

Public Speaking and Consulting Best Practices Tip Sheet

This Tip Sheet is designed for existing and aspiring Survivor Leaders and Subject Matter Experts as an introduction about working professionally as a consultant or public speaker. This resource includes advice from Survivor Leaders and Subject Matter Experts, as well as a few tools and resources from mainstream public speaking and consulting resources.

TIPS FOR CONSULTING FROM SURVIVOR LEADERS AND SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS:

WHAT IS A SURVIVOR LEADER AND SUBJECT MATTER EXPERT?

- Only you can determine if you're ready to be a leader, share your expertise, or work professionally in the anti-trafficking field as a consultant or public speaker. The term "subject matter expert" refers to someone with lived experience on a specific topic doing professional work. You are the expert of your unique lived experience as a survivor.
- There are many ways that survivors can work professionally in the anti-trafficking field without having to constantly tell your story. Some survivors may be ready to share their stories to raise awareness and help people understand the issue exploitation and trafficking, and some survivors will never want to do this, and that is OK. It is your choice, and you should never feel pressured to do this by anyone including the agency that has helped you or might employ you.
- Survivors have led the anti-trafficking movement and are involved in all areas of it including policy and program development, advocacy, training, awareness raising, direct services, systems change, fund development, social enterprises, art, writing and music, and so much more. You can determine your role and what is best for you – including choosing to take a break or not be involved in this work professionally at all.

PRACTICE SELF-CARE

If you do decide to work in this field, it is so important to understand that you might be triggered, sometimes often, by the requests made of you, by insensitive or ignorant questions, by burnout because there is so much work to do, or by just a lack of awareness about how non-survivors should appropriately engage with survivors—which can be exhausting to have to continue to teach folks. Because of all of this, it is important that you are aware of your triggers, that you have a plan in place for before/during/after you participate in an event or project in case you are triggered and need to calm down or reset, and that you have a support system of people around you that understand and help you process.

OTHER HELPFUL TIPS INCLUDE:

- Factor in time for breaks and rest. Take your personal time when needed and put this in your contract. Renegotiate contracts if needed. You come first.
- Be your own advocate. Speak up if you feel you are not being treated well or respected.
- Bring a support person to speaking events if that helps you.
- Ask for childcare help if you need it.
- Realize that you don't have to take Q & A right after you speak. If you need time for yourself, coordinate that with your client. Be honest about what you need.

Funding for this project was provided by the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe. Developed by Lindsay Arf, Lateesha Coleman, Joy Friedman, Monia Miller, Bukola Oriola, Chris Stark in collaboration with Heather Caillier, Ascend Consulting Inc. Copyright © 2022. Contact: heather@ascendconsultingmn.com



- Prepare for unexpected triggers. Have a grounding plan for the moment like drinking water, deep breathing, and focusing on a safe person in the audience.
- Have a post-event plan with self-care activities: eating, drinking water, meditating, debriefing with a trusted friend, doing a hobby that brings you joy, seeing safe family members or children, watching something that makes you laugh, taking a nap, exercising, or whatever helps you feel good and safe.

A LIST OF INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITIES PROVIDED BY CURRENT SURVIVOR LEADERS:

- Watch YouTube funny video or other videos to distract yourself
- Process with another person
- Breathing techniques
- Go outside
- Aromatherapy
- Music
- Choosing certain colors
- Meet and process with survivors, de-escalate
- Go to the place early and make a plan for triggers, know the space, the AV, the room, the technology, mentally prepare
- Self-care (nails, meditate, gym, swim, etc.)—work it out right away, don't dwell in it
- Connect with family/kids/grandkids—remind myself of the innocence
- Self-talk—positive self-talk
- Plants, taking care of life
- Journaling
- Window shopping
- Crafts or creative outlet
- Drive
- Pray and/or meditate
- Listen to sermons
- De-escalation practices
- Dressing up/makeup/hair, taking care of yourself
- Baths
- Cry
- Work on projects, business, etc.—positive things to prevent relapse and keep moving forward
- Acknowledging, labeling emotions, mourning, grieving
- Therapy/counseling, regularly
- Organize/cleaning
- Physical therapy
- Workout
- Time with family
- Watching TV, shut brain off
- Process/debrief with colleagues

SET BOUNDARIES RIGHT AWAY

- Clients don't get to hear your personal story unless you agree to share it. Be clear beforehand about what you are there to present on and what is off limits.
- You don't have to answer every question. You can politely decline to answer and move on.
- If there are certain questions you will not answer on a panel, let the facilitator know beforehand.
- Utilize the *Recommendations for Engaging with Survivors as Speakers and Consultants – Guide Sheet for Agencies, Systems, Faith Communities, and other Community Groups/Members* resource that will lay out some of the best practices for professionals and people requesting your services.



RATES AND PAYMENT

- Be upfront and clear on pricing and payment expectations. Be proactive and upfront about contract deliverables. It's OK to negotiate fees and expectations and it's ok to say no.
- See the booking request sample questions and use this to create your own speaking or consulting request form or email that you can use when you get requests. This helps you to have as much information about the request as possible before communicating about your services and fees.
- Use booking contracts. You are usually an independent contractor in these situations which means you can create your own contracts. See the example resource template and customize this for your own expectations. Sometimes the client will have their own contract that they will need you to sign instead, and that is OK, but be sure to read it carefully and understand what you are agreeing to. It is also OK to ask them to make modifications if you are uncomfortable with any of the conditions.
- Create a document (or add this to your website if you have one) that lists your fees (optional) and types of training, speaking, consultation or other services you provide. You can determine your fees, but it is important to know that some clients will have a budget cap or hourly cap that they can pay you based on their funding sources. For example, if you are being contracted to work on an event or project that is funded with a federal grant, there are daily and hourly caps on rates that the client can pay you according to their grant terms. In 2022, these caps are \$81.25 an hour or a maximum of \$650 per day. You can also quote a "Flat Rate" fee by determining how long it takes to do things: travel, planning, reviewing, developing content, printing, paper, taxes etc. and apply a value to that. For example, if someone asks you to travel somewhere for a conference to speak, you can add up all the expenses and quote a flat fee of \$2,000 (this is just an example). This can also be applied to project work if you know it will take a certain number of hours for the prep time, supplies you will need, the actual work, reviewing drafts, and the post-project follow-up work etc.
- Understand what other professionals are charging for the similar services (this is called market research), what the client's budget is, and then set rates at or above the government rate as you think is appropriate.
- It is okay to ask for payment in the form that you prefer. Ask about the payment process—do they need a W9, do they need you to submit an invoice, how long will payment take, are there other options if you prefer not to be paid by check, etc.?
- Be sure to understand that any payment you receive by check (especially if it's over \$600) will be reported to the IRS as income. It is important that you track all of your income that you make as a consultant or speaker/trainer and also record any expenses that you may have—that includes mileage, business expenses like printing, possibly your cell phone, computer or other technology, meals when you are traveling for contracted work, and any other expenses that you have that are related to this income. Please contact an accountant for details. This is just a general summary and is not meant to be tax advice.

UNDERSTAND AND COMMUNICATE CLEAR EXPECTATIONS ABOUT YOUR WORK

- Ask the client about ownership rights or permission for sharing any of your work—does it belong to them after you share it? If so, how will you be compensated for that?
- Understand that some of the work you produce will be considered "work for hire" as a consultant. That means you are paid at the time you create it and then it belongs to the organization who paid



for it. This is common with grant funded projects. Federal and state funded projects automatically own the rights to any works created under the grant. However, you should receive proper credit and acknowledgements.

- If you are creating resources for them, be clear about deliverables and what the fee is for—giving permission for sharing products or video etc.
- Again, it's OK to say 'no' to any requests for your materials.
- Make sure you have a copyright and notice on the materials you use to present with if you created it.

APPROPRIATE DRESS

- Wear business attire to reinforce your professional image as an expert.
- Be aware of the environment you are presenting (for example: a youth rally vs. a luncheon keynote) and dress appropriately
- When in doubt, over dress.
- If you are in a Zoom meeting or virtual setting, also dress professionally and keep your camera on when you are able to.

GENERAL TIPS FOR PUBLIC SPEAKING (THESE ARE MAINSTREAM RESOURCES AND NOT RECOMMENDATIONS FROM SURVIVOR LEADERS)

1. It's natural to be nervous. Preparation is key! Create an outline of what you want to say, in case you lose your train of thought or get off course.
2. Know your audience as much as possible beforehand. Your speech should be catered to what they need to hear.
3. Bring energy and enthusiasm! Especially if you are giving an online presentation. When speaking in person you have your whole body to convey your meaning. If you are presenting virtually, all you have is your face and upper body. If you are presenting over Zoom, you should bring twice as much energy to keep attention.
4. Authenticity matters. Don't be afraid to be vulnerable - audiences respond to this.
5. Your speech should have structure. Don't underestimate the power of a clear beginning, middle and end. Audiences need this structure in order to process what you are communicating.

SOURCES:

The New Rules of Public Speaking - Fortune

<https://fortune.com/2022/01/18/the-new-best-practices-for-public-speaking-knowledge-charisma-and-authenticity/>

10 Tips for Improving Your Public Speaking Skills - Harvard Professional Development

<https://professional.dce.harvard.edu/blog/10-tips-for-improving-your-public-speaking-skills/>



HOW TO BE A PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANT

1. **GATHER FEEDBACK.** Ask your point of contact for feedback on your consulting services. What worked? What didn't? This will help you improve and it shows your client that you care about the results of your services - making them more likely to rehire you.
2. **PERFECT YOUR PRESENTATION.** The structure of your presentation matters. Make sure you have a compelling intro and visuals that support the story you're telling. Use graphics and charts from trusted sources to help your audience understand your content on different levels. Using video can also be powerful - just make sure it comes from a reputable source.
3. **MIND THE DETAILS.** Your relationship with clients includes how you handle the everyday details of the service you offer. It's not just about what you present, it's about how you conduct yourself with your client before, during and after the services are delivered. Answer emails on time, be on time to in-person and virtual meetings (keep your camera on if you can), and try to understand the complexities of the client you are serving. Your attention to detail will go a long way in your client relationships.
4. **CHOOSE YOUR CLIENTS CAREFULLY.** Sometimes, certain clients will not be the best fit for what you offer. Make sure to have an initial conversation with a potential client to understand what they are looking for, who their audience is, and what their expectations are for you. Take the time to gauge the client during your initial meeting to see if it will be a good fit for you.
5. **MARKET YOURSELF.** You are your best marketer of the services you offer. It's important to include your name and contact info on any materials you hand out to an audience—these are all potential new clients. There are many free business card designers online. Create simple, clean-looking, professional cards and make sure you have them ready to hand out at any presentation or meeting. Also make sure that your online presence is consistent and professional. Create a LinkedIn account, and make sure that your social media accounts do not have personal information shared publicly, and that all your account profiles are professional. Create a website or other online presence that is easy to find that you can share with potential clients and colleagues. Remember that you are your best salesperson because you know the full value of what you bring to the table. Don't be afraid to self-promote!

SOURCES:

7 Consulting Presentation Tips to Land and Satisfy Clients

<https://www.constantcontact.com/blog/7-consulting-presentation-tips-to-land-and-satisfy-clients/>

How to be a Better Consultant: 8 Tips and Strategies

<https://www.constantcontact.com/blog/how-to-be-a-better-consultant/>

HELPFUL VIDEOS

How to Become Full-time Paid Public Speaker: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oxJWQtLTTVc>

Top Tips for Becoming a Powerful Speaker: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O9NjYbtFjKY>

Responsibilities of a Speaker: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rXp7W-9y0LI>



OTHER TOOLS AND RESOURCES FOR SURVIVORS

These have not been vetted but were shared by the Survivor Leaders. These are resources, trainings, tools, and networks to help survivors develop their own consulting or public speaking business.

- SHYNE – assists survivors in setting up businesses free
- Rebecca Bender – (some resources are free, check her website)
- GEMS – becoming a survivor leader conferences and events and groups
- Project 360 Degrees
- Sun Gate Foundation
- HEAL Trafficking– (check research)
- Survivors Network
- Survivors Alliance – tools, events, resources
- REP Career Trainings – community response training (not trafficking related)
- JUST Conference – Shared Hope (need funds for fees, travel, lodging, etc.)
- Shared Hope Survivor Group

TECH TIPS

Canva - Free graphic design platform with templates for creating social media graphics, presentations, posters, documents and other visual content

Create a free blog or website with Wordpress, Blogger or Wix

VistaPrint offers 100 custom business cards for \$15

Google has free tools and templates for surveys, spreadsheets, calendar, forms, and more

