

Speaking Appearance at A Trade Association

Bear in mind that trade associations exist to lobby the government, educate the members, build consumer demand. There is no other major *raison d'être*.

Therefore, you are providing value in one of their key strategic areas.

Focus on the benefits to the members, because that is the criterion by which the executive director is evaluated. Make a strong, early, concise case about what you will provide *in terms of participant outcomes and improved skills or results*.

If your letter gets “bumped down” to a program or event manager, at least it will have come from their boss.

Some hints for success:

- Use a publication such as *National Trade and Professional Associations of the United States* to identify the relevant associations, budgets, audience, convention themes, and dates. This is invaluable preparation. (Available from Columbia Books, Inc., 1212 New York Avenue, Suite 330, Washington, DC 20005, 202-898-0662.)

- Send the inquiry via FedEx to maximize chances of immediate attention.

- Enclose a press kit oriented toward the needs of the association and its membership.

- Study the business and trade press to understand key member issues.

- Enclose a sample video and/or audio of your speeches.
- Err on the side of including too many testimonial letters.
- Offer to meet in person if that is at all convenient.

Inquiry to Speak At A Major Trade or Professional Association

I'm proposing that I speak at your conference on May 6 in San Diego with a presentation entitled, "How to Avoid A Strategy That Sits on the Shelf: *Why Planning Is Killing Strategy*." This is designed to fit well with the conference theme of "Searching the Future."

Among other advantages, the participants would benefit from:

- Specific tools to create a strategy of inclusion
- Alignment of all individual objectives behind corporate goals
- Separation of strategy (top-down) and planning (bottom-up)
- Acquisition of a template to apply immediately
- Clear methods to use strategy as a real-time management tool
- Real-world case studies to provide practice and discussion

I'm the author of 17 articles and position papers on strategy and strategic initiatives, several of which are in the enclosed press kit. My work has included strategy retreats with Acme Corp., Bravo Institute, and Charlie, Inc., all of which are about the same size as most of your member organizations. In addition, I've enclosed an audio tape of several radio interviews I've provided on the subject, as well as a video of my presentation to the Minnesota State Bankers Conference on "Strategy As A Leadership Leverage Point." You'll also find several testimonials related to this topic and my overall presentation effectiveness in the package.

I'll call you on Friday, February 6 at 10 am your time to discuss this further. If you would like to talk before then, use any of the contact points on this letterhead to reach me.

Thanks in advance for your consideration. I'm looking forward to our discussion.