



How to Identify Speakers as Business Prospects

It is important that you begin finding great speaker clients as soon as possible. It is easy to start doubting and asking, “Can I really do this?” if you do not put your new skills into practice right away.

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You may already have speaker clients or potential clients, but if you do not, then that will be your first order of business.

Your best opportunity for profitable clients is to find people speaking often (at least 25 engagements a year) and who are speaking for a fee. These are usually people whose business revolves around being out and talking to people about their expertise.

The first step in identifying speakers as business prospects is to understand which type of speaker you're going after.

Three Types of Speaker Business Prospects

Subject Matter Experts

These are people who are known for a very specific kind of expertise. They present at scientific events, academic societies and in front of corporate audiences. They are very process driven, they usually have a high-paying job and they're just speaking on the side. Some of these people are trainers. They will have just a few clients versus a lot of them and they'll go train for weeks or something like that at a particular location. Subject matter experts need less marketing and more of the presentation building, content building, research and fact checking.

The Thought Leader

The majority of speakers that VSAs work with are thought leaders. These people are consultants and coaches, often with other revenue streams like books and seminars. They speak, not only to generate speaking fees, but they use speaking as a marketing tool. They need a lot of VSA help, because they're often out consulting and they'll have fewer speeches than others. But it's very important for them to leverage those events, because they're always looking for business. They may also have training programs that they do as well. So

you will be dealing with a variety of speeches with a lot of customization as you will with subject matter experts.

The Motivational Speaker

Motivational speakers are the traditional type of speaker. They have an inspiring story as a former executive, a celebrity, a sports figure or perhaps as a comedian. This is a very transactional business for speakers. Marketing to get speaking engagements is the focus here.

These are the people that are going for broke and most of what they do is speak. Speaking for pay is the major revenue stream in their business model, they usually have products to sell during their speeches like books, CD's or DVDs. Some motivational speakers are trying to move into other areas, such as consulting or giving retreats.

Their message is based on their own stories and successes, so once they have a speech, there are fewer customizing activities. They also tend to be creative and right-brained, so these folks need a whole lot of help in processing and organizing. They are charismatic, very friendly and upbeat, but they also have very high expectations, because they don't know what they need. They just want everything done. You're going to have a lot of autonomy with them (you'll also have some autonomy with thought leaders, probably less so than subject matter experts, these folks are really, really picky about their presentation, they want everything just perfect because they're very left-brained).

Personal Prospect Lists

The more possible clients, called prospects, that you can identify, the more you can begin a marketing campaign to interest them in working with you. You will talk to many people who may become professional speakers in the future and who will remember to call you. You will talk to others who will wish they had known about your services two years ago when they just starting to move from amateur to professional speaker. The more people you talk to, the more likely they will know people who could use your services, even if the person you are talking to is not a likely client.

Sit in a quiet place and think of everyone you know who is a speaker or who might be in a place to refer speaker clients to you as you read the next section. If you have an entrepreneurial friend or business associate, get their help in brainstorming all your possible connections as well.

Aspiring Speaker Prospects

You may not realize it right now, but you already know people who are speakers or who are thinking becoming speakers, perhaps because they have just become authors. And those people know other aspiring or successful speakers. Think about each family member, friend, neighbor, club member, school parent and professional you work with: Are any of them speakers?

There is no sign-up list that people register on when they start thinking of becoming professional speakers. Many people are shy about talking about these thoughts, doubting that they can really ever make it happen. It becomes your job to get these people talking because YOU ask the question: "Do you know anyone who is an author and/or a speaker? I have recently become a certified professional speaker's assistant and I can help them speed up and enjoy the process of becoming a professional speaker." You will be surprised how often you get a resounding, "Me!"

It is estimated that almost half of the adult population actively considers writing a book. Most of us do not know that others are writing until they find a publisher and area willing to talk about it. And once they do, they begin speaking as a way of selling their books and other products.

Here are some great places to find aspiring professional speakers or be recommended to them:

- Toastmasters groups
- Professional organizations
- Networking groups
- Women's organizations (groups and clubs)
- Online training classes for speakers
- Speaking conferences (like the National Speaker's Association)
- Other virtual assistants or virtual author's assistants

Get on the Internet and do a search on www.Google.com with any of these words or phrases and look for those in your area.

Business Professional Referral Sources

Besides individuals who might be speakers themselves, there are many people who, as part of their professional work, work with speakers. Anyone with a large contact list is likely to know speakers.

The next time you meet a professional at a Chamber of Commerce or networking meeting you might say: "Do you have any speaker clients? I have recently become a certified professional virtual speaker's assistant and I can help them speed up and enjoy the process of becoming a successful professional speaker. I work on all aspects of speaking process, helping with marketing and sales, travel arrangements, handling the work of the speaker's office and more."

Here are some great places to find professional referral sources who can recommend you to speaker clients:

- Attorneys
- Accountants
- Business managers
- Business coaches
- Publicists
- Marketing consultants
- Event planners
- Speaker's bureaus

Communicating with Prospects

Once you have a prospect on your radar, or have been referred to a prospect from a business professional, it is important to create a great first impression. Sending a simple email can be a wonderful, no-pressure way to offer your services.

Success Mindset

I know that I am learning what I need to in order to be successful and I know I can help many other people by sharing what I know. I also know that there are a lot of people on my team who will help and support me every step of the way and who are confident about my success, sometimes before I am. I am at the beginning of a very exciting time for my own personal development!

Speaker Prospect Contact Collection Worksheet

Name	Web Site	Email	Telephone	Types of Speakers: Subject Matter Experts (S) Thought Leaders (T) Motivational Speaker (M) Referral Source

SAMPLE PROSPECT EMAIL

Dear

Paul Becker, a mutual business acquaintance suggested I get in touch with you. Paul said he knew you were just ramping up your speaking engagements and thought I might be able to help you do that.

I am a certified Professional Virtual Speaker's Assistant and I help speakers maximize their time and effectiveness by handling all the back office administration while the speaker is on stage and out on the road. You work on your speeches and delivery them and I answer questions from prospective clients, organize your office, work with your vendors and much more.

I am attaching a short two-page piece on "What a Virtual Speaker's Assistant Can Do For You" with more information about all the services I can provide. If you would like to set up a time to talk by phone, I would welcome the opportunity to get to know more about your need for an assistant. Let me know if any time next week might work for you.

In the meantime, you might enjoy reading some of the articles on the work of speaker's assistants on my web site at www.SpeakersAssistPro.com/articles.

Sincerely,

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What a Virtual Speaker's Assistant Can Do For You

Successful speakers have always relied on professional help to handle all the administrative and professional duties that are above and beyond what the speaker does on stage.

It is really hard to focus on everything that is going back home in the office when you're onsite trying to give a great speech. The certified Professional Virtual Speaker's Assistant (PVSA) is your assurance of finding someone who is completely qualified and ready to get to work for you.

Here are four reasons speakers find speaker's assistants invaluable:

1. There is just too much work for one person.

So many new or aspiring speakers have day jobs and they don't have the time to do all the tasks involved.

2. A virtual speaker's assistant can help you ramp up faster.

Look for someone with training and experience in doing tasks like working with speaker's bureaus. Trained speaker's assistants understand the industry, the technology and have already established resources and connections.

3. The cost is greater when you do it yourself.

There is a high learning curve for anyone who has never made the journey of a professional speaker. Whether the speaker is paid \$5,000 per speech or \$270 an hour as a coach, therapist, attorney or entrepreneur, the speaker's assistant is a tremendous value at a much lower per-hour cost. With a speaker's assistant the speaker has the freedom to concentrate on those things only the speaker can do, especially writing the best speech he or she can.

4. There is synergy in a collaborative effort.

If you set the timetable, budget, and your intentions, the speaker's assistant will be there to give you the confidence you are heading in the right directions.

How Do I Know that My Speaker's Assistant Is Qualified?

We suggest you go through an interview process, including some of these types of questions:

- Can you handle my travel schedule and deadline-oriented office?
- Have you worked with many other speakers?
- How do you give me regular updates on the projects we do together?
- What sorts of challenges have you solved for other speakers as a virtual speaker's assistant?
- How do you keep up with all the new technology and other speaker resources that will help me stay up-to-date?

Beyond your own investigation, your professional virtual speaker's assistant goes through rigorous training,

including hours of practice, an exam and continuing education.

What Kinds of Services do Virtual Speaker's Assistants Provide?

The speaker's assistant has the freedom to concentrate on those things that only the speaker cannot do effectively if the speaker's eye stays on the ball – which it should.

There is a very high learning curve for setting up a speaker's business, a lot technology to learn and to have a person devoted to that, social media and other vital parts of the successful speaking business is the biggest contribution a virtual speaker's assistant can make for the speaker's business. We hope you will use the checklist on the back to start a discussion about your specific needs, desires and goals for the success of your speaking career.



What a Virtual Speaker's Assistant Can Do For You

Managing the Speaker's Relationships

- Work with speaker bureaus
- Work with meeting planners
- Identify speaker prospects

Managing the Speaker's Intellectual Property

- Inventory source material
- Get permissions and avoid trademark violations
- Understand and research the target audience and competition
- Create one sheets and speaker bios
- Create multi-media presentations
- Create special reports, tip sheets, articles and white papers
- Create podcasts and videos

Managing the Speaker's Office

- Write administrative office procedures
- Manage speaker contracts
- Manage industry certifications (CSP/NSA and others)
- Manage emails/incoming calls

Managing the Speaker's Logistics

- Manage the speaker's calendar
- Respond to requests after the speech
- Set up travel and technology
- Coordinate videotaping and transcriptions
- Coordinate media opportunities

Managing the Speaker's Marketing and Sales Process

- Help promote the speech
- Maintain and update the speaker web site
- Handle the speaker's database of clients and prospects
- Coordinate the marketing and sales plan
- Produce newsletters and email campaigns
- Implement social networking strategy and plan
- Manage lead generation and outreach

Managing the Speaker's Products

- Create virtual product launches
- Manage speaker products and fulfillment
- Sell products at events

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