



Tips for Panel Discussions

- Find out as much information about the format, timing, audience and other participants as possible in advance.
 - What other opinions will be represented, and by whom?
 - How familiar is the audience with the issue?
 - Is this likely to be a fact sharing session, or is it more controversial or contentious? How much time will each person have, and who will moderate the session?
- Be Prepared
 - Determine three key messages relevant to your audience.
 - Think about anecdotes, stories and examples that illustrate your messages and practice telling them.
 - Anticipate questions and prepare concise responses that answer the questions directly.
 - Create a short, meaningful introduction of you for the moderator to use.
 - Familiarize yourself with the other panelists' backgrounds and positions on the issue.
 - Prepare 30-second closing remarks.
- Be conscious of how you look when you're not speaking. Resist fidgeting, swinging your foot, or making facial expressions that signal disapproval of others' remarks.
- Interact politely with the other panelists during the discussion.
- Avoid acronyms and technical jargon.
- Phrase your talking points in bumper sticker language.
- Use "bridges" to navigate the discussion and bring it back to your messages.
 - "I'd like to address that question..."
 - "Let me add something to that idea..."
 - "We take a different perspective at my company..."
 - "It is not a question of personal opinion. It is an issue of fact. The fact in this case is..."