



Moderator Role and Expectations

Role of the session moderator:

A moderator is the glue that keeps it together. The moderator's job is to help ensure the audience's needs are met and the learning outcomes are achieved. The moderator sets the tone, establishes pace, and ensures all content remains relevant to the stated session description and takeaways. It is the moderator's responsibility to make sure the session is lively, engaging, and worthwhile.

Advance preparation:

- Establish parameters around the format and timing for the session.
- Get in touch with panelists early on to discuss what they want to discuss and what the most important outcomes of their talks are.
- Ensure all topics identified by panelists for discussion reflect the session title, description, and learning outcomes.
- Summarize all topics from panelists and determine if there is any overlap and suggest changes if needed.
- Ensure all panelists understand the needs for their presentation and any associated preparation deadlines.
- Identify probing questions to ensure topics are explored in proper depth.
- Ensure enough knowledgeability on the topic to support the conversation.
- Identify areas of convergence and difference, ensuring the content builds on itself but is not repetitive.
- Introduce opportunities to engage attendees, through poll questions, Q&A, gamification, and other creative meeting formats.
- Set time to meet with panelists on-site in advance of the session for final preparation (if needed).

On-site meeting with panelists prior to the session:

- Review the session format and agenda. Be firm with the panelists about the amount of time allocated to their comments as well as any other ground rules.
- Review the seating order and make sure it is consistent with prepared slides.
- Review your introduction with each panelist for accuracy and relevance. Make sure you know how to pronounce their personal and company names correctly.
- Tell them how and when you will intervene and how they should signal to you and to each other when they want to answer a question or add to the discussion.
- Remind presenters to turn off their cell phones.
- Encourage the panelists to mingle with attendees before the session starts.

During the session:

- Work with staff to ensure mics are working, chairs and stage are set appropriately, and panelists are prepared.
- Keep time and hold panelists accountable to their slated timeframes.
- Make the panelists the center of attention. Be aware of the fact that you are there to summarize, ask short questions, and facilitate questions from the audience.
- Ask probing questions to ensure topics are explored in proper depth. Ask questions the audience would want to know, not what you want to know.
- Maintain awareness of attendees and ensure content is engaging to them.
- Engage attendees, through poll questions, Q&A, gamification, and other creative meeting formats.
- Remain neutral and objective in the midst of different panelist opinions and ideas.
- Read all housekeeping and concluding announcements provided by staff.