

GUIDE TO BEING A GOOD HOST

The host of a session is responsible for all logistical aspects (preparing the room, providing the necessary equipment, controlling the lighting, etc.) as well as ensuring that the session runs smoothly and collegially.

Before the actual session:

1. Check with the speaker(s) to determine what they will need for their presentation. This can include using a PowerPoint presentation, any requirements for a demonstration, things as simple as chalk and an eraser, etc. If a slide presentation is planned, determine how the files will make their way to the room's computer and whether you will be required to control the lights during the talk.
2. Check the pronunciation of the speaker's name and obtain their title (which you will use to introduce them).

During the session:

Introduction

3. Stand at the front of the room, bring the audience to silence, and then introduce the speaker and state their title. For example, "This afternoon, Marie Curie will speak to us on 'The discovery of Radium'." Avoid expressions like, "Without further ado, ..."
4. Turn to the speaker as you sit down. You may or may not turn down the lights, depending on the previously conveyed wishes of the speaker. If you will be doing this, ensure that you have a seat near the light switches.

During the Talk

5. Prepare a couple of questions to ask the speaker—just in case none comes from the audience.

Upon Completion

6. Once the speaker has ended, lead the applause that recognises the effort taken by the speaker to prepare and deliver their talk. As you are clapping, stand up and walk to the front (but off to the side) of the room.
7. You will then lead the question period.* Open the floor to questions. For instance, "Do we have any questions for our speaker?" Look around and call on individuals in an orderly manner. Acknowledge the individual by gesturing to them using your hand (not fingers), like a flight attendant. After the speaker answers the first question, turn again to the audience and repeat. However, keep aware of the time and do NOT go beyond the allocated time.
8. If there are NO questions from the audience, ask a question yourself. Prepare this during the talk, and make sure that your question concerns the scholarly content of the talk.
9. At the end of the question time, end by saying something like, "Let's thank our speaker once again," and lead the final round of applause.

** It is the responsibility of the host (not the speaker) to lead the question period. Speakers should NOT take on this role unless confronted with an incompetent host.*