

You Should Be a Moderator

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The Harvard Club of Boston
Presenter: Kevin Leavey



Why are we here today?

- The Program Committees of the SOA challenge themselves with a quality goal:
 - Participants rate the quality of the sessions higher than last year
- How to do this?
 - We believe increasing the level of interaction in the sessions is a way to increase satisfaction. Highly effective moderators can create an environment that encourages participation.



Our Objectives

- To share some benefits to being a moderator
- To share some “best practices”
- To hear about YOUR “best practices”
- Want everyone to leave with:
 - New tools in their tool kit;
 - Knowing where to go for help; and
 - Challenged to make a difference!



Role of Moderator

- Planner
- Stage-Setter
- Facilitator
- Time-Keeper



Benefits to Being a Moderator

- Networking
- Public Speaking
- Meeting Management



Role of Moderator: Planner

- You create a successful session through good planning
 - Start with the session description and learning outcomes
 - Define the session approach
 - Have a planning call with presenters in advance to outline the agenda, topic coverage (how will the session flow?)
 - Meet presenters in advance (in person if possible)
 - Have a “dry-run”
 - Practice your opening and closing remarks!



Role of Moderator: Stage-Setter

- You set the tone for the session!
 - Evaluate room logistics
 - Introduce yourself to people as they come in – Welcome them!
 - Set expectations of (“give permission to”) the audience during your opening remarks
 - Ask the audience a question during your opening remarks



Role of Moderator: Stage-Setter

- You provide context and integration for the presentations
 - Provide a few introductory remarks before turning things over to the presenters
 - ◆ Why is this issue important? What relevance does it have to the actuarial profession? Why should you listen to these presenters?
 - Consider how the presentations “fit together” – help the audience understand those connections



Role of Moderator: Facilitator

- You have significant influence on the level of interaction
 - Consider recruiting 1-2 speakers rather than 3
 - Encourage presenters to take questions throughout rather than holding to the end
 - Be prepared to be the first questioner
 - ◆ Ask a “novice” question



Role of Moderator: Facilitator

- You have significant influence on the level of interaction
 - Call on people! (carefully)
 - Use hypothetical case studies (readable on screen)



Role of Moderator: Facilitator

- Room set-up can influence the level of interaction
 - Get to the room early
 - Play “pass the mike” (smaller groups)
 - Use “runners” and have written questions brought to the podium (larger groups)



Role of Moderator: Time-Keeper

- You keep the schedule on track
 - Set the schedule in advance
 - Use green/yellow/red time cards



Time-Keeper Case Study

- The situation:
 - You are the moderator for a session with three panelists. The first presenter is scheduled to speak for 20 minutes. You have given her the green/yellow/red card warnings, but after 20 minutes she shows no sign of wrapping up.
- Discussion Question:
 - What alternatives are available to you? Which do you choose and why?



Resources

- Presenter Coaching
 - 1-hour personal coaching provided by Bob Callahan, faculty at Seattle University
- Management & Personal Development Section Council
- SOA Staff



Thank You!



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