

7 Insider Tips to Find the RIGHT Speaker for Your Event



Dear Meeting Planner,

You've got an event coming up and you want to find the right speaker for your group. It's not easy. I know because not only have I been a speaker for 25 years, but I've also booked a lot of speakers for one of my companies. I quickly learned about the pitfall I call "speaker disappointment." The last thing you want is for the speaker you hire to disappoint. No one wants to suffer a disappointing speaker, especially not the event planner.

The good news is that I have 7 tips to help you find the right speaker and avoid "speaker disappointment."



When I was hiring speakers, I used these 7 tips and found that they reliably enabled me to vet potential speakers so well so that my speaker selection was always a huge hit with the audience - and made me the hero who found them!

Here's how you find and select the right speaker:

1 Always take a discovery call with your potential speaker and ask them to describe their keynote speech.

Ask them these things:

- ✓ Can you tell me the 3 major points of your talk?
- ✓ What stories do you tell?
- ✓ What problem does your talk bring a solution to?
- ✓ What is the main idea you're confident the audience will take away from your talk?
- ✓ How would you describe your personality as a speaker?
- ✓ Besides stories and your key points, do you do anything else in your talk you'd want me to know about such as audience interactions?

Look for someone who's done at least 500 speeches. To be fair, beginners to the craft of speaking can do a very good job and there's nothing wrong with giving someone who is fairly new to the profession a shot if you've got a real strong feeling about them. But it's also risky because any seasoned working professional speaker will tell you that 1,000 gigs is a good mark for how many it takes to achieve a real measure of mastery at the craft. Ask your prospective speaker how many speaking engagements they've done and remember the 1,000 speeches.

Before making your call to prospective speakers, decide what kind of speaker you want.

Here are some solid examples that you might choose from:

- ✓ **Magician Speaker.** A speaker who entertains with a lot of magic and relates that magic to motivational messages.
- ✓ **Comedian Speaker.** A speaker who entertains with a lot of jokes but who also includes some motivational messages.
- ✓ **Celebrity Speaker.** A speaker who is a celebrity. (Often exciting for your audience to meet and often just okay speakers as it's not what they do for a living).
- ✓ **Motivational Speaker.** A speaker who specializes in motivating people with stories and motivational messages.
- ✓ **Expert Speaker.** A speaker who specializes in being expert on a topic and who adds value to your audience's ability to do their jobs better. Super smart, perhaps not strong on being motivational.
- ✓ **Motivational Expert.** A speaker who is an expert on a topic with takeaways for your audience to do their jobs better but who is also very motivational.
- ✓ **After-Dinner Speaker.** A speaker who is strong on stories that entertain and inspire your audience, perhaps even make them cry. The perfect speaker for a gala event or an awards banquet.

Most speakers are one of these types. Someone who's been speaking for decades may have mastered more than one of these formats. For instance, I can do three of these now, the motivational speech, the motivational expert speech, and the after-dinner speech. But what's important is that you know in advance which type of speech you're really desiring.

4

Ask a speaker how they prepare for a talk.

Some speakers don't necessarily prepare for your event because they do the same speech each time, where other speakers customize their talk for your group. A guy like me goes so far as to do brief interviews with key people in your organization so that your audience knows I'm not doing a canned speech but rather that I cared enough to be highly informed about them specifically. It's a great idea to look for a speaker who cares about customizing their talk for your group. Your audience really appreciates it.

5

Ask if the speaker has a book.

If they do, ask if they don't mind sticking around for a book signing afterwards. Or consider purchasing copies of their book in advance and giving them out to your audience at the event as a gift to all attendees. This greatly enhances your audience's impression of the speaker and takeaway value.



6

Negotiate with your speaker if you need to.

Let's say you discover the perfect speaker for your event but their fee is twice as high as your budget, what do you do? You tell them your budget for a speaker and ask them if they'd be willing to do your event for the fee you can offer.

Speakers can be highly flexible in their pricing. To be fair to speakers, high fees are high for a reason. If you can command high fees it's because you've mastered one of the most valuable skills in the world, being able to connect, motivate, entertain and ignite a room full of strangers!

(And trust me, it's no easy task. The best speakers just make it look easy. Again, that's why experience matters so much when you select a speaker).

And remember these three bargaining chips you always have with speakers. Speakers may lower their fees if you'll videotape their talk, if you offer to make referrals for the speaker, and if it's for a charitable or good cause.

Yes, you want someone who is going to be motivational and deliver takeaway value, but let's be honest, almost every audience really hopes the speaker will have great stories and make everyone laugh. As one of my clients put it after my talk for his audience, "Thank you! You gave us a full day in one hour. You made us laugh, cry and learn." For the first 10 years of my speaking career, I was strong on motivation and good on story. But then I also created a comedic one man show for theatre audiences, and that's how I really learned to tell great stories and make audiences laugh. It's the trifecta of a great talk: motivation, stories and laughter.

May your next event be your best one yet, and may your chosen speaker be the highpoint! If you're looking for a Motivational Speaker, a Motivational Expert, or an After-Dinner Speaker, I'd welcome a discovery call with you. I'd love to help you ignite Passion and Purpose at your next event.

"Masterful, heart warming, powerful, authentic, incredible speaker!! Attendees were blown away and inspired to take their lives to the next level. You can't be disappointed with Patrick, he's the best!"

Jonathan Budd, CEO of POWUR



5 Reasons To Book Patrick To Speak At Your Next Event

1 Audiences love him.

"He gave me a full day in one hour. I laughed, I cried and I learned," said one audience member. Patrick's a command performer and master storyteller who enchants people quickly, but it's his unforgettable ability to get into people's hearts that's the real reason why people often name Patrick as their favorite speaker ever.

2 Meeting planners love him

Patrick takes a deep and true interest in getting to know his clients so that he can tailor his presentations to the objectives of the event. Always pleasant to work with and zero attitude after 25 years in the business.

3 He's inspiring and motivational

Patrick lives purposeful, passionate, courageous, loving and inspired. Patrick's commitment to make his life is a masterpiece inspires audiences to want to do the same with their own lives. That's why he's in the Motivational Speaker's Hall of Fame.

4 He's funny and entertaining

Patrick triumphed in the comedy world with his solo, theatre show. HBO named him the funniest new performer in America. He's toured the world making theatre audiences laugh for 12 years and counting. People often compare him to Jim Carrey.

5 He'll sign books and genuinely connect with people

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Patrick Combs is a Hall of Fame inspirational speaker, a Best Selling author, and a highly acclaimed comedic entertainer. He has been the invited guest speaker of more than 1,500 organizations and he's been the star comedic entertainer on more than 400 stages around the world.

[Schedule a call with Patrick](#) 

Check his availability, get answers to your questions about his speaking services, and tell him exactly what you're seeking from a speaker to help you have an incredible event and wow your group! Don't make the mistake of not discovering why world class organizations and leaders like you LOVE Patrick.

To Your Next Successful Event!

Patrick Combs