables, Tall tables etc?
- Do you need water / drinks and glasses on stage?

If you are going to be using or needing any of these items please ensure that YOU have made suitable arrangements with the venue management and organisers way ahead of time.

Remember that it is YOUR Responsibility to make sure that the correct equipment is there, and also to TEST that it is working. Don't blame them if things are not working –it's your responsibility. Make sure that you have all the necessary extension cords, connections and backup batteries etc.

Remember to get an assistant to help you run the equipment and help you with the stage / props etc set-up before you speak and also to help you remove them after your session.

Finally – Remember its ShowTime – Go out there - knock their socks off and Have FUN.

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