

How to Prep Your Annual Ted Talk

7 Steps for Preparing Your Annual Speech

- 1. Start discerning 4-6 months out.** Meet several times with your event team to talk with God and each other about the theme and program content. Stay alert to ministry trends and advancements, and ponder how they could shape or be woven into your theme.
- 2. Develop key concepts with a team.** Choose two or three main points for your talk. Ask appropriate staff members to provide pertinent facts for each aspect.
- 3. Write the first draft.** Pray. Write. Pray some more. Write some more. A good speech is best written in the context of communication with the Lord. You want His passion and Scripture to fuel it and flow through it.
- 4. Invite feedback.** Choose a handful of ministry associates, hopefully both women and men, to read your speech and give honest feedback. This will help you strengthen, tighten, omit, and revise where needed. They serve as a microcosm of your eventual audience.
- 5. Create PowerPoint.** You may delegate this to a team member who's up on current trends in design, photos, font size, colors, etc. Your PowerPoint imagery should support the event theme.
- 6. Do a trial-run with a review team.** Run through the entire program with a group of six to eight associates. Give everyone a copy of your speech so they can mark possible changes, comment on PowerPoint images, timing, tone, etc.
- 7. Build in margin.** Complete the trial-run at least a week out from the event. This gives your entire team breathing space—including you! There are plenty of other ministry responsibilities and event details to attend to in the final week.

3 Ways NOT to Prepare

- 1. Delay.** With a mountain of projects on your desk, it's hard to even see much less prioritize an event that's two months out. So, wait to write your speech until it becomes super urgent.
- 2. Do it alone.** You know your ministry, you know what's most important to share, so figure it out by yourself. After all, isn't that what leaders are supposed to do?
- 3. Cram.** All-nighters worked in college, so why not in ministry? If the week leading up to the event is jammed with speech revisions, just look forward to crashing afterwards.

Lisa Hosler is president of Align Life Ministries, where she has served since 1985. Align is a life-affirming ministry that serves people in southeastern Pennsylvania, partners with organizations, and resources leaders and the church at large. Lisa speaks nationally and internationally about leading from a place of intimacy with Christ and seeking God collectively for greater alignment, agreement, and advancement.

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