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SPECIAL  
EVENT®**

Don't book your  
next speaker...  
...until you hear this

Jennifer Best, AAE Speakers Bureau





# Jennifer Best, VP of Marketing, AAE Speakers Bureau

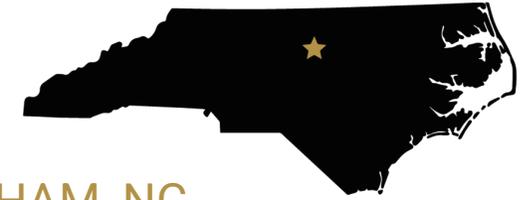
20+ years in Marketing (digital, brand strategy)

15+ years working with events

Volunteer board member, American Marketing Association Triangle (NC); member, MPI; active supporter of the American Heart Association

Fun fact: I've been to over 50 concerts, starting with Hall & Oates and most recently, Goo Goo Dolls.

# About AAE Speakers Bureau



DURHAM, NC



22

YEARS IN BUSINESS

12,000

EVENTS

\$300M

BOOKINGS



# What We'll Talk About Today

- ✓ What matters most to speakers when accepting events
- ✓ How to identify the right speaker for your event
- ✓ What's involved in booking a speaker and options to do this
- ✓ What to include in your speaking offer
- ✓ Negotiating with speakers and positioning your offer for success



# Recommended Speaker Engagement Timeline

Start planning budget,  
topic, and gather initial  
speaker ideas

**6 – 12 months**

Extend your speaking  
offer and finalize  
contract

**3 – 6 months**



What matters most to speakers when booking events?

# What Speakers Say Matters Most

**70+%**

Topic + Experience  
Match

**60+%**

Pays Ideal Fee

**40+%**

Matches My Values



## What (Else) Makes a Speaker More Likely to Accept?

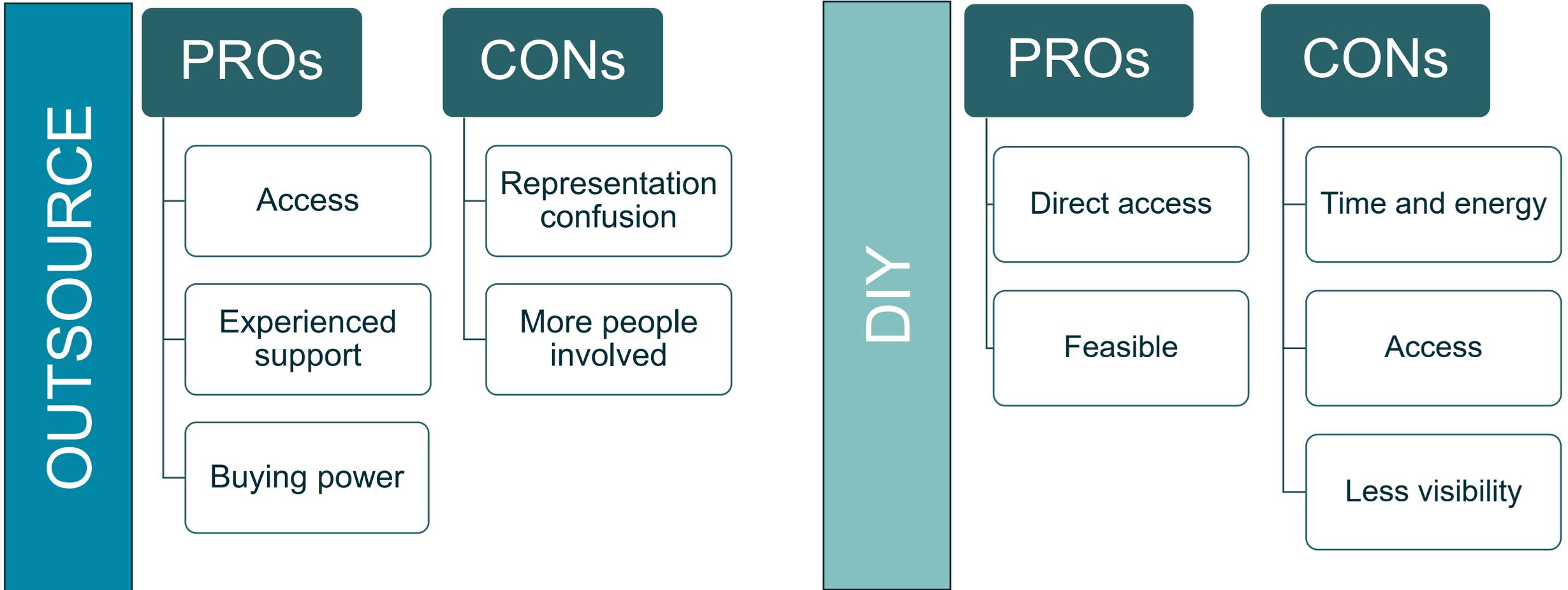
- ✓ It fits in their schedule – work/life balance
- ✓ The requirements for the event seem reasonable and achievable
- ✓ It's in a desirable location
- ✓ It's with a well-known company or respected university

# Speaking Industry Insider Tip



**Consider your own bandwidth, in-house support team, and instincts when deciding whether you want to book the speaker yourself or work with a trusted partner.**

# Should You Outsource or DIY?





# Starting the speaker search process



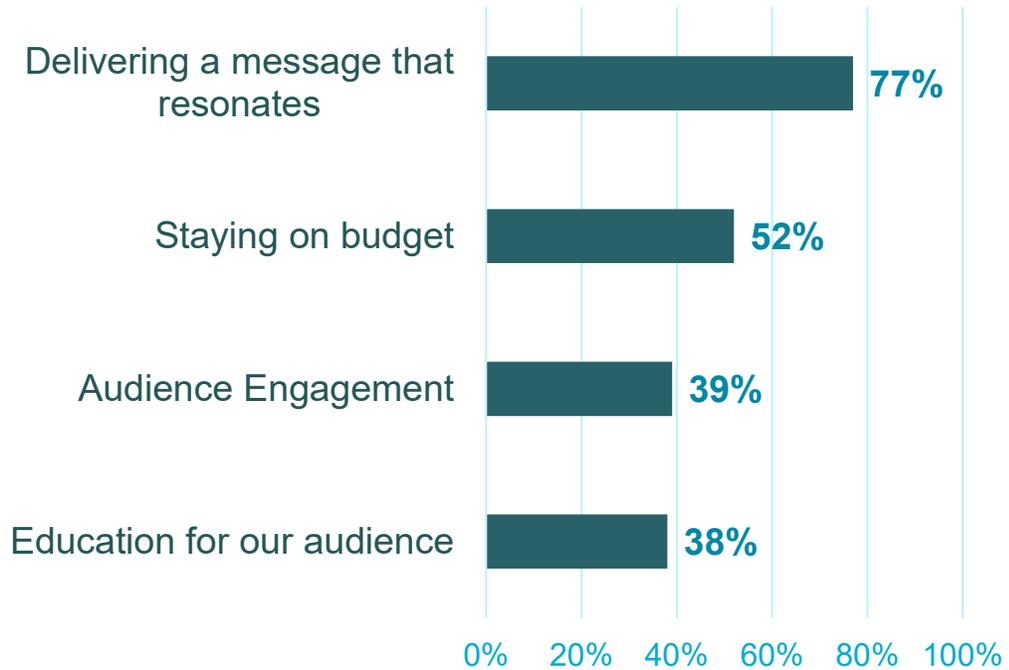
## Speaking Industry Insider Tip



The speaker you choose will become a steward of your event's (and your organization's) tone and brand, so **be selective.**

# Define Your Goals First

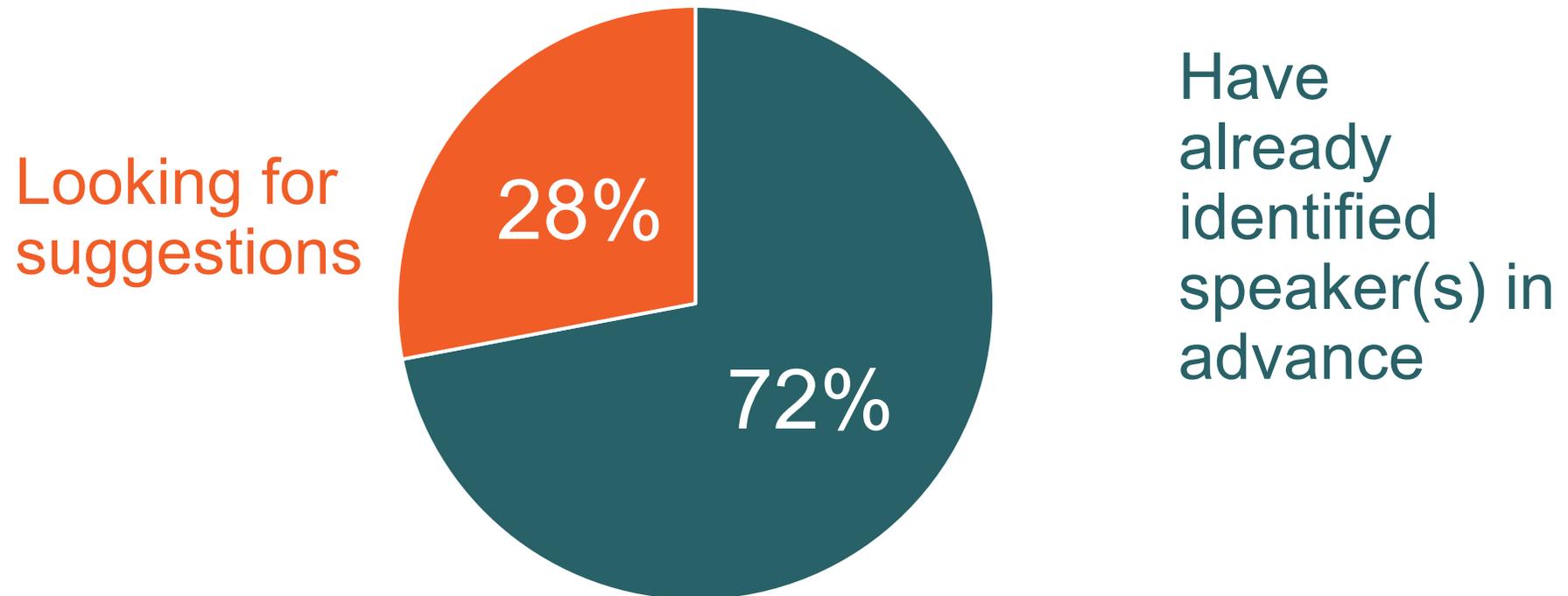
What are your goals for your speaker's engagement?\*



\*Source: 2023 AAE Internal Client Survey



# When you reach out to AAE, where are you in the speaker selection process?



# 7 Steps to Start Your Speaker Research

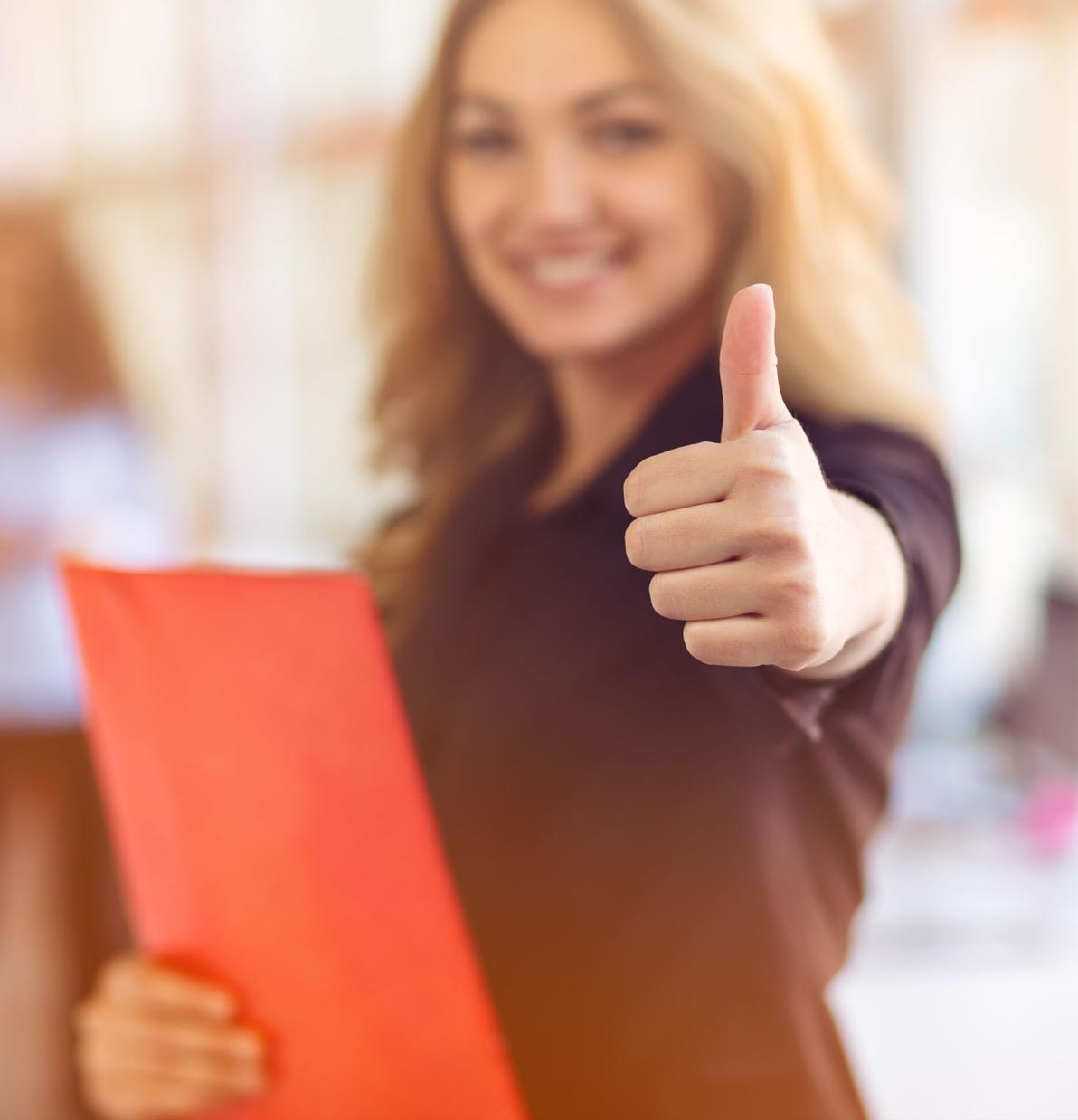
1. Set your goals.
2. Define your ideal speaker.
3. Identify your target speaker budget range.
4. Brainstorm possible speaking topics that fit your theme.
5. Read/listen to news, podcasts, industry publications and take note of people being mentioned, interviewed, or writing that content.
6. Start to develop a short list of speakers (ideally in budget)
7. Research and refine your list. Prioritize the short list in order.

# If working with a bureau, your speaker proposal should include:



- ✓ Updated information about each speaker.
- ✓ A reasonable number to choose from.
- ✓ Accurate price estimates.\*
- ✓ Specific travel requirements, if known.
- ✓ Applicable notes (local speaker, fee flexibility, etc.)
- ✓ A diverse set of speakers (gender, ethnicity, age, abilities, etc.)
- ✓ Popular and relevant talent options.
- ✓ Speakers at or close to your requested budget.

\* **These are estimates and not final offers.** Fees can often fluctuate based on all the event's factors. But, if they're recommended by a bureau, it is believed that based on past engagements, they will ultimately be in your price range.



## Once you've narrowed the list, ask yourself:

- ✓ Has this speaker presented on a similar topic to a similar organization?
- ✓ Is this speaker a match for my audience?
- ✓ Will this speaker's name, company, expertise, or celebrity draw more attendance at my event?
- ✓ Does this speaker reflect the values of my organization?
- ✓ Based on the event goals you've set, does choosing this speaker allow you to achieve those?

DISTINGUISHED LECTURE SERIES

ANGELA DAVIS

OCTOBER 11, 2023

SCHOOL  
for Peace and Justice



Beginning the discussion with your speaker



## Speaking Industry Insider Tip



Start your engagement with the speaker on the right foot. **Sell your event to the speaker** – help them understand the importance of it to your industry, and why they are uniquely qualified to transform your event.

**Personalize your outreach** to them, including where you might have heard about them or seen them speak previously.

3 Key Decisions to Make Now and Include in Your Offer

# #1 Presentation Format

## Session Type

Keynote

Panel

Emcee

Fireside  
Chat

Performance

## Location

In-Person

Virtual

Hybrid

Metaverse

3 Key Decisions to Make Now and Include in Your Offer

# #2 Approved Travel Expenses

## Payment

Actual Expenses

Travel Stipend

## Types

Hotel

Flights

Ground Transportation

Meals

Additional Expenses

## Who Arranges

Sponsor

Speaker

Bureau

Manager/Rep

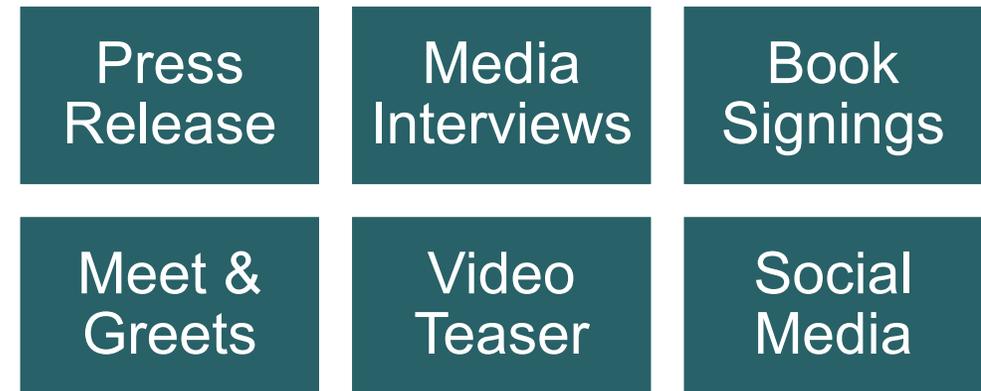
3 Key Decisions to Make Now and Include in Your Offer

# #3 Additional Promotional Requests

## Event Promotion



## Types





Ready? Set! OFFER!

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## Speaking Industry Insider Tip



Never extend multiple formal offers for the same engagement at the same time.



# Communication is the key to success.

Always be:

- ✓ Timely with responses
- ✓ Upfront with requests
- ✓ Detailed about expectations
- ✓ Clear and concise language

# All Speaker Contracts Should Include:

## Scope of Services

- Event details
- Presentation duration
- Additional services

## Compensation

- Fee
- Travel
- Additional expenses
- Payment schedule

## Intellectual Property

- Clarify usage rights to materials
- Address length the copyright terms apply

## Cancellation and Termination

- Explain how either party can terminate
- Process to do that and penalties related

## Force Majeure

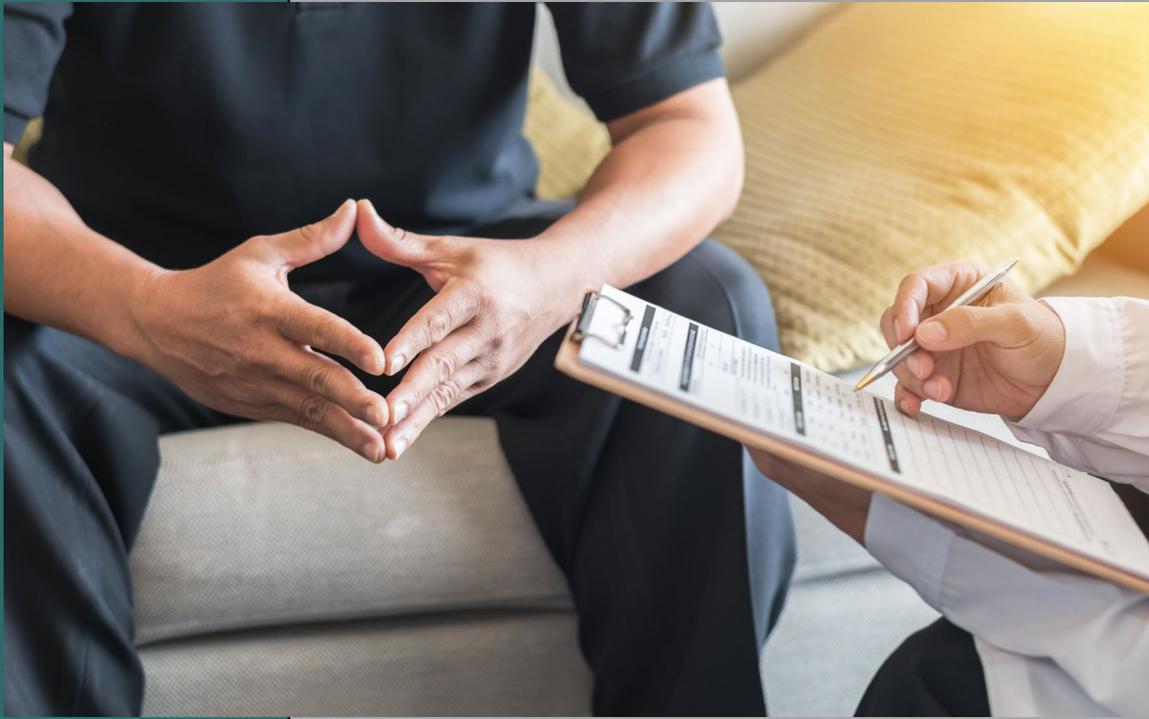
- How to handle unforeseen circumstances (like a pandemic)
- Addresses forces outside either party's control

## Indemnification

- Hold each party harmless from damages, liabilities for breach of agreement or negligence



## Speaking Industry Insider Tip



**Be realistic with your contract.**

- Choose your battles
- “How important is it?”
- Be patient
- Show empathy

# Six Tips for Negotiating with Speakers

1. Define your terms and dealbreakers.
2. Details are your friend – know them, share them.
3. The higher level the speaker, the more requirements you should expect them to have.
4. If you are recording, plan extra prep time.
5. Always get clear approvals on using the talent's name and likeness.
6. An experienced buyer's side agent can help with all of this.



## Remember:

- Be fair, realistic, patient, and communicative during the entire process.
- Do your homework before coming to the conversation. Bring your terms.
- Look for stories that motivate and resonate, within budget.
- Lock down all terms in writing, including extra services.
- Find a trusted partner if you need help.

*Thank you!*



# Questions?



Don't forget to review this session!

## Like Free Stuff?

Download AAE's Event Planning Toolkit, exclusively for CS + TSE 24!

**PLUS!** Get an advance copy of the 2024 Speaking Industry Benchmark Report when its published!

*Scan me*

