

Master Gardener Program

Introducing Speakers

1. A moderator's role is to start and end each session on time, create a comfortable learning environment for learners, and introduce and help the speaker.
2. Be at the front of the room with the speaker to begin the session on time. Remind her or him to leave time for questions and you will give a signal when there are 10 minutes left. Ask if there are handouts for the session.
3. Even if people are still finding seats and talking, go up to the microphone and start talking about coming in, finding seats, wanting to stay on time... anything you can think of to get people settled and looking at you. (If you wait for THEM to be ready, they will take too much time.) Finally, ask people to turn off cell phones)
4. THE MAIN PURPOSE OF AN INTRODUCTION IS TO GET PEOPLE'S ATTENTION FOCUSED UP FRONT AND READY TO LEARN. When most of the audience is ready (see #3), say "Welcome to this session on _____". It is my pleasure to introduce the area of research, recent honors or awards, or something that is unique to her or him. Speakers have their detailed biographical information online for those who are interested.
5. Before you leave the podium, say "Please help me welcome _____" and begin to applaud. This cues the audience to applaud. WAIT AT THE PODIUM UNTIL THE SPEAKER GETS THERE, smile and nod and then exit. (Never leave a podium naked. That may conjure up a funny image, but you won't forget this part of a moderator's etiquette!)
6. Sit where the speaker can see you so she or he can ask for your help and so you can easily signal when there are ten minutes left in the session.
7. Give the 10-minute signal, then start moving toward the front of the room at 5 minutes and stand there.
 - a. If the speaker asks for questions, let people ask questions until the end of the session. Remind speaker to repeat the question for learners at the back of the room. When time is up, move in on the speaker, and say to the audience "We need to stay on time so I'm ending the session now, but let's thank our speaker with a round of applause." BUTTING IN ON A SPEAKER LIKE THIS WHEN THE TIME IS UP IS NOT RUDE. IT IS RESPECTFUL OF OUR AUDIENCE AND ALL THE SPEAKERS WHO WILL FOLLOW IN THE PROGRAM.
 - b. If the speaker ends the presentation by saying "thanks for listening" and the audience starts clapping, hurry up to the podium. If there is time for questions, tell the audience there is time for a few questions, tell the audience there is time for a few questions. If the speaker has NOT left time for questions, tell the audience there is no time for questions but the speaker may wait at the side of the room for individual questions. Again, this is not rude to the speaker. It is respectful of the audience who needs to move on and the next speaker coming on.