



## Panel Discussion Tips



Successful panel discussions allow the audience to learn from a group of experts by listening to—and more importantly participating in—engaging conversations. Conversely, ineffective panels serve as boring and repetitive lectures that fail to facilitate learning.

*Please consider the tips below to assist you in structuring and presenting a panel discussion that is both captivating and informative.*

### FOR PANELISTS

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- Plan ahead to reduce redundancy and ensure that all content is adequately covered. *If possible, set up a conference call to become acquainted with your fellow panelists before the session.*
- Structure your presentation to include an interactive component every 15-20 minutes to keep the audience engaged.
- Use storytelling to help your audience emotionally connect with the presentation.
- Consider polling the audience using apps such as Poll Everywhere, Directpoll, or Twitter; or, simply ask participants to stand if a certain statement relates to them.
- Slides are optional. Rather, focus on engaging the audience through interactive activities.
- When disagreements arise, proceed diplomatically and make sure that your exchange enriches the conversation, rather than detracts from it.



### FOR FACILITATORS

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- Get to know your panelists ahead of time to become familiar with their backgrounds, better understand their areas of expertise, and learn about any informative and/or interesting examples they may have to share from their own experience.
- Maintain control of the session to prevent panelists from speaking over one another or repeating the same information.
- Encourage debate within the panel but be sure to keep the conversation in line with both the session's content and the audience's interest.
- Meet with audience members before the panel starts to crowdsource content and questions.