



## Getting Ready for a Speaking Presentation

By Dr. Linda Hancock

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled “All Psyched Up” for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of “Life is An Adventure...every step of the way” and “Open for Business Success” is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email [office@drlindahancock.com](mailto:office@drlindahancock.com)

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My son lives five hours away from my home but travels with me for professional speaking engagements. He usually arrives a day or two before the scheduled event and we begin strategizing and preparing so that I can be my best.

Following are the steps that we take:

1. Review of the materials that I have received from the hosting organization - We want to make sure that we understand the specific needs and requests as well as the logistics for our stay. We double-check the times they have set for us to fulfill their banquet and room reservations as well as any specific details for setting up our sales booth and doing sound checks.
2. Refinement of the presentation - I have usually prepared notes for the topic to be covered and we then coordinate these with any slides, photos or videos that we want to incorporate into our power point so that it flows.
3. Prepare a customized free gift for the audience members. This is usually a mini book that they can download through a hidden page on our website. We give them the address and they get the gift in exchange for entering their name and email address into a database form. We find this method is less expensive than having a paper handout and it also allows us to capture contact information for future marketing.
4. Draw materials - We also print slips of paper on which the audience can write their names and email addresses for a draw in which they can win two or three of my books or audio products. Most people carry pens but having a supply with you is a good idea as well as having a container for entries. Describing the prizes to them allows you a comfortable way to market,
5. Back up materials - We use luggage with wheels to transport supplies for the book table such as business cards, bookmarks, and sale items.
6. Inventory - It is better to have too much than to run out and then be faced with shipping costs. Make sure you also have a good pen for autographing the sale items, paper and pens for audience members to write out specific requests they might have and a prepared method for issuing receipts that purchasers need. You will also need to have a good supply of small bills in order to make change for the buyers.
7. Technical supplies - My son carries with him his laptop, specific cords that he might need for the sound system, audio/video devices for recording the event and his iPhone for taking photographs that we can later use in marketing materials.
8. Presentation props - I usually put my outfit for the second half of the presentation into a piece of luggage that I can actually pull-on stage with me. That way I don't have to worry about going back to the hotel room or looking for specific things in a short break.
9. Invoicing documentation - I usually ask for a down payment of half the fee at booking and the remainder on the day of the presentation. It is a good idea to take a copy of the invoice showing balance due with you for the organizers.

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10. Travel preparations - We usually plan to be at the venue the day before I speak. This means that I will need to have my hair professional done, the car filled with gas or travel to the airport arranged.

It sounds like a lot of things to get ready, but we are finding that the more times we do this, the easier it becomes. The key, of course, is to have a plan and allow the time in order to do all of the tasks so that you truly can say that you are ready when you need to be.