

# Yawns or Standing Ovations?

## 10 Tips for Choosing Your Keynote Speaker

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Selecting a keynote speaker is a critical decision that can make or break the success of your National Sales Meeting. Get it right, and you have an unforgettable experience that has value long after the event is over.

Here are the 10 essential tips to consider.



### 1. Make it Relevant

Choose a speaker whose expertise aligns with the theme or objectives of your meeting. For example, if your meeting focuses on sales strategies, look for a speaker with experience in sales or closely related fields. Avoid the astronauts and athlete marquee names with no expertise in your world.

### 2. Expertise

Look for a speaker with a proven track record in public speaking, especially on sales or closely related topics. Are they a Toastmaster Champion? Do they have the presence and “hard knocks” expertise you want? Have they carried the bag, held a frontline sales manager job, or run a large sales force?

### 3. Engagement

The speaker should be able to captivate the audience and foster a sense of involvement and engagement. Consider their experience delivering engaging and interactive presentations, not just information dumps and death by PowerPoint. Most of all check them for “war stories” there is nothing worse than a speaker who starts out with “when I was selling for IBM”... ugh.

### 4. Credibility

Consider the speaker’s industry knowledge, accolades, and credentials. This adds weight to their profile and enhances their credibility as an expert. Has their firm been recognized in their industry for excellence?

## 5. Budget

Ensure that the speaker's fee fits within your allocated budget. Consider the speaker's value to your event, but also be mindful of your financial constraints. Some high-end speakers can break the bank, and the long-term value is questionable.

## 6. Availability

Check that the speaker is available on your event dates and can accommodate logistical needs. It's essential to confirm their availability before making a final decision.

## 7. Audience Fit

Make sure the speaker resonates with your specific audience demographic. Consider their style of speaking, language, and the relevance of their message to your audience. Go as far as confirming the dress code. If your culture is more business casual, you don't want a blue pinstripe suit, white shirt, and red tie. You want your audience to feel the speaker is like one of them.

## 8. Customization

Some speakers are one size fits all. Pick someone who can tailor their talk to your specific needs, adding value to your event. Consider whether customization options are available. This means a thorough briefing on your sales strategy, products, markets, and competitors. The more connections they can make to your world, the better.

## 9. References, Reviews & Rehearsal

Look for testimonials or reviews from previous engagements. This can provide insights into the speaker's past performance and their impact on other events. Do a dry run – get a sense of their style and the overview of the message. And make sure all the technical requirements are checked and super-checked before showtime.

## 10. Interactive Capabilities

A speaker who can integrate Q&A sessions, live polling, or other interactive elements can make the event more engaging for the audience. This speaks again to "practice makes perfect" and doing a dry run before the session. You can find a speaker who will deliver a memorable and impactful presentation by carefully weighing these factors.

## Let's get started.

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