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INTRODUCTION STRATEGY

A small adjustment with outsized influence

Most experienced speakers invest significant time refining their keynote, while not giving a thought to how they're introduced to the audience.

Have you ever cringed just before walking on stage because your host got something wrong about you?

A strong introduction **establishes credibility, sets expectations, and helps attendees decide—quickly—to engage.**

You don't need to write a new one for each event. Simply create a **repeatable structure** your host can deliver with ease and authority.

The TRUST Framework

This five-part sequence provides a reliable structure for every keynote introduction:

- **T — Topic relevance:** Why this topic matters *now*
- **R — Reason you were chosen:** The client's specific need only you can address
- **U — Unique proof points:** A few credentials that earn trust
- **S — Style & presence:** What the audience can expect from you on stage

- **T — The toss:*** A warm, welcoming handoff

When these elements are in place, the audience is oriented, receptive, and believes you'll add value before you take the stage.

*(I mean, adding Welcome doesn't spell anything fun)

SAMPLE INTRODUCTION

Let's give this a try. I've created the repeatable structure you can use (and you can treat it as a MadLib *only* after you've completed 4 usable ones).

REMEMBER: Clients will love that you're providing this, but give them a couple of items they can tweak themselves. Supplying them with small choices of wording will allow them to feel ownership. It's the IKEA effect.

"Today's session focuses on **[T - topic = insert topic/problem to be solved]**, and we wanted a speaker who could **[R - reason = insert a "solving" phrase like those listed below]**

help us make sense of ____

clarify the current landscape

help us better understand ____

and **[R - reason = insert an "outcome" phrase like those listed below]**

provide practical guidance we can use right away.

show us how to apply those lessons moving forward.

That's why we invited **[Speaker Name = Your Name]**.

[Speaker Name] has worked with **[U - unique expertise = insert credible organizations you've worked with]**,

is the author of **[insert book or body of work]**,

and **[insert a "results" phrase like those listed below]**

brings real-world experience to this conversation.

is delivering proven results in ___ area.

her work has helped thousands of professionals thrive during uncertainty.

her research has shaped how global teams respond to change.

his insights have been featured in Forbes and Fast Company.

Known for a style that's **[S - style = insert a descriptive word like those below]**

engaging and substantive,

compelling and exceptionally clear,

dynamic and outcome-driven,

plain-spoken and insightful,

please join me in welcoming **[T - the toss = Speaker Name]."**

Finished product:

"Today's session focuses on building trust and influence in a fast-moving environment, and we wanted a speaker with proven results to guide us.

That's why we invited Shelley Dolley.

Shelley Dolley is a strategist who has advised business speakers for 25 years and was the Chief of Staff for management guru Tom Peters.

She is known for making complex challenges clear and leaving audiences with practical tools they can apply immediately.

It is my great pleasure to welcome Shelley Dolley."

FINAL CHECK

Before you send your sample introduction—including a few options for them to customize themselves—to the host, ask:

- Is the reason I'm on this stage clear in the first 10 seconds?
- Are the proof points selective and strong?
- Will the audience know exactly what they're about to gain?
- Does the ending make it easy for me to begin?

When the answers are yes, you step on stage with credibility, focus, and momentum.

Help your client look knowledgeable and prepared while you elevate how you're perceived.

READY TO LEVEL UP?

If you're overwhelmed by the number of plates you have to keep spinning as a thought leader, we should talk. I offer customized **Brand Audits** and **Strategic Advising** for business speakers who are looking to elevate their position in the industry. Together, we'll identify the steps you need to take—in the proper order for your sanity and bank account—to reach your goals.

[SCHEDULE A CALL](#)

→ Don't forget to **share this newsletter** with a colleague if you find it useful. Growing a strong community of speakers helps us all thrive.

GET ON THE RIGHT PATH

Thought leaders turn to Shelley Dolley when they need to build and grow their brands. She draws her insights from managing the career of speaking legend Tom Peters.



MORE ABOUT SHELLEY



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