

MEDIA TRAINING
Panel Discussions
(December 2025)



What Are Our Goals ?

What we'll strive to accomplish



- Motivate you to take on more panel opportunities.
- Prepare you to show up as a more effective, memorable panelist.
- Boost your confidence on stage so you speak with assurance.
- Help you captivate your audience from the moment you start speaking.



Why Say Yes to Panels

Where leaders share ideas — and get noticed



- **Build credibility and trust.** People get a clearer sense of who you are, how you think, and why your expertise matters.
- **Increase your visibility.** Panels put you in front of peers who may not yet know you.
- **Give back to your industry.** Share insights others can use in their own businesses.
- **Build meaningful relationships.** Connect with fellow speakers, organizers, and attendees.



Is This The Right Panel For Me?

Not every opportunity is the right fit



- **Assess whether the topic aligns with your expertise.** Make sure you can add real value to the conversation.
- **Consider who else is on the panel.** Strong panelists elevate the discussion and your credibility.
- **Know the target audience.** Confirm the room is filled with the people you want to reach.
- **Look for added value at the conference.** Can you schedule meetings with prospects, customers, or partners?
- **Confirm the logistics.** Understand what's covered, including travel costs and conference fees.



Getting To Know Your Fellow Panelists

Start building rapport early



- **Suggest a pre-conference call.** If the moderator doesn't schedule one, propose a quick check-in to align on topics and discussion points.
- **Connect on LinkedIn.** Learn more about each panelist's background, perspective, and areas of expertise.
- **Respond promptly and stay engaged.** Timely communication builds rapport and keeps everyone aligned.
- **Support the moderator.** Be proactive and responsive to requests ahead of the session.



Pre-Arrival Prep

What to Do Before You Get There



- **Review questions in advance.** Ask the moderator for questions ahead of time and offer your own to shape the conversation.
- **Have a backup plan.** Travel issues and illnesses happen—identify someone on your team who could step in if needed.
- **Plan your wardrobe early.** Choose outfits that fit the conference, work on stage, and make you feel confident.
- **Arrive early when possible.** Try to get to the conference the day before you're scheduled to present.



Final Prep Before the Panel

Last-Minute Steps That Make a Difference



- **Visit the room the day before or as soon as possible.** Ballrooms can be hard to find, and arriving ahead of time helps you avoid unnecessary stress.
- **Assess the setup.** If the AV team is present, introduce yourself and confirm what microphones and equipment you'll be using.
- **Get comfortable with the space and visualize the moment.** Walk the stage, look out at the room, and picture yourself speaking confidently—familiarity removes the unknown.
- **Arrive at your session early.** Get mic'd up, connect with your fellow panelists, and ask any last-minute questions.



Executing in the Moment

What to Focus On While You're On Stage



- **Check your posture.** Sit up, keep your shoulders back, and avoid slouching—even if the chair makes it tricky.
- **Remember who you're speaking to.** You're not just talking to the moderator and panelists—you're there for the audience.
- **Add value with “yes, and.”** Build on others' points to keep the conversation moving.
- **Mind your fillers.** Pause and take a breath between sentences instead of filling the space with “um” or “uh.”
- **Enjoy the moment.** When you're present and engaged, it shows—no forced smiles needed.



Handling On-Stage Curveballs

Keeping Your Composure in the Moment



- **If your mic goes out, don't panic.** Other panelists have mics you can borrow while the AV team fixes yours—make eye contact or get their attention first.
- **Use the Bridging ABCs for tough questions.** Acknowledge the question, bridge to your message, and contribute insight that adds value for the audience.
- **Jump in if you haven't been called on.** Build off another panelist's answer with a line like, "Jennifer, I'd like to build on that if I may."
- **Handle questions outside your focus gracefully.** "That's outside my day-to-day focus, but what I can speak to is..."—and share your perspective.



After You Leave the Stage

Simple Steps That Keep the Conversation Going



- **Stick around after the panel.** Talk with attendees who want to connect—you never know who might be a prospect, partner, or member of the media.
- **Capture the moment.** Have someone take photos during the panel and a group shot you can share on LinkedIn, your newsletter, or company channels.
- **Extend the conversation online.** Draft a LinkedIn post with key insights from the panel—having someone take notes or record the session helps.
- **Thank the organizers.** A quick note goes a long way and helps keep you top of mind for future invitations.



Questions?

Opening the Floor



THANK YOU!

