



Tips and Best Practices for Professional Presentations

Round Tables

A round table is a discussion that invites attendees to informally share ideas on a specific topic. They are particularly useful for brainstorming new ideas and learning about the projects and perspectives of peers.

When developing your round table...

- **Consider Your Topic:** Round tables often address hot topics and trends, but are also good venues for under-discussed issues.
- **Consider Your Audience:** What topics will be of most interest to conference attendees? Even if attendees come from different professional specialties, what topics unite them?
- **Develop Questions:** Be prepared with a list of questions to facilitate discussion if needed.

When moderating your round table...

- **Avoid Presentation:** Round tables are discussion-oriented, and should be a conversation between peers. Do not use slides or spend a large amount of time speaking.
- **Be Aware of the Space:** Round tables may occur in a small or closed-off area. Make sure that there is room for everyone to be included around the table or within the circle. Monitor volume levels to ensure that speakers are audible to those seated further away.
- **Facilitate:** Read questions aloud for all participants. If conversation slows, help prompt by asking guiding questions. Ensure that all attendees have the opportunity to speak and share if they choose.
- **Maintain Professional Interaction:** Round tables sometimes address controversial issues. Make sure that everyone feels welcome to share their individual perspectives, and maintain courtesy and professional communication.